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**Transforming Rural Education: Village
Institutes as Architects of Modernity in
Türkiye (1937-1960)**

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Transforming Rural Education: Village Institutes as Architects of Modernity in Türkiye (1937-1960)

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Declaration

I, Hasan G?nder, the undersigned doctoral candidate specializing in history at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Szeged, do hereby solemnly affirm, with complete awareness of my legal responsibilities, that the doctoral dissertation titled *Transforming Rural Education: Village Institutes as Architects of Modernity in T?rkiye (1937-1960)* is a product of my own original and independent scholarly work. I further confirm that all references and citations within this dissertation have been meticulously adhered to in strict accordance with the established protocols of source handling. Moreover, I assert that the printed and electronic copies of this dissertation are entirely identical in both text and content.

Date: Szeged, 2023, September 25.


Hasan G?nder

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Dedication

To my dearest family,

With a heart full of gratitude, I dedicate this dissertation to my cherished family, whose constant love and support have been instrumental in shaping my journey.

My dear mother, Naciye Gönder, your tireless love and selfless sacrifices have been the compass guiding me through life. This work is a reflection of your inspiring presence in my life and is dedicated in honor of your resilience and devotion.

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List of Abbreviations

- AKP Justice and Development Party (Turkish: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
- CHP Republican People's Party (Turkish: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
- DP Democrat Party (Turkish: Demokrat Parti)
- FRP Free Republican Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası)
- IHTs Itinerant Head Teachers (Turkish: Gezici Baş Öğretmenler)
- TÖS Türkiye Teachers' Union (Turkish: Türkiye Öğretmen Sendikası)
- USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- VI Village Institutes (Turkish: Köy Enstitüleri)
- WWI World War I
- WWII World War II

Introduction

Türkiye's modernization adventure is a process that has been going on for about a century, if the modernization movements in the Ottoman Empire, of which Türkiye was the successor, are not counted; the modernization movements in the Ottoman Empire officially started with the proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict in 1839. However, some historians, such as Reşat Kasaba, Stefanos Yerasimos,¹ İsmail Cem and Doğan Avcıoğlu² accepted the beginning of the Turkish modernization as 1923, the proclamation of modern Turkish state, since the reform efforts were constantly interrupted until 1923. The fact that the Turkish modernization has still not been completed despite the turn of the century and that there have been developments against modernization in the political life of the country from time to time has led some researchers to think that this process has failed or has not completed yet.

The studies available in the literature have reached the following conclusions regarding the failure of this process or the reason why it has not been completed yet: the top-down policies of the single party regime, the struggle between traditionalists and reformists in the single party period, military coups and interventions, the rising of Islamist movements, and the Kemalist project and its top-down reforms.

To briefly summarize the arguments available on the subject in the literature:

The top-down policies of the Kemalist project and the "for the people, despite the people" mentality: Reşat Kasaba claimed that Türkiye's modernization in the past century has created a disjuncture where state power and social forces have been pushed apart, and the civilian and military elite that controlled the state has insisted on having the upper hand in shaping the direction and pace of Türkiye's modernization.³ Furthermore, Serdar Şen and Toni Alaranta stressed that the major target of the political elites during those modernization efforts was to strengthen their power.⁴ Lastly, Karaömerlioğlu, Kemal Karpat, and İlhan Başgöz and Howard Wilson claimed that the *"for the people, despite the people"* mentality harmed the modernization process.⁵

¹ Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye* (Ankara: Belge Yayınları, 1986), 115–61.

² İsmail Cem, *Türkiye'de Geri Kalmışlığın Tarihi* (İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 1998), 85–116; Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Türkiye'nin Düzeni Dün Bugün Yarını* (Ankara: Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, 2018), 81–96.

³ Reşat Kasaba, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Türkiye*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

⁴ Serdar Şen, *Silahlı Kuvvetler ve Modernizm* (İstanbul: Sarmal Yayınları, 1996), 187.

⁵ Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "The People's Houses," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998): 77–84; Kemal Karpat, "The People's Houses in Türkiye: Establishment and Growth," *Middle East Journal* 17, no. 1-2 (1963): 55–67;

The struggle between traditionalists and modernists within the single party regime: Bernard Lewis and Oğuzhan Göksel claim that the struggle within one party between traditionalist and progressive forces caused the disruption of modernization efforts.⁶ Likewise, Oya Baydar, Engin Tonguç and Fay Kirby claimed that reform efforts could not spread to rural areas due to the constant struggle between two factions within the single party.⁷

Military coups and interventions: Elifcan Karacan, Hasan Gönder and Gülbahar Konak argued that coups did more damage to societies and democracy than the civilian government they replaced, due to reasons such as the power struggle that took place after the military intervention, the close interest of the army in politics, the disruption of democracy in order to "protect democracy" and the restriction of individual rights and freedoms.⁸ Differently from this, Korkut Boratav and Yahya Tezel stated that the military elites were allied with the business circle and the landlords after the establishment of the republican regime. In fact, there were number of soldiers and bureaucrats who later be part of bourgeoisie.⁹

The rising of Islamist movements: Ahmad emphasized that the Islamist movement had become more aggressive and its party, the National Order Party, openly rejected reforms and Kemalism.¹⁰ On the other hand, Çağlar Kırçak and Bozkur Güvenç et al., claimed that the Islamist element was more overpowering than the Turkish element. It was the power of the Islamists who wanted to abolish the secular republic and create an Islamic state based upon the Shariah. The Junta encouraged and supported the Islamists because they saw Islam as the antidote to all forms of left-wing politics.¹¹

Upon reviewing the extant literature pertaining to my dissertation's focal point, I discerned two prevalent issues: firstly, a tendency among researchers to narrow their analysis

İlhan Başgöz and Howard Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk* (Ankara: Dost Yayınevi, 1968), 61–86.

⁶ Oğuzhan Göksel, *Assessing the Turkish Model: The Modernization Trajectory of Türkiye through the Lens of the Multiple Modernities Paradigm* (Durham: Durham University School of Government and International Affairs, 2015), 26; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Türkiye* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 265–72.

⁷ Oya Baydar, "Sınıfsal Açından Köy Enstitüleri," *Yeni Toplum* (1976): 19–21.

⁸ Elifcan Karacan, *Remembering the 1980 Turkish Military Coup d'État: Memory, Violence, and Trauma* (Berlin: Springer, 2015), 99–107; Hasan Gönder and Gülbahar Konak, "Muhteva analizi yöntemiyle Türkiye'yi 1980 askeri darbesine götüren 1974-1980 arasındaki dönemin incelenmesi," *Turkish Studies- Historical Analysis* 16, no. 3 (2021): 282–7.

⁹ Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye'de Devletçilik* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2006), 41–72; Yahya Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisadi Tarihi* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1986), 121–7.

¹⁰ Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Türkiye* (London: Routledge, 1993), 147.

¹¹ Çağlar Kırçak, *Türkiye'de Gericilik 1950-1990* (Ankara: İmge Yayınları, 1993), 75–89; Bozkurt Güvenç, *Türk-İslam Sentezi* (İstanbul: Sarmal Yayınları, 1991), 33–4.

to a single aspect of the matter, and secondly, a general lack of acknowledgment of the rural factor's significant influence on Turkish modernization. My dissertation foregrounds the rural factor, particularly highlighting the transformative power of the Village Institutes (VIs) — schools instituted in rural regions to cultivate a new generation of rural teachers. This emphasis on the VIs are not merely for their historical role but also for what they represent — the profound importance of the rural dimension in the process of Turkish modernization, which represented more than 75 percent of the population until 1960. These VIs signified a significant effort to modernize rural life and uplift rural conditions. However, the onset of mass migration from rural areas to urban centers around 1960 led to a diminished focus on rural areas, resulting in their increased neglect. This neglect hampered the broad-based implementation of Turkish modernization and led rural areas to become hubs of resistance against modernization and its associated reforms.¹² Moreover, my research posits that this systemic neglect finds its roots in a longstanding paradigm shared by the Ottoman Empire and the modern Turkish State, which saw villagers more as a resource for taxes and military recruitment than as participants in nation-building.¹³ By centering my dissertation on the VIs, I aim to underline the necessity of recognizing and addressing the rural dimension for a comprehensive understanding and successful implementation of Turkish modernization.

Although in the early Turkish republican historiography, the regime introduced itself as "a new, independent modern nation-state that has cut off its ties with the past,"¹⁴ it is obvious that the national consciousness was still not adopted by the peasants¹⁵ and religion was still a strong actor in the villages compared to the secular cities in the country;¹⁶ and the situation and conditions of the rural areas has not improved. For this reason, in this study, Turkish modernization has been examined by taking the rural areas and the villagers to the center without ignoring other factors.

To reveal the importance of the rural factor and its effect on Turkish modernization, the VIs, which is the most comprehensive and effective initiative that has been carried out in rural areas of Türkiye, has been examined in this study. Although VIs were short-lived— it lasted between 1940 to 1954— it has improved the social, economic and cultural conditions of rural areas and educated more than 25 thousand rural teachers and educators who could work

¹² Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İkinci Adam* (Ankara: Remzi Kitabevi, 1988), 320.

¹³ Baha Mutlu Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması* (Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık, 2018), 17.

¹⁴ Emin Fuat Keyman, "Modernization, Globalization," *Constellations* 17, no. 2 (2010): 315–21.

¹⁵ Emin Fuat Keyman, *The Good Governance of Türkiye* (İstanbul: Bilgi University Publications, 2008), 34–62.

¹⁶ Asım Karaömerlioğlu, *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2021), 113–37.

in a versatile way. These teachers organized and formed rural intellectuals and made a great contribution to the modernization process of the country.

Interpretations of Village Institutes' History

When the studies on VIs in the literature are analyzed, the existence of two opposing views and arguments will be seen. To summarize the views and arguments for VIs:

Critical analysis on VIs

Some of the researchers, among those Filiz Meşeci Giorgetti, Halil Fikred Kanad, Emin Soysal et al., argued that VIs could not deliver what was expected due to the short-lived existence period, and could not make a considerable contribution to the development of rural areas and villagers.¹⁷ Differently from this view, leftist Kemal Tahir saw the VIs as the epitome of Kemalist populism at its height.¹⁸ In support of this argument, Karaömerlioğlu stated that VIs students were expected to vote for Republican People's Party (CHP) after graduation¹⁹ and for Giorgetti, since VIs were exposed to political interference by the single party regime and spread the government's policies and ideology involuntarily.²⁰

Contrary to this view, Ortaç and Vexliard argued that VIs were accused of developing a revolutionary mentality among students. The villagers criticized the new teachers, graduates of VIs, saying that they didn't show a good example from a religious standpoint.²¹ The right-wingers, among those Emin Soysal and Halil Fikred Kanad, who set off from these views, made the VIs scapegoats for their political aims and anti-communist hysteria.²²

Also, some Turkish anti-communists argued that because there were similarities between the Turkish and the Soviet educational system, the VIs project were a communist

¹⁷ Filiz Meşeci Giorgetti, "Training Village Children As Village Teachers For Village Work: The Turkish Village Institutes," *History of Education Review* 38, no. 2 (2009): 52–4; Emin Soysal, *İlk Öğretim Olayları ve Köy Enstitüleri* (Bursa: Uygun Basımevi, 1945), 38–49.

¹⁸ Baydar, "Sınıfsal Açıdan Köy Enstitüleri," 19–20; Engin Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç* (İstanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1970), 33.

¹⁹ Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no. 1 (1998): 69–72.

²⁰ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 44.

²¹ Alexandre Vexliard and Kemal Aytaç, "The Village Institutes in Türkiye," *Comparative Education Review* 8, no. 1 (1964): 45.

²² Komünizme ve Komünistlere karşı Türk basını, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Koç Federasyonu İçyüzleri* (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1966), 25–83.

conspiracy.²³ However, Karaömerlioğlu proved in his article that this accusation was unfounded.²⁴

Nureddin Ergin, on the other hand, claimed that the VIs had done no contribution to rural areas or people, and moreover it harmed the health of the students due to the harsh working conditions, that the administrators and teachers were inexperienced, and that these institutions were too costly for the state. He portrayed the VIs as amateur operations.²⁵ Lastly, for Nureddin Topçu, the VIs were actually patterned on the theories of Kerchensteiner, citing the idea of education for production through work school in which Tonguç has adopted in VIs. In this respect, to him, this organization, which is alien to Türkiye, cannot ever spark a Turkish renaissance.²⁶

Positive evaluations of the VIs

Proponents of VIs, while accepting the necessities and shortcomings of realizing the project, argued that the idea of self-sufficiency of villages sounded reasonable. The strongest supporter, Engin Tonguç, was İsmail Hakkı Tonguç's son and his arguments were based on a social activist framework. To him, VIs were the response of the rural people to a critical problem unique to Türkiye. These schools mitigated rural underdevelopment and brought fundamental social change to the villages. According to Tonguç, VIs should not be viewed only in terms of education, but primarily to what extent they slowed down the exploitation of rural Anatolia by Türkiye's privileged class.²⁷

Sadık Kartal claimed that the VIs system contributed to eliminating the gender inequality between men and women, and supported these claims with the numerical data on the literacy rates he had published.²⁸ Türkoğlu supports this view and claimed that VIs fundamentally demolished inequality of opportunity.²⁹ Furthermore, Yılmaz stated that VIs were learner-centered institutions, that these institutions were an invaluable tool in realizing the most important goals of democratic education, and that a paradigm shift had taken place

²³ Komünizme ve Komünistlere karşı Türk basını, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Koç Federasyonu İçyüzleri*, 64.

²⁴ Karaömerlioğlu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 66.

²⁵ Nureddin Ergin, *Arifiye Öğretmen Okulu ve Tarihçesi* (İstanbul: Sakarya Sosyal Araştırma Merkezi, 1968), 105–21.

²⁶ Nurettin Topçu, *Türkiye'nin Maarif Davası* (İstanbul: Hareket Yayınevi, 1960), 55–91.

²⁷ Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç*, 89–151.

²⁸ Sadık Kartal, "Toplum kalkınmasında farklı bir eğitim kurumu: Köy Enstitüleri," *Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 4, no. 1 (2008): 28.

²⁹ Pakize Türkoğlu, "Dünden bugüne eğitimimiz ve Köy Enstitüleri," *Abece* 80 (1993): 23–5.

in these institutions, from "top-down" to "bottom-up."³⁰ Lastly, Pedro Orata asserted that the VIs could be role models for countries that build primary education from scratch.³¹

When the studies on VIs in the literature are evaluated, the following points draw attention. First, the formation of two opposite sides in the studies regarding VIs reveals that these institutions have not been sufficiently understood and could not be evaluated impartially by most of the researchers. Second, VIs were generally discussed under the name of village schools and mostly only the educational aspect of these institutions³² is emphasized. However, VIs were far more than an educational undertaking. For this reason, in this dissertation, other aspects of these institutions, such as modernization, professionalization, democratization, pedagogical and production-oriented education, were also examined.

VIs have emerged with the support of the regime and evolved over time, which turned into a structure that went beyond the regime's expectations and even confronted the regime in some cases. Although it was short-lived, the VIs educated approximately 25 thousand teachers and educators, organized and formed a rural intellectual group. My scholarly pursuit involves assessing the degree to which these organizations have facilitated the transformation and modernization of rural communities in Türkiye.

Rethinking these argumentations, the main questions of the research may be the following:

1. Can alternative theories be developed that challenge the established perspectives on the incomplete process of Turkish modernization within the education system?
2. What was the effect of the dual education system, traditional *madrasahs*, and Western-style modern schools in the Ottoman Empire on the republican regime? Can the factionalism within the party, as proposed by various scholars, be indicative of wider societal divisions?
3. Could there be alternative insights be developed on the role of VIs in Turkish modernization, and how might these contrast with the traditional teacher's training schools?

³⁰ Kaya Yılmaz, "Democracy through learner-centered education: A Turkish perspective," *International Review of Education* 55, no.1 (2009): 23–30.

³¹ Pedro Orata, "Facts, problems and progress of education in the world of today," *International review of education* 4, no. 1 (1960): 7.

³² Necdet Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma Hareketinin," *Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 9, no. 35 (2005): 269–70; Çiğdem Erdem, "Cumhuriyet Yönetiminin," *Gazi Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 10, no. 3 (2008): 193–6.

4. How did the VIs swiftly nurture a unique group of rural intellectuals? What motivated this group, were their goals accomplished, and what was their impact on the nation's modernization and professionalization?

5. Does the discontinuation of the VIs align with certain interruptions in the Turkish modernization process?

6. What were the responses of different societal groups — such as villagers, landlords and rural notables, intellectuals, state officials, military, etc. — to the VIs? What were their anticipations, interests, or apprehensions?

The aim of this study is to introduce VIs, which were designed according to the characteristics of rural areas and have achieved great success in a very short time since I believe that VIs can be a symbol and a model for the rural transformation of developing countries. Also, I aim to explain the connection between the collapse of VIs and the failure of Turkish revolution and the modernizing reforms of the Kemalists. Because the actors and dynamics that led to the VIs' destruction have also produced regular disruptions in Turkish modernization.

Methodology

This study is historical research prepared using qualitative research methods. Bill McDowell defined historical research in his book *Historical Research: A Guide* as follows:

"Historical research represents a systematic enquiry into the past and an attempt to separate true from fictionalized accounts of historical events, based upon the examination of a wide range of relevant source material."³³

Qualitative research, on the other hand, can be defined as research in which qualitative data collection techniques such as observation, interview and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a natural environment in a realistic and holistic way.³⁴ Qualitative research is a method that adopts an interpretative approach to examine the research problem based on an interdisciplinary holistic perspective. The facts and events on which the research is conducted are handled in their own context and interpreted in terms of the meanings that people attribute to them.³⁵

³³ Bill McDowell, *Historical Research: A Guide for Writers of Dissertations, Theses, Articles and Books* (London: Routledge, 2002), 73–9.

³⁴ Ali Yıldırım and Hasan Şimşek, *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri* (Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık, 2008), 39.

³⁵ Remzi Altunışık, Recai Coşkun and Engin Yıldırım, *Sosyal Bilimlerde Araştırma Yöntemleri SPSS Uygulamalı* (Sakarya: Sakarya Yayıncılık, 2010), 301–5.

This study focuses on the rural factor, which I claim is effective in the failure or non-completion of Türkiye's modernization process. Since rural areas have lost the government's attention since 1960, when an intense migration from rural to urban areas began, the initiatives carried out in the field of education in rural areas until 1960 and the policies of the state towards rural areas were examined. The following sources and methods were used to collect data related to this study:

The personal archive of İsmail Hakkı Tonguç

This dissertation largely benefits from İsmail Hakkı Tonguç's personal archive, of which approximately 1400 documents that were divided into 11 categories are used.

Hence, first, I would like to introduce İsmail Hakkı Tonguç and explain the importance of his documents that have been used in this PhD study.

İsmail Hakkı Tonguç is the founder and developer of the VIs initiative, and worked as the General Director of Primary Education during 1935-1946. He was also a painting-handicraft teacher. Coming of a rural origin and after helping his father in agriculture for a while, he went to Istanbul (coming up against his father) to study, and by begging for days at the door of Minister of Education, Şükrü Bey, he persuaded him to give the opportunity to be educated. With the help of Şükrü Bey, Tonguç was sent to Kastamonu Teachers' Training School for free and after his graduation, he passed the exam of the Ministry of Education to select the people to be sent to education abroad, and he studied in Karlsruhe-Ettingen, Germany. Tonguç, who is closely interested in the education problem in rural areas, has conducted various research on the subject, made examinations abroad and written books.

The reason why the documents in his archive in relation to the subject of this study and Tonguç himself are important is that he is the architect of the VIs. With this initiative, Tonguç has mediated to provide education for more than 20 thousand teacher candidates in a short period of six years. Also, these sources have special value, especially because the documents in the Ministry of Education have vanished due to a fire incident, the significance of Tonguç's documents is beyond argument.

When İsmail Hakkı Tonguç passed away in 1960, his archive was kept as secret by his son Engin Tonguç and was not shared with anyone due to the socio-political conjuncture of the period.

Following the methodical categorization of the comprehensive Tonguç archive, an assemblage of approximately fifty thousand pages and roughly 1400 unique documents was delineated. These were organized systematically under 18 overarching categories, each

further subdivided into specific subheadings. In adherence to scholarly rigor, a detailed and systematic selection procedure was employed to sift out content not aligned with the primary research objectives. The process commenced with an initial assessment to eliminate materials beyond the stipulated research timeframe and to identify redundant content. In the subsequent phase, each document underwent a rigorous evaluation, gauging its potential relevance to the central research inquiries. Priority was accorded to documents characterized by profound analytical depth, exhaustive data, and significant contextual resonance. Criteria of authenticity and credibility were paramount; any material of questionable origin or veracity was discarded. In situations where documents offered overlapping insights on analogous topics, a comparative analysis was conducted to select the most illustrative content. After this exhaustive appraisal, only 15-20% of the total collection was deemed directly relevant and merited an intensive analysis for inclusion in this dissertation.

In addition, all the works done in the Institutes, village trips, and the process from the establishment of the institutes to their demolition were photographed and these photographs, expressed in tens of thousands, are also included in Tongu's archive. The photographs reveal the finest detail of what happened in that period, village life, and the education and working life of the institute students.

On the website of the foundation, Engin Tongu explains the reason why these documents were under his auspices for a long time:

"During these protracted years, characterized by coups, political conflicts, and vilifications, my primary concern has been to safeguard the integrity of the archive. The aim was to prevent its dissolution, maintaining it in its entirety for the benefit of future generations. Ideally, these documents and photographs should be housed in a secured location such as a library, university, or an educational institution, where they can be conserved and scrutinized. This would be the standard procedure in any civilized country. Unfortunately, due to the lack of stability and security locally, this has not been possible. Consequently, I have taken it upon myself to protect these documents throughout these years. Simultaneously, with the escalating interest from the press and the general public toward the VIs, there has been a growing demand for information. Accordingly, it was imperative to utilize these documents, letters, and pictures to fulfill this requirement."³⁶

³⁶ Engin Tongu, "İsmail Hakkı Tongu BelgeliĐi Vakfının KuruluĐu," accessed March 23, 2021, <http://www.tongucvakfi.org.tr/vakf305n-kurulu351u.html>

For this reason, various studies were initiated, and in 2004 it was planned to transfer the documents to the electronic environment, to protect them and for the public to use and benefit from them.

It has been seen that this process, which seemed easy, was actually not that easy. Because most of the classified documents were also related to another document; therefore, the need to make a new classification emerged. In short, the argument arose that the archive had to be reorganized almost from the beginning. Due to this situation, the sharing of these documents with the public has been delayed. The official establishment of the foundation took place on March 29, 2011. Following an extensive categorization process, a majority of the documents were made available to the public a few years subsequent to this date.

However, based on the foundation's principles, making a request for a document does not mean that it will be accessible. It is necessary to fill in a few forms, specify the purpose of using the documents and convince the foundation. This is, in fact, one of the factors that caused the documents not to be disseminated and yet to be used in academic research. Foundation executives state that the reason for taking such measures is to eliminate non-serious researchers. In this context, while the most substantial number of documents previously granted by the foundation to researchers had been 35, during my initial visit to the foundation in August 2020, I requested access to 40 documents, consisting of approximately 2500 pages, and was granted access to all of them. This unprecedented access can be attributed to the foundation's recognition of my serious research intent, the promising cooperation I established with the archivist, Mrs. Nuray Aktay, and the board of trustees, who have closely monitored and supported my work. This has provided a significant advantage in my research. The utilization of documents and photographs from Tongu's archive, which hitherto have not been featured in any reputable academic study, aims to fill the existing gap in the literature and shed light on this obscure historical period. This constitutes one of the primary objectives of the present study.

Also, the books written by İsmail Hakkı Tongu, the books written by Engin Tongu about his father and the institutes, the two books published by the Ministry of National Education, the six issues of the Journal of Village Institutes and the memories of the institute directors and students are also accepted as primary sources and used in this study. On the other hand, I tried to confirm the data I obtained from the documents in Tongu's personal archive by comparing them with the relevant data in the books that I accepted as the primary source and mentioned above. In case of any contradictions, I found in a document or book, I

rather did not use these data in the dissertation to ensure the security of the source and to convey the correct information.

Interview

To provide a variety of data on the subject, I interviewed the graduates of VIs who became a part of these institutions and closely witnessed the developments afterwards. The premise behind using interviews as a data-gathering technique is that the participants' viewpoints are significant, and they could have an impact to shape the research³⁷ since they are the ones who witnessed the history. To briefly define the interview, it is a data collection technique in which the participants in the research sample actively explain their knowledge, feelings and thoughts about the research topic and tell their life stories.³⁸

Given the depth and detail required for the interviews, the number of participants was deliberately kept to six. The selection of these participants was based on a set of carefully determined criteria. First, I tried to choose the interviewees who were educated in different VIs and also, tried to select at least one person who was educated at Hasanođlan Higher VI. Their studying period was another criterion since VIs started to be undermined in 1946 to approach the issue from a holistic perspective, I tried to select interviewees studying both before and after 1946. The last criterion was gender. Despite my best efforts to achieve gender balance in the respondents, I encountered some challenges in obtaining female graduates because the ratio of women enrolling in institutions was only approximately 7-8% and a lot of time had passed since the establishment of the institutes. Therefore, I conducted the interview with 2 female and 4 male graduates.

I asked the interviewees questions under three categories. First, some personal questions to introduce the interviewee. Second, questions regarding the interviewee's opinion on the VIs such as his view of the institutes' curricula, the principle of on-the-job training, whether s/he considers the VIs a successful initiative or not, the reason for the closure of institutes etc. In the last category, questions about the profession of village teachers whether there were any differences compared to the teacher's training college or not, his/her work in villages after graduation and whether this work was hindered due to the communist

³⁷ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Method* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990), 213–30.

³⁸ Irving Seidman, *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2006), 9–14.

propaganda, and finally his/her opinion on the differences between the village teacher and the village trainer etc., were asked.

Although the questions were prepared systematically and carefully, the conditions and preferences of the interviewees mostly determined the course of the interviews, since I conducted a semi-structured interview. In the interview, the interviewer has prepared the questions in advance but provides partial flexibility to the interviewee during the interview. The interviewer allows for questions to be rearranged or for discussion on the relevant topic if necessary. In this way, an environment is created in which the interviewees have a say in the research practice.

It was difficult to conduct face-to-face interviews, especially in these days when we have been experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic and people have stayed at home for months to avoid human interaction to not catch the virus. For this reason, I informed the interviewees that we could do the interview face-to-face, online or by a method they preferred. Ahmet Usta and Hayri Dođan agreed to make the interview face-to-face, and I travelled to their cities of residence and conducted the interview. Mahmut Koç and Sabriye Yaşar stated that they want to conduct the interview online, and I interviewed at their convenient time.

Pakize Türkođlu asked me to send the questions by courier and wrote the answers on the papers and sent them back to me. Since she did not know how to use technological tools, I found it appropriate to use this method. Tahsin Yücel, on the other hand, found it appropriate to write answers to my questions and send them to me by e-mail. Since the interview can be done face-to-face, over the phone or by other technological means,³⁹ and we are going through extraordinary days, I accepted their requests. The interviewees that we interviewed face-to-face or online did not want to see the questions beforehand. Noting that the interviews and their outputs will be used in my doctoral study, I obtained a signed permission document from the interviewees and submitted it in the appendix.

Finally, the study incorporated and thoroughly investigated from a critical perspective the secondary materials that were prepared based on research and provided original arguments and analysis.

³⁹ Yıldırım and Şimşek, *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, 71–7.

Analysis of Data

Document Analysis

This study made use of an extensive archive, consisting of approximately 50,000 pages of documents. Given the multitude of available publications considered as primary sources on the topic, a document analysis method was deployed to categorize the data and discern the most significant pieces of information. Document analysis, according to Creswell, is the careful scanning of written documents containing information connected to the subject, as well as the development of new integrity from this information.⁴⁰ For Bowen, on the other hand, the researcher's interpretation of documents or written sources gives voice and meaning to an assessment topic.⁴¹

Document analysis, which involves the literature review on the researched subject, organizes a systematization of the researcher's observation and interview records and other documents.⁴² While this analytical method saves the researcher time and other resources, it also makes it easier to prioritize the studied facts and events, classify data sources, and create new data sets.⁴³

Content Analysis

Content analysis was utilized to carefully investigate the material acquired from interviews, documents, and written works on the subject, with an inductive analysis concentrating on the origins of a chronic problem in Türkiye and dealing with the issue holistically.

The purpose of content analysis is to discover patterns, themes, biases, and meanings related to the core of the research.⁴⁴ The collected data — whether from interviews, observations, or document evaluations — undergoes a meticulously structured analytical process. This process commences with data coding, progresses to the pinpointing of codes,

⁴⁰ John Creswell, *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative* (New Jersey: Pearson, 2002), 174–85.

⁴¹ Glenn Bowen, "Document analysis as a qualitative research method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27–9.

⁴² Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln, "Competing paradigms in qualitative research," *Handbook of qualitative research* 2, no. 105 (1994): 169–74.

⁴³ Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack, "Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers," *The qualitative report* 13, no. 4 (2008): 547–55.

⁴⁴ Kathleen Carley, "Content analysis," in *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. R. E. Asher (Edinburgh: Pergamon Press, 1990), 726–8.

categories, and themes, and subsequently, to the arrangement of these identified elements. The final stage encompasses the explication and delineation of the resultant findings.⁴⁵

The collected data is the subject of the content analysis; codes are extracted from events and facts that are frequently repeated in the data set or that the participant stresses extensively. Comparable and related facts (codes) are understood by placing them within the context of particular concepts (categories) and themes, moving from codes to categories and then to themes.⁴⁶

Comparative-historical analysis

The seventh section of this study contrasted the Hungarian foundation Eötvös József Collegium and the Turkish institution Hasanoğlu Higher VI using comparative-historical analysis approach.

Comparative-historical analysis is a social science method that investigates historical events in order to establish explanations that are valid beyond a particular time and place, either by direct comparison to other historical events, theory development, or connection to the current day.⁴⁷

According to Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, comparative historical analysis is a long-term intellectual effort that explains substantively meaningful processes and outcomes through systematic and contextualized comparisons.⁴⁸

Many similarities have been found between these two organizations, which were founded at different times for similar problems in different countries and for distinct reasons and were closed about the same time as the new world order emerged. This dissertation employs the comparative-historical analysis method to demonstrate the similarities between these two organizations.

⁴⁵ Gunther Eysenbach and Christian Köhler, "How do consumers search for and appraise health information on the world wide web? Qualitative study using focus groups, usability tests, and in-depth interviews," *Bmj* 32, no. 7337 (2002): 574–6.

⁴⁶ Mariette Bengtsson, "How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis," *Nursing Plus Open* 2 (2016): 9–13.

⁴⁷ Michael Bernhard and Daniel O'Neill, "Comparative Historical Analysis," *Perspectives on Politics* 19, no. 3 (2021): 700–3.

⁴⁸ James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, "Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8–23.

The logic of the argumentation

This study consists of six parts. The first part was planned as the background of the thesis and focused on Türkiye's pre-1930 period -the Ottoman period and the first years of the modern Turkish state, these two periods were examined together, since there was no serious change in the socio-economic and cultural situation of the rural areas. As the foundations of the set of problems were laid in this period, this past has been discussed in detail to better understand the issue and its origin.

The second part of the study focuses on the decade from 1930-1940, analyzing significant rural developments and initiatives. These changes in the 1930s shifted the regime's focus to rural areas, paving the way for the VIs in 1940. This section also discusses the establishment of the VIs, including parliamentary debates, criticisms, aims, and legislative aspects. The study then details the specific conditions leading to the creation of the 14 VIs.

In the third part, how the VIs were organized and how these institutions functioned were explained. The selection process of the students is examined and the impressions of the students on the first day they came to the institute are conveyed. Subsequently, the VIs curriculum and the criticisms made to this curriculum are examined. Afterwards, some important laws related to VIs passed after 1940 are discussed. Finally, the various contributions of VIs to rural areas and villagers are discussed.

In the fourth part, the values and principles that made the VIs unique and special, the principle of integration of work with education, the principle of democratic education, the boarding co-education and cooperative system, and the criticisms against them are discussed.

In the fifth part, Hasanoğlan Higher VI and the Hungarian Eötvös József Collegium were compared in various aspects. The reason for making such a comparison is that these two institutions, which were established in different countries at different times, provided qualified education at the higher education level and trained new intellectual/elite teachers in their countries. Despite some differences, there are many similar points between these two institutions, and both have positively affected the development and modernization of their countries. In this section, I aim to reveal these similarities and to examine the contributions of these organizations to their respective countries.

In the last part, the dissolution process of the VIs, how the bipolar order formed after the end of the WWII affected Türkiye, the transition to the multi-party system in 1946 and the accusations made against the VIs are analyzed.

Chapter 1

1. Theoretical Framework

1.1 Modern, modernity and Modernization

The term "modern," which literally means "new and contemporary," emphasizes characteristics specific to a certain time period.⁴⁹ The Latin word "modernus," which gives the notion its original meaning, indicates the rejection of paganism and the commencement of Christianity.⁵⁰ Swingewood defines modernity as a complex process that results in the emergence of a new type of society through economic, political, and cultural development and transformation.⁵¹

Modernization refers to a social structure that is fundamentally different from the feudal structure that existed in Western Europe from the 17th century to the end of the twentieth century and was transformed as a result of economic, political, socio-cultural, and intellectual developments. This new civilization, which arose as a result of dramatic advances in science, economics, and politics, has also been seen as a measure of growth and development.⁵² Simply expressed, modernization refers to a "backward" civilization's endeavors to acquire a higher level of civilization than itself.⁵³ Modernization, according to this concept, is a comprehensive process of social change that occurs organically or as a result of external factors.⁵⁴

As can be understood from here, modernization is a phenomenon interwoven with progress and the modernity of developed Western nations. This situation has highlighted the issue of modernization in non-Western countries. The primary reason for this is that modernization processes in Western and non-Western nations differ. The transition from tradition to modernity in Western countries occurred largely spontaneously over a 400-year span. In other words, internal dynamics have been effective in the West's modernization.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Halis Çetin, *Modernleşme Krizi, İdeoloji ve Ütopya Arasında Türkiye* (Ankara: Orion Yayınevi, 2007), 66.

⁵⁰ Jürgen Habermas, "Modernlik: Tamamlanmamış Bir Proje," in *Post-modernizm*, ed. Necmi Zeka (İstanbul: Kıyı Yayınları, 1994), 31–32.

⁵¹ Alan Swingewood, *Sosyolojik Düşüncenin Kısa Tarihi* (Ankara: Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları, 1998), 9.

⁵² Çağlar M. Kurttaş, "Osmanlı Modernleşme Sürecinde Aydınlar ve Bürokrasinin Rolü," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 29, no. 1 (2019): 400.

⁵³ Metin Heper, *Modernleşme ve Bürokrasi* (Ankara: Türk Sosyal Bilimler Derneği Yayınları, 1973), 17.

⁵⁴ Murat Baran, "Avrupa'da Gelişen Modernlik ve Modernleşme Anlayışları ve Bu Anlayışların Türkiye'ye Yansımalarına Tarihi Sosyolojik Açından Bir Bakış," *Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 8, no. 11 (2013): 58–9.

⁵⁵ Levent Köker, *Modernleşme, Kemalizm ve Demokrasi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 50–2.

The concept of "non-Western modernity" emerges in response to the conventional understanding of modernization, which has historically been intertwined with the trajectory of Western European societies. In essence, modernization in the West evolved from a transformative shift from feudal structures, largely induced by organic, internal dynamics over approximately 400 years, encompassing profound changes in various realms, including economics, politics, and socio-cultural paradigms. This comprehensive metamorphosis was both spontaneous and internally-driven, informed by the unique socio-historical circumstances of Western Europe.⁵⁶

Contrastingly, non-Western societies, including Türkiye, faced the daunting challenge of pursuing modernization within drastically shorter timeframes and under significant external pressures. In these contexts, the journey to modernity was not solely a product of intrinsic societal evolution but was often catalyzed by the aspiration to emulate or adapt Western models of development. Herein lies the essence of "non-Western modernity" — an endeavor to achieve modernization that, while inspired by the West, also seeks to carve out an independent trajectory grounded in the distinct internal dynamics and histories of non-Western nations.⁵⁷

Türkiye provides a compelling case study in this discourse. While it took cues from Western models, Turkish modernization was not a mere mimicry of Western modernity. Instead, shaped by its unique socio-cultural and historical context, Türkiye sought a modernity that was reflective of its identity and internal dynamics. As Eisenstadt articulates, the outcome was a "Turkish modernity" rather than a mere replication of Western modernity. This suggests that Türkiye's path of development exemplifies a specific and unique iteration of "non-Western modernity," characterized by both Western inspirations and indigenous influences.⁵⁸

1.2 Historical development of modernization in Türkiye

In Western Europe, the trajectory of modernization was influenced by a series of interconnected factors: the emergence of a personally free and autonomous individual during the 16th and 17th centuries, the establishment of a modern, civilized societal framework, and the ripple effects of historical milestones, including Enlightenment philosophies, the French

⁵⁶ Vural Karagül, "Osmanlı Türk modernleşme sürecinde mülki idare ve mülki idare amirliği" (PhD diss., Bursa Uludağ, 2013), 10–2.

⁵⁷ Baran, "Avrupa'da Gelişen Modernlik," 71.

⁵⁸ İlber Ortaylı, *The Nature of Traditional Society: Türkiye Political Modernization in Japan and Türkiye* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 199.

Revolution, and the advent of industrialization. Conversely, in the Ottoman Empire, modernization manifested as a unique process, shaped predominantly by the interplay of its intrinsic socio-political dynamics and the pressures exerted by external entities. Tourain claimed that modernization "did not come from within" because irrational political and cultural forces had an impact on Türkiye's modernization process.⁵⁹ Nişancı agrees with this viewpoint and believes that, while Turkish institutions can be considered modern in terms of their appearances, there is a continuity with the past in terms of the understanding and mentality that govern how these institutions operate.⁶⁰

Ortaylı, on the other hand, stated that modernization in Türkiye began as a result of an internal decision rather than an external influence. Indeed, when one examines the three-century history of modernization from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Türkiye, one can argue that the modernization movement generally originated "from inside" as a response to imperial problems, compelled by the sultan or civil and military intellectuals.⁶¹

The background of Ottoman modernization is the understanding that the West has technological supremacy as a result of military setbacks, and the Ottomans began to turn to the West in attempt to catch up to the West in terms of progress. This tendency began at the beginning of the nineteenth century, during the reign of Selim the Third (1789-1807). Because modernization studies are mostly focused on the military and are frequently halted, a substantial portion of the literature concentrates on more comprehensive modernization efforts of Mahmud the Second (1808-1839).⁶² However, Selim the Third, who lost his throne and his life in the fight against the resistance forces, established a body of new troops entirely trained in the European style, which is significant because it took the empire's most difficult step toward modernization. I believe it is fair to say that modernization studies began under his reign.

However, military advancements were just one facet of the empire's larger modernization canvas. As the empire increasingly recognized the benefits of a Western-style administrative structure, there was a pressing need to nurture a bureaucracy proficient in Western administrative norms while retaining core Ottoman values. Addressing this requirement, the state initiated the establishment of Western-style schools. The objective was

⁵⁹ Alain Touraine, *Modernliğin Eleştirisi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004), 340–3.

⁶⁰ Engin Yıldırım, "Anthony Giddens'in Yapılanma Teorisi," *Bilgi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 1 (1999): 27–31.

⁶¹ Ortaylı, *The Nature of Traditional Society*, 137.

⁶² Rüya Telli and Aşenur Yılmaz, "Geç Dönem Osmanlı Modernleşmesine Genel Bir Bakış," *Liberal Düşünce Dergisi* 25, no. 100 (2020): 13–9.

twofold: to imbue the younger generation with contemporary knowledge and, crucially, to prepare them for roles in the newly evolving bureaucratic machinery.

Ebubekir Ceylan, in examining this transition, emphasizes the intertwined nature of the Ottoman educational reforms and state apparatus modernization. He posits that the first civil and secular primary and secondary schools weren't simply academic establishments; they were strategic institutions. Their *raison d'être*, according to Ceylan, was to produce cadres tailored for the revamped bureaucracy. This perspective underscores the instrumental role education played in the empire's broader modernization narrative, with schools serving as crucibles where the future pillars of the Ottoman administrative system were molded.⁶³

Mahmut the Second later used the new army to defeat the anti-reformist Janissaries. Sultan Mahmut replaced the corrupt Janissaries at the beginning of the nineteenth century with a restructured and modernized army model known as the "Assakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye" (the victorious Mohammedan Soldiers). Military reforms were followed by social and political reforms.⁶⁴

1.3 Ruptures in Turkish Modernization

Modernization theory in Türkiye has been studied in the literature using the notion of continuity and disconnection thesis.⁶⁵ Researchers such as Fuat Keyman, Bedia Akarsu, Yılmaz Altuğ, Toktamış Ateş, and Suna Kili, among others, who defend the disconnection thesis, base their claims on the fact that a state structure that had existed for centuries completely collapsed in 1923, and a new state was established after the loss of independence;⁶⁶ researchers such as Aykut Kansu, Bernard Lewis, Çağlar Keyder, and Korkut Boratav, who defend the continuity thesis, emphasize institutional, organizational and cultural continuities in the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Türkiye as a natural

⁶³ Ebubekir Ceylan, "An analysis of History of Turkish Education: Sources, Pioneers and Approaches," In: Paolo Bianchini – Roberto Sani (ed.), *Textbooks and Citizenship in Modern and Contemporary Europe*, Bern, 2016, pp. 73–91.

⁶⁴ Kemal Karpat, *An Inquiry into the Social Foundations of Nationalism in the Ottoman State: from Social Estates to Classes, from Millets to Nations* (Princeton: Center of International Studies, 1973), 61–6.

⁶⁵ Telli and Yılmaz, "Geç Dönem Osmanlı Modernleşmesine," 14.

⁶⁶ Bedia Akarsu, *Atatürk Devrimi ve Temelleri* (Ankara: İnkılâp Kitabevi, 1997), 43–52; Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 317–8; Yılmaz Altuğ, *Türk inkılâp tarihi: 1919-1938* (Ankara: Çağlayan kitabevi, 1992), 51–6; Toktamış Ateş, *Türk Devrim Tarihi* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1980), 23–35; Suna Kili, *Türk Devrim Tarihi* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2014), 211–35.

consequence of the modernization theory.⁶⁷ As detailed in the second section of this thesis, I accepted Turkish modernization on the basis of the continuity thesis.

However, I argue that there are some turning points (ruptures) in Turkish modernization as a result of internal or external factors, drawing on the literature's views and arguments that view this process as ruptures, and that these turning points change the country's modernization and modernization perception, too. According to Fuat Keyman's reasoning in his article, after each rupture, the country's vision and priorities toward modernization have shifted.⁶⁸

The first rupture occurred with the proclamation of the republic, and the objective of modernization was set as reaching the level of contemporary civilization. Since the Western civilization was regarded as the most civilized region,⁶⁹ civil bureaucrats and military elites equated this change with "a transformation of a traditional society into a modern society."⁷⁰ VIs arose in parallel with this goal and perspective. The goal was to ensure that the revolution and reforms that realized in cities was also spread to rural areas.

However, with the transition to parliamentary democracy in 1946, perceptions and objectives toward modernization shifted. With this rupture, Türkiye's modernization included a substantial reference to the issue of democratization. Despite recurrent regime breakdowns and democratic inadequacies, modern Türkiye's history has been and continues to be one of development with democratization since 1946.⁷¹

After the second rupture, the perception of modernization was equated with democratization, and the maintenance of the multi-party system, which was the emblem of this democratization at the time, became a priority. Despite widespread criticism of VIs before 1946, which grew in parallel with the perception of modernization, the CHP defended and preserved these institutions. The issue is further highlighted by the closure of these institutions in response to similar actors' objections following a change in the perception of modernization in 1946, which demonstrated that VIs were no longer in line with the period's modernization perception. The critics, the actors who voiced the criticism, and the country's ruling party did

⁶⁷ Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 1–30; Lewis, *The emergence of modern Türkiye*, 62–77; Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Türkiye: A Study in Capitalist Development* (New York: Verso, 1987), 165–76; Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi* (Ankara, İmge Kitabevi, 2008), 155–61.

⁶⁸ Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 317–8.

⁶⁹ Paul Dumont, "The origins of Kemalist ideology," in *Atatürk and the Modernization of Türkiye*, ed. J. M. Landau (Oxford: Routledge, 1984), 25–44.

⁷⁰ William Outwaite, *Modern Toplumsal Düşünce Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008), 504–7.

⁷¹ Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 318–20.

not change, but the country's view of modernization had altered. As a result, I contend that the closing of the VIs can be explained by a shift in perception of modernization in 1946.

Lastly, Keyman claims that more ruptures occurred with globalization in 1980 and Europeanization in 2000.⁷²

The fifth rupture in Türkiye occurred as a result of globalization that began in the 1980s, significantly impacting not only the economy but also culture and politics. Since then, globalization has played a pivotal role in Türkiye's process of modernization.⁷³ As a consequence, terms like minimal/effective state, free market rationality, and interaction have gained momentum and become increasingly important in the political sphere.

Turgut Özal's policies provide excellent illustrations of this phenomenon. His policies were grounded in reference to globalization, a critique of the strong state tradition, the encouragement of entrepreneurial individualism, the resurgence of identity-based disputes, the emergence of civil society, and a preference for liberal markets. Following the military coup, Özal established a new political party and attained power, surpassing the country's major political parties. By accurately predicting the direction of the rupture, Özal skillfully capitalized on this in politics to ascend to power. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) in the 2000s presents a similar argument. The AKP gained power in 2002 by aligning its policies with the sixth rupture, emphasizing globalization and Europeanization.⁷⁴

This indicates how deeply the catch-up modernizations were really exposed not only to the pressures of catching up, but also to the external alliance and different political considerations that intersected them.

1.4 Professionalization

Professionalization, like modernization, is a complex concept that researchers have interpreted differently. Professionalization is defined as a social process that transforms any occupation into a true "profession of the highest integrity and competence."⁷⁵

⁷² Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 317–21.

⁷³ Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 318.

⁷⁴ Ali Yaycıoğlu, "Restorasyon mu Yeniden Kuruluş mu," Oksijen Newspaper, accessed August 12, 2022, <https://gazeteoksijen.com/yazarlar/ali-yaycioglu/restorasyon-mu-yeniden-kurulus-mu-159340>

⁷⁵ Randall Collins, "Changing conceptions in the sociology of professions," in *The formation of professions: Knowledge, state and strategy*, ed. Rolf Torstendahl and Michael Burrage (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 94–102.

Larson saw professionalization as a movement from ancient societies — exclusiveness of traditional guilds and patronage abuses — to a more democratic framework.⁷⁶ Professionalization, on the other hand, is viewed as a type of social structure by Max Weber. Ritzer adds to this point, noting that Weber saw professionalization as a means not only of producing and delivering high-quality special services, but also of influencing our general ideas in a rationally based, open society. Afterwards, Talcott Parsons constructed an intricate structural-functional system based on these ideas. Professionalization was viewed as a pervasive ethos of reason in his perspective.⁷⁷ Furthermore, Bernstein saw the phenomena as a process that must constantly rebuild and renew itself. Otherwise, he believes, deprofessionalization is unavoidable.⁷⁸ Finally, Carr-Saunders and Wilson saw it as a stabilizing and liberating force in the face of increasing industrial and governmental bureaucracies.⁷⁹

In 1990, Collins formulated a classification for professionalization into two distinct types: the "Anglo-Saxon" and the "Continental European". The Continental model portrays the state as the primary actor in the professionalization process, while the Anglo-Saxon model characterizes self-employed practitioners as possessing autonomy.⁸⁰ According to Collins' conceptualization, Türkiye aligns more closely with the Continental model. Nevertheless, both models are examined in this study to determine their congruity with the professionalization trajectory observed in Türkiye.

Because Türkiye is regarded as a Continental model of a special kind of professionalization, it is no coincidence that the foundation of this project was supported by the state. This project, on the other hand, was able to implement democracy within the institute by ensuring equal participation and representation among directors, teachers, and students. All work at the institutes was done collaboratively,⁸¹ and weekly meetings were held to evaluate the work done during the week. Everyone, regardless of status, could publicly

⁷⁶ Magali Sarfatti Larson, "Professionalism: Rise and fall," *International Journal of Health Services* 9, no. 4 (1979): 608–12.

⁷⁷ Clive Kanes, *Elaborating Professionalism: Studies in Practice and Theory* (Los Angeles: Springer Science and Business Media, 2010), 4–5.

⁷⁸ Kanes, "Elaborating Professionalism," 185.

⁷⁹ Julia Evetts, "The concept of professionalism: Professional work, professional practice and learning," in *International handbook of research in professional and practice-based learning*, ed. Stephen Billett, Christian Harteis and Hans Gruber (Los Angeles: Springer, 2014), 35.

⁸⁰ Collins, *Changing conceptions in the sociology of professions*, 98.

⁸¹ Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1979), 54.

criticize - both positively and adversely. As a result, the institutes have their own autonomy and democracy.⁸²

1.5 The Relationship between Modernization and Professionalization

This dissertation's theoretical approach is based on the intertwined relationships between modernization and professionalization. I argue that there is a close relationship between professionalization and modernization, and that these two concepts have a direct impact on one another. Over the past several decades, several researchers have frequently regarded the majority of professions as the inevitable offspring of modernization's worldwide processes.⁸³

The fact that modernization became known as an important term in the globalized world and gained popularity in the West may have suggested that professionalization arose as a result of modernization. Indeed, it is accurate to state that in a majority of instances, the process of modernization has precipitated the emergence and development of professionalization. However, it is important noting that professionalization existed for centuries before democracy and modernization. Although they are not mutually dependent on each other, it has been noted in most countries that professionalization and modernization emerged and developed concurrently.⁸⁴

As in Türkiye, the introduction and development of professionalization has contributed to the construction of a multivocality environment and the development of modernization. However, as Durkheim claimed, the development of modernization may lead to political instability,⁸⁵ as it did in Türkiye in 1946, and because professionals of VIs could not survive in the country's transition period to democracy, they lost their partial autonomy and the process of de-professionalization of VIs (1946-1954) began, at least in the rural sector and especially concerning the VIs. Although there is a similar link between these two concepts, as demonstrated in the Turkish case, modernization could not contribute to professionalization in the same way due to the country's political environment and powerful its rural notables.

⁸² Fay Kirby, *Türkiye'de Köy Enstitüleri* (Ankara: Tarihçi Kitabevi, 2018), 264–5.

⁸³ Peter V. Meyers, "Primary schoolteachers in nineteenth-century France: A study of professionalization through conflict," *History of Education Quarterly* 25 (1985): 21.

⁸⁴ John Benton, "Trotula, Women's problems, and the professionalization of medicine in the Middle Ages," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 59, no. 1 (1985), 31–6.

⁸⁵ Emile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (Oxford: Routledge, 1992), 7–8.

1.6 Türkiye's Professionalization Process

Professionalization is a phenomenon that is generally connected with modernization; however, both were constantly interrupted in Türkiye. The professionalization of state-level, military-level, and teaching professions in Türkiye, as well as its impact on the country's modernization, is examined in following section.

1.6.1 Professionalization in state and military level in Türkiye

Professionalization and modernization in the Turkish military and state emerged and evolved at the same period and for the same causes. For this reason, their professionalization process has been investigated under the same topic.

The Ottoman Empire's wind of change began with the professionalization and modernization of the military. During the reign of Selim the Third, the establishment of military schools offering Western-style education, as well as the invitation of military-based consultants from countries such as Germany and France, resulted in the formation of a Western-style army called Nizam-ı Cedid. However, the reforms in the military field were suspended due to the revolt of the Janissaries and Sultan Selim the Third was killed for doing modernization work in the country.⁸⁶

The empire was regarded as the sultan's property at the state level during the Ottoman Empire's classical period (until 1839, the declaration of Tanzimat Edict). Although there were some important bureaucrats during this time, they were ineffective because they were nominated by the sultan, who held absolute power.⁸⁷ This situation began to alter with the Ottoman Empire's westernization movements, which began in the nineteenth century. Modern schools established to train bureaucrats are crucially significant during this period. The civil bureaucracy that were educated in these schools not only enabled the Ottoman Empire to introduce and implement Western reforms, but also extended its life by maintaining ties with Western great powers during the Ottoman Empire's dissolution process.⁸⁸ It can be argued that the modern civil and military schools that opened during this period created the groundwork for the regime transition that occurred in 1923 and the establishment of the modern state.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Kahraman Şakul, "Nizâm-ı Cedid düşüncesinde batılılaşma ve İslami modernleşme," *Divân: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi* 19 (2005): 127–30.

⁸⁷ Halil İnalçık, "Osmanlı Padişahı," *A.Ü. Siyasal Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 13, no. 4 (1958): 74.

⁸⁸ Muharrem Sevil, *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Modernleştiriciler* (İstanbul: Vadi Yayınları, 2005), 102–5.

⁸⁹ Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Türkiye*, 127.

The emergence of "Ayan" was another factor that accelerated bureaucratic professionalization. "Ayan" are city and town officials who supervise the relationship between the state administration and society. Taking advantage of the Ottomans' loss of control, these bureaucrats gained their dominance in the territories they were in over time and became a significant force against the central authority. The state had to recognize and acquiesce to this authority, which it could not control.⁹⁰ Because the Ayans implemented numerous administrative, military, and social reforms in the regions they ruled, it was assumed that these people became more powerful due to the reforms they implemented.

This is plainly stated in the Sened-Ittifak (Cooperation Agreement) signed in 1808. This pact was considered as a significant turning point in Ottoman-Turkish history, as a preliminary step of the transition to the parliamentary system, and for the first time, a group with certain rights and privileges alongside the Sultan was formed. The Ayan, according to Karpat, cleared the path for democracy in the Ottoman Empire.⁹¹

The most significant military reform under Mahmud the Second was the closure of the Janissary Division in 1826 and the foundation of a modern army.⁹² This circumstance resulted in the elimination of a traditional institution that had existed for almost 400 years and represented the old ideals that were the empire's main impediment to modernization and professionalization.⁹³

The most major developments toward modernization occurred in the field of bureaucracy during the Tanzimat period, and an attempt was made to construct a Western-style bureaucracy. Government offices began to be totally compared to Western bureaucratic organizations, and the internal arrangements of the palace and government offices began to be designed in a European style. Superior-subordinate relations were forged in the bureaucratic hierarchy, while the bureaucratic network extended, ministries were constituted, and new regulations were written, accompanied by a new administrative law.⁹⁴

The Tanzimat Period was a crucial period in establishing a provincial organization with specialized civil officials. However, it cannot be stated that the Ottoman Empire, which possessed vast lands, implemented these reforms equally throughout the country. The lack of a systematic policy to teach the employees who will implement the reforms, and thus a lack

⁹⁰ Şakul, "Nizâm-ı Cedid düşüncesinde batılılaşma," 133–6.

⁹¹ Kemal Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi: Sosyal, Kültürel, Ekonomik Temeller* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2010), 32–5.

⁹² Lewis, *The emergence of modern Türkiye*, 80.

⁹³ Ortaylı, *The Nature of Traditional Society*, 93.

⁹⁴ Bayram Kaçmazoğlu, *Türk Sosyoloji Tarihine Giriş* (İstanbul: Birey Yayınları, 2001), 93–102.

of trained personnel to be sent to all territories of the empire, is the main reason this was not achievable.⁹⁵ In fact, Deringil emphasizes that the shift to the modern state in today's meaning began with several changes implemented during this period.⁹⁶

However, since the 1860s, the reforms have not been considered to be sufficient, and the necessity for further reforms to bring the country up to European standards has been apparent. In this setting, the first organized movement opposing the Sultan's and the central government's absolute sovereignty, a group called the New Ottoman Society, comprised of civil bureaucrats and intellectuals, was founded, quickly grew, and evolved into a constitutional and parliamentary movement. Under pressure from the New Ottomans, the Sultan declared a constitutional monarchy in 1876, forcing him to adopt a parliamentary constitutionalism regime.⁹⁷ The Kanun-ı Esasi was the constitution of this regime, Sultan Abdülhamid the Second was the executive body, and the General Assembly became the legislative body. A two-winged parliament was constituted in accordance with the Kanun-ı Esasi. The parliament whose members were elected was known as the Meclis-i Mebûsan, and the assembly whose members were appointed was known as the Notables Assembly. The Meclis-i Umumi was the name of the parliament, which had two chambers (General Assembly).⁹⁸ First Constitutional Monarchy came to an end in 1878, when Abdülhamid closed the Parliament, as a result of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878.⁹⁹

Abdulhamid the Second solidified his control by closing the parliament under the pretext of war, then eliminating civilian bureaucrats who pushed for westernization and applied pressure for this cause, and appointing those who supported him to crucial positions. Civil bureaucrats with secular and liberal views were not retained at important positions throughout this period. Military elites were largely in charge of westernization and secularization activities starting from the 1890s.¹⁰⁰

The Ottoman Constitution was re-declared on July 23, 1908, after being suspended for 30 years, as a consequence of military elite pressure, and the Second Constitutional Era started. Although most scholars consider this period to be a continuation of the first, Aykut

⁹⁵ Ali Akyıldız, *Osmanlı Bürokrasisi ve Modernleşme* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), 78–80.

⁹⁶ Selim Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri ve İdeoloji: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2014), 21–3.

⁹⁷ Murat Tazegül, *Modernleşme Sürecinde Türkiye* (İstanbul: Babil Yayınları, 2005), 81–3.

⁹⁸ Roderic Davison, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Reform* (İstanbul: Agora Kitaplığı, 2005), 30–6.

⁹⁹ Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2019), 170–6.

¹⁰⁰ Şen, *Silahlı Kuvvetler ve Modernizm*, 107–11.

Kansu contends that it was different from the First Constitutional Era announced in 1876, and that civil bureaucrats, academics, and military elites staged a revolution in 1908.¹⁰¹

Elections were held immediately following the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. The elections were won by the Committee of Union and Progress.¹⁰² The Sultan's power was limited to a symbolic level with the constitutional amendment. The parliamentary system was properly established in the country for the first time, albeit in a short period of time. Although this period contributed to the country's democracy and saw many innovations and reforms in the country's social and political structure, the war occupied the government's agenda due to the successive wars, WWI and the Balkan War, and thus the government had to suspend its reform efforts.¹⁰³

Following the Turkish War of Independence from 1919 to 1923, the republican regime was established in 1923. Military elites who attended modern military schools and adopted Western ideals played a significant part in the establishment of the republican system, rising to positions of power in the state founded with civilian bureaucrats who backed the War of Independence. Many reforms based on Western ideals were enacted during this time period. However, these reforms implemented in the country were top-down reforms that were prepared and implemented by the military elite and civilian bureaucrats. Consequently, these reforms were not uniformly adopted throughout the nation. Various factors, including budgetary constraints, inadequate infrastructure, influence of rural notables, and others, impeded the effective implementation and dissemination of these changes to rural regions. Notably, as per the 1927 data, these rural areas constituted approximately 80 percent of the country's population.

It is worth noting that, following the foundation of the Türkiye, the military (or military elites) had no impact on modernization until the mid-1950s. This is because Atatürk, the modern Turkish state's founder, did not want the military to engage in politics. They did not intervene in politics because they believed their representatives were in charge. However, after the Democrat Party (DP) took power, the military was forced to abandon their barracks and interfere in politics due to their anti-modernization and anti-professionalization policies throughout the country. In this sense, the military, operating under the motto "preserving the

¹⁰¹ Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, 21–6.

¹⁰² Mete Tunçay, *II. Meşrutiyet'in İlk Yılı* (Ankara: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), 400.

¹⁰³ Zafer Tunaya, *Batılılaşmada Temel Araştırmalar ve Yaklaşımlar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1983), 235–40.

country's modernization and professionalization," frequently disrupted modernization and professionalization studies.

1.6.2 Professionalization of the teaching profession in Türkiye

The process of professionalizing the teaching profession in the Ottoman Empire has roots extending to the 19th century, a time marked by shifts in sociopolitical landscapes and educational paradigms. Underlying this professionalization was the empire's conscious move to embrace Western ideals in its quest for modernization. Recognizing the necessity to instill and implement these Western approaches, the empire laid the foundation for advanced military and civilian educational institutions. A notable initiative during this era was the deployment of nearly 200 students to European countries, aiming to immerse them in Western sciences and technological advancements, thereby facilitating their subsequent integration into the Ottoman fabric.¹⁰⁴

Mahmut the Second, discerning the essentiality of disseminating these Westernized ideals and methodologies across the empire, declared primary education as both free and mandatory through an edict in 1824.¹⁰⁵ This proclamation laid a cornerstone for the professionalization journey. To further this endeavor, 1848 witnessed the inception of Darülmüallim, a modern educational institution specifically designed to cultivate educators for secondary schools, known as "Rusdiyes."¹⁰⁶

The narrative of educational evolution is incomplete without acknowledging the establishment of the Ministry of Education in 1857, serving as a nodal point to holistically and expeditiously address educational matters. An emblematic representation of the ministry's proactive role was the 1869 regulations conceived by Saffet Pasha, the then Minister of Education. Drawing inspiration from the French educational system, these regulations encapsulated myriad objectives: from institutionalizing mandatory education and creating schools tailored for specific requirements to streamlining teaching methodologies and nurturing teacher competencies.¹⁰⁷ The fruition of these regulations was evident in 1870 with

¹⁰⁴ Aynur Erdoğan, *Osmanlı'da Yurtdışı Eğitim ve Modernleşme* (İstanbul: Büyüyen Ay Yayınları, 2016), 31–42.

¹⁰⁵ Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi* (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2019), 151.

¹⁰⁶ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri Dergisi I-VIII: 1945-1947* (Ankara: Güner Matbaacılık, 2005), 69.

¹⁰⁷ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 171–9.

the launch of "Iptidai" teacher schools, pioneering institutions aiming to groom primary level educators using contemporary pedagogies and endowing them with substantial autonomy.¹⁰⁸

Despite these robust frameworks and intentions, the empire grappled with challenges, inhibiting the realization of a cohesive basic education system extending to its remotest territories. Abdülhamid's tenure further exacerbated the stagnation, marked by the cessation of reforms and the installation of anti-reformist functionaries.¹⁰⁹

Post the Second Constitutional Monarchy's inception in 1908, even though tangible strides in foundational education were absent, it remains paramount for contemporary scholars and pedagogues to dissect and evaluate these phases.

Transitioning to the era post the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, the educational sphere was centralized under the Ministry of National Education. Notably, the period up to 1935 was typified by the persistence of archaic methodologies. It was only with the appointment of Ismail Hakkı Tonguç as the General Directorate of Primary Education and the inception of VIs, which were accorded partial autonomy yet remained under state oversight, that there was a resurgence in educational reforms.¹¹⁰

However, the political climate of 1946, punctuated by a transformed perception of modernization and the challenges faced by VI professionals during the democracy transition, culminated in the closure of VIs. Their eventual reincarnation in 1954 as traditional teacher institutions underscored the oscillating trajectories of educational reforms.

Despite these vicissitudes, the VIs' legacy in fostering professionalization in teaching and their advocacy for democratic ethos remains indelible. They not only aided Türkiye's democratic shift but also, through their alumni, played a pivotal role in establishing the Türkiye Teachers' Union (TÖS), championing educators' rights.

An analytical reflection on this journey underscores the fact that while Türkiye predominantly followed the Continental European model of professionalization, VIs, intriguingly, manifested traces of the Anglo-Saxon model, especially in their later phases. They began as entities tethered to governmental diktats but gradually metamorphosed into institutions with intrinsic values, imprinting an enduring influence on Turkish educational history.

¹⁰⁸ İlhan Palalı, "Osmanlı devletinde ilköğretimde yenileşme ve Urfa ilk mektepleri," *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları* 127, no. 250 (2021): 85–91.

¹⁰⁹ Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi: Sosyal, Kültürel, Ekonomik Temeller*, 144–56.

¹¹⁰ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 70.

Chapter 2

2. Background- Pre 1930 period.

The rural regions of Türkiye, while representing significant resources for national development, have concurrently posed considerable challenges to the trajectory of Turkish modernization. This complexity can be attributed to Türkiye's rural condition, characterized by a dispersed structure comprising approximately 40,000 villages, each with distinct needs and circumstances. This diversity has complicated the regime's task of propagating reforms and providing basic services, thereby introducing Turkish modernization in a context fraught with difficulties. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that these rural areas, despite the aforementioned challenges, also served as vital resources towards the country's overall development.

This chapter is planned as a background of the dissertation and provided the necessary information and data for a better understanding of the "backwardness" of rural areas and its roots. This chapter is organized under five subheadings. First, the land order in the rural areas and its importance for the villagers and VIs are examined. Second, the social, economic and cultural situation of the villagers is revealed. Third, the issue of education and the educational institutions opened in rural areas during the Ottoman Empire and newly established republic until 1930 are examined. Finally, the ideas that came into view for rural areas and which would later form the basis of VIs were analyzed and discussed whether İ. Hakkı Tonguç, was effected/inspired from these views.

2.1 Land order in Rural Areas and the Rising Power of Landlords

During the Ottoman era, land was segmented by ownership: individual-owned and Sultan-owned.¹¹¹ Individual lands were further divided into *Öşriyye* and *Harajiyeye*. *Öşriyye* referred to lands associated with Muslims before or after conquests. Owners had full rights, provided they paid a tenth of their crop as tax.¹¹² *Harajiyeye*, on the other hand, were lands from conquered territories that stayed with their original non-Muslim owners, who could manage them as long as they also paid the requisite tax. İsmail Cem posits that this arrangement prevented land-seizure related unrest and maintained stability.¹¹³

¹¹¹ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1994), 504.

¹¹² Halil Cın, *Osmanlı'da Toprak Düzeni ve Bu Düzenin Bozulması* (Ankara: Berikan Yayınevi, 2016), 732–49.

¹¹³ Cem, *Türkiye'de geri kalmışlığın tarihi*, 29.

Sultan-owned, or *miri* lands, formed the majority in the empire. These were not owned but were allocated to individuals, known as Timariots, who in return for tax collection rights from these lands, had to offer military services when required. This system, termed the timar system, was highlighted by Alaattin Aköz as being instrumental in the empire's expansion until the 16th century, primarily due to its success in attaching villagers to the land and providing a ready military force.¹¹⁴

I contend that the Ottoman Empire's "service estate" structure, specifically through the timar system, didn't crystallize until around 1550. İsmail Cem identifies this year as pivotal because the empire's shift in land ownership ethos precipitated the rise of landlords, leading to the timar system's decline.¹¹⁵

By the latter era of Suleiman the Magnificent, the empire grappled with mounting financial troubles. To counteract the ballooning treasury deficit, it sought to harness land revenues, previously largely appropriated by the Timariots. Consequently, the timar system waned as the privileges of the Timariots were rescinded.

In this altered system, the *mültezim* (taxman) would upfront the land's projected tax to the empire and subsequently collect dues independently. This process often saw the *mültezim* extract excessive taxes from villagers, aiming to maximize their own profits. This led to the villagers' exploitation and the sidelining of the Timariots.¹¹⁶ In essence, the empire's policies directly birthed and emboldened the landlord (*mültezim*) class. Their ascendancy, juxtaposed against a weakening empire, saw them dominate rural domains.

Further compounding rural distress was the landlords' exacting tax demands, which many villagers couldn't meet. Consequently, they sank into debt with emerging agricultural usurers, leading many to forfeit their lands and exit their villages.¹¹⁷ The result? Rapidly enriched landlords exerted even more control over vast tracts of land.¹¹⁸

Kartekin posits that villagers faced dismal circumstances, further eroded by the empire's actions, before the republic's proclamation.¹¹⁹ Echoing this sentiment, I argue that post-1923, villagers' plight scarcely improved. Presuming that long-entrenched rural landlords would lose their grip post-1923 is erroneous. In 1923, while there was a pronounced

¹¹⁴ Alaattin Aköz, *Sürü Peşinde Saban İzinde Osmanlı Devleti'nde Konargöçerler ve Köylüler* (Ankara: Palet Yayınları, 2014), 209–10.

¹¹⁵ Cem, *Türkiye'de geri kalmışlığın tarihi*, 34–51.

¹¹⁶ Cem, *Türkiye'de geri kalmışlığın tarihi*, 93–7.

¹¹⁷ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *XVI Asrın ikinci Yarısında Türkiye'nin Geçirdiği İktisadi Buhranların Sosyal Yapı Üzerindeki Tesirleri* (İstanbul: Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etütler Konferans Heyeti, 1964), 28–31.

¹¹⁸ İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020), 42–65.

¹¹⁹ Enver Kartekin, *Devrim Tarihi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Rejimi* (İstanbul: Sinan Yayınları, 1973), 44–52.

emphasis on instituting a new order and accelerating urban modernization, the rural regions, which housed a significant 80% of the population as indicated by 1927 data, remained predominantly unaddressed. Consequently, these areas remained under the influence of powerful landlords.

2.2 Social, Economic and Cultural Condition of Villagers

This section endeavors to explore the lifestyles, family structures, traditions, beliefs, and economic conditions of villagers. Although subtle distinctions can be discerned when comparing with the imperial era, these variations did not substantially alter the villagers' day-to-day existence. Thus, both periods are analyzed in tandem. This methodological choice highlights that the first twenty years of the republican period brought about minimal discernible advancements or shifts in the living conditions of the rural populace.

2.2.1 Family Structure in the Village

In rural areas, a pronounced patriarchal social structure, originating from the Ottoman Empire period, persists.¹²⁰ Evidently, the 1935 census from the State Institute of Statistics indicated literacy rates of 17.27% for males and 4.21% for females, underscoring the patriarchal bias.¹²¹ This disparity in literacy can be attributed to societal norms, such as only counting men and animals in Ottoman censuses for taxation purposes.¹²²

While men predominantly handled agricultural tasks and joined the Ottoman army during wars, women bore the brunt of household responsibilities. They managed child-rearing, domestic chores, animal care, and assisted in fieldwork. Furthermore, they were expected to bear many children. Notably, while Ottoman-Turkish rural society held men as family heads, it did not regard women as societal equals.¹²³ Tütengil highlighted the gap between urban and rural women's status. Despite the republic's constitutional gender equality, it was seldom actualized in rural settings.¹²⁴

Children in villages were introduced to work at a tender age, learning agricultural skills from fathers and domestic chores from mothers.¹²⁵ It's essential to recognize this

¹²⁰ Cem, *Türkiye 'de geri kalmışlığın tarihi*, 87–92.

¹²¹ State Institute of Statistics, *Milli eğitimde 50 Yıl 1923-1973* (Ankara: Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Matbaası, 1973), 4.

¹²² Fakir Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 2019), 33–7.

¹²³ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 62–5.

¹²⁴ Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *Az gelişmiş ülkelerin toplumsal yapısı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1966), 13–4.

¹²⁵ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 65–7.

learning was hands-on, with minimal verbal instruction.¹²⁶ Even though the Ottoman Empire mandated primary education in 1824 under Mahmud II, many rural families prioritized labor over formal education. Criticisms were directed at VIs for employing child labor. However, such practices mirrored longstanding village traditions rather than introducing new norms.¹²⁷

2.2.2 Birth, Childcare, Sickness and Death in the Village

In villages, birth was typically overseen by local individuals who acquired midwifery skills traditionally, learning by assisting a predecessor. Post-birth traditions included placing babies in warm soil in colder villages and attending to their needs primarily when they cried.¹²⁸ If children were excessively fussy, they'd undergo traditional rituals to repel the evil eye, such as lead pouring or prayers from hodjas.¹²⁹

Regarding health, villagers often relied on traditional remedies. When a child fell ill, mothers sought advice from relatives and neighbors, usually implementing the various suggestions.¹³⁰ Persistent illnesses were often perceived as divine punishment, with imams discouraging the pursuit of medical explanations, emphasizing instead that healing was at God's discretion.¹³¹

Mahmut Makal observed the perception of the villagers about death during his investigations in the villages in the 1940s:

"Most of the newborns and children would die due to the cold, and the villagers would have believed that it was God's will. In fact, most of the villagers did not want doctors and their treatment methods in their villages. There were 130 houses in the village that Makal lived, that is, 130 families. In February alone, 34 children were reported to have died in the village where Makal worked. Apart from working as a teacher in this village, Makal would visit other villages with his health officer friend, record the number of births and deaths in the villages, and report this list to the government. His

¹²⁶ Adnan Avcı, *Akçadağ Köy Enstitüsü Yılları (Öncesi-Sonrası)-Tüm yönleriyle Cumhuriyet Meşaleleri: Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Alfa Kitap, 2018), 108–9.

¹²⁷ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 27–31.

¹²⁸ İlköğretim ve Eğitim Meselesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 24 December 1935a, P03-75-1F, Reports and Notes, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 14–5. (hereafter cited as *ilköğretim ve Eğitim Meselesi, Reports and Notes*)

¹²⁹ Köyde Eğitim ve Sağlık by İ. Hakkı Tonguç, n.d., P01-74-42, Training Necessary Personnel for the Village, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2 (hereafter cited as *Köyde Eğitim ve Sağlık, Training Necessary Personnel for the Village*)

¹³⁰ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 73–5.

¹³¹ İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Köyde Eğitim* (Ankara: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 2008), 87–93.

friend, would look after 13 villages, and the number of children he wrote on the death certificate for February was 120 from these 13 villages."¹³²

2.2.3 Tradition and Religion in the Village

Rural areas have their own traditions and laws and powerful actors in rural areas such as landlords and imams, ensuring that these traditions and laws would be followed.¹³³

For example, Taqi ad-Din Observatory, the first large and modern observatory of the Ottoman Empire, which was founded in 1575 and was managed by one of the most important scientists at the time, Takiyüddin, was destroyed in 1580 with a cannon shot from the sea.¹³⁴ The reason for the destruction of this observatory is the fatwa given by Shaykh Al-Islam Kadızade Ahmet Şemsettin about the observatory: "Trying to make observations brings bad luck. Presumptuous attempts to discover the secrets of the heavens bring disaster. In whichever country this was attempted, it was devastated when it was prosperous."¹³⁵

Relatedly, a master named Emin managed to bring clean water to a village where there was no water, working all alone. But the imam of the village, Niyazi Hodja, said that he had a dream and that the angels were angry with Emin's work, that this would bring big trouble to the village. Villagers stopped using water after these words of Niyazi Hodja.¹³⁶ Gedikoglu argues that the traditional structure of Turkish villagers is not open to innovation.¹³⁷

Imams, to protect their own status against innovation, would have given harsh reactions to the innovation proposals and those who made the proposals would have been accused of infidelity and given various punishments.

Because of the possible provocation of imams, people did not want the teacher and welcome the school that was going to be opened. In his memoirs, Makal conveyed that in the village where Makal was appointed as a teacher, the villagers told him that "If you had not come this year, we would have demolished this school too. Then, we would have been comfortable for another 5-10 years."¹³⁸

¹³² Mahmut Makal, *Bizim Köy: Bir Köy Öğretmeninin Notları* (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 2019), 13–5.

¹³³ Tonguç, *Köyde Eğitim*, 9–11.

¹³⁴ Süheyl Ünver, *İstanbul Rasathanesi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1969), 28–51.

¹³⁵ Nüzhet Gökdoğan, *Türk Astronomi Tarihine Bir Bakış* (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), 470.

¹³⁶ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 65.

¹³⁷ Şevket Gedikoğlu, *Niçin Eğitim Kursları, Köy Enstitüleri* (Ankara: İdeal Matbaası, 1949), 28–41.

¹³⁸ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 107.

2.2.4 Economic Situation of Villages and Villagers

Veli Demiröz, a student at the Hasanoğlan Higher VI, which was established near Ankara, examined the economic situation of the villagers living in Hasanoğlan village during his examinations in March 1946. His work was published in the V-VI issues of the Journal of Village Institutes. The important parts of this article, which has the character of illuminating the internal structure of a particular village and specifically a family, are shared below.

"Hasanoğlan village inhabited by 271 households. It is possible to analyze the households of Hasanoğlan village in economic terms in five groups:

1. There were 61 households that had no property and they made a living in return for their physical strength.
2. There were 25 households that had land but could not cultivate their lands or could cultivate only a small part of it. They had small lands. Since they did not have the means of work and farming was not enough to fend for themselves, they made a living in return for their half bodily strength.
3. There were 101 households that cultivated their own land. Economically, these people were considered to be a middle class. The Biçer family, which we will examine in detail below, was also included in this group.
4. There were 54 households that were slightly superior in terms of land, workforce and equipment to those considered middle class.
5. Finally, there were 30 households in this village that were considered wealthy."¹³⁹

Veli Demiröz stated that 35 families without oxen and donkeys were in a very difficult situation and these families did not even have any food to eat, for this reason Hasanoğlan Higher VI would give them the leftovers from the students, thus prevent them from dying of hunger. Makal describes the situation of the villagers who do not have any animals as follows: "Some villagers have no animals. In these cases, people replace animals and plow the land."¹⁴⁰

According to the data found in a document we obtained from Tonguç's archive and later published by Tonguç in his book "*Education in Village*," Tonguç visited a village market in 1937 and recorded the prices of the products bought and sold in this market. An important point that draws our attention is that the products produced by the villagers are sold cheaply

¹³⁹ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri Dergisi*, 212–26.

¹⁴⁰ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 28.

in this market, while the products that the villagers need and that come from outside are sold above their value.

Table 1: The Prices in the Village Market in 1937

Prices of some items sold by villagers		Prices of some important items that villagers bought from the same market	
Item	Kurus	Kilogram	Kurus
1 Chicken	20-30	1 Salt	6-7
1 Pullets	12-15	1 Gas oil	30-40
4 Eggs	5-6	1 Soap	35-40
1 Lamb	150-200	1 Sugar	33
1 Sheep	400-500	1 Meat	20-30
1 Goat	800-900		
1 Cow	1200-500		
1 Ox	3000-000		
Kilo		Pair	
Honey	45-50	1 Flat-heeled shoe for children	50-60
Molasses	12-20	1 Big Shoes	250-500
Oil	70-100		
Cheese	15-20		
Wheat	4-5		
Load		Meter	
1 Straw	30-40	1 Chintz	15-40
1 Wood	12-30	1 Cadis	80-100
1 Coal	80-90	1 Canvas	20-30

Source: İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Köyde Eğitim* (Ankara: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 2008), 81–4.

According to the prices given above, it can be said that the villagers have to sell their products below their value to buy the products they need. Because they only had access to the market set up near their village, intermediaries used this situation and made great profit. The fact that the villagers have to sell a sheep or goat in order to buy a pair of shoes is one of the most important indicators of this situation. Consequently, the rural inhabitants remained reliant on the rural notables within their regions, which hindered their potential for socio-economic advancement. This reliance, compounded by prevalent poverty, contributed to the continued underdevelopment of rural areas. Such circumstances curtailed the range of economic and educational opportunities accessible to these villages, further entrenching the status quo.

2.3 General Characteristics of Education in the Ottoman and Early Republican period

Education in the Ottoman Empire has never been accessible for all classes of society. Not only the isolated villages in rural areas, but also the villages close to the cities and even some cities and towns have been deprived of school education.¹⁴¹ Only a small fraction of the population in the empire had the opportunity to go to school and complete their education. In the 1913-1914 academic year, the number of all children studying in schools was estimated to be around 600 thousand. Considering that the population of the empire was 20 million, it is understood that only 1/4 of the school-age children went to school.¹⁴²

Upon examining the educational institutions prevalent during the Ottoman period, it is evident that there were predominantly two types of schools dispersed across the empire: Madrasahs and Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools. There were also educational institutions established for a specific purpose and offered only to a very small segment of the society. These were the Palace Schools, where the high-ranking civilian staff to run the state would be educated,¹⁴³ the Enderun Palace Schools, where the children of the Christian people or prisoners of war would be educated to be assigned to the state administration¹⁴⁴ and finally, there were the schools of minorities, modern schools established by non-Muslims to give their children a western-style education in their own language. However, due to the fact that these institutions did not spread throughout the empire and did not have any effect in rural areas, these institutions are not examined in this study.

Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools, also known as neighborhood schools, were institutions that provided education at the primary level. Madrasahs, on the other hand, provided education at the secondary and higher education level. Madrasah graduates were also the Ottoman ulema, in other words, their intellectuals. Both schools were supervised and managed by religious authorities in terms of education and training.¹⁴⁵ Until the mid-19th century, these two types of schools provided basic (religious) education in the empire and raised a pious, docile generation. In these schools, which were usually built adjacent to the mosque, only the reading of the Qur'an was taught without explaining its meaning.

During the Ottoman Empire, no serious studies were conducted on education in rural areas. The point of view adopted by the Ottoman Empire towards the villagers formed the

¹⁴¹ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 14.

¹⁴² Refet, "Türkiye'de Maarif-i İptidai," *Türk Yurdu* 2, no. 7 (1925): 400.

¹⁴³ İsmail Hakkı Baykal, *Enderun Mektebi Tarihi* (İstanbul: Halk Basımevi, 1953), 6.

¹⁴⁴ Barnette Miller, *The Palace School of the Mohammed the Conqueror* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), 13–7.

¹⁴⁵ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 15–21.

basis of this attitude. According to the empire, the rural areas were places from which soldiers and taxes could be gathered.¹⁴⁶ However, it should be noted that primary education was provided over almost all villages through imams (there was a mosque in every village), and only religious education was given in these schools. Children were not even taught literacy in these schools. Classes were typically conducted in barns or rooms adjacent to mosques,¹⁴⁷ which leads to the assertion that formal school structures did not truly exist within rural areas. Furthermore, graduates of teacher training institutions located in urban settings exhibited a reluctance to venture into village locales for employment. This scenario was even dramatized in contemporary literature; individuals who chose to accept teaching roles in rural areas were portrayed as courageous figures. This theme is notably exemplified in Reşat Nuri Güntekin's novel, "The Green Night", which captures the challenges faced by educators in the countryside.¹⁴⁸ For this reason, those who wanted to be teachers in the village were accepted without any conditions. The data provided by Akyüz for the year 1900 also confirms this situation. In 1900, there were 15 teacher schools in 15 provinces that were active in the countryside. 32 teachers were working in these schools and only 496 students were studying.¹⁴⁹

In the following, the madrasahs and primary schools, which spread throughout the empire and deeply affected the society, will be examined in more detail.

2.3.1 Madrasahs

Madrasahs, originating from the period of the Seljuks, were educational institutions established with the dual intent of disseminating Islamic teachings and preparing intellectual personnel for the administrative needs of the empire. They operated as free boarding schools, funded and maintained through the endowments established by their founders.¹⁵⁰ The madrasah met the basic needs of its students, such as shelter, clothing and food. It is known that in some madrasahs, pocket money would also be given to students at certain intervals. The founders of the madrasah determined the number of students and teachers to be admitted to the school, and the size and amount of expenditures to be made in the madrasah. In order to meet these expenses, the founders generally donated their land, field or shop to the

¹⁴⁶ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 17–23.

¹⁴⁷ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 216.

¹⁴⁸ Reşat Nuri Güntekin, *Yeşil Gece* (Ankara: İnkılap Kitapevi, 1998), 43–78.

¹⁴⁹ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 250.

¹⁵⁰ Adnan Adıvar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1943), 2.

madrasah.¹⁵¹ However, the enrollment in these madrasahs was strictly gender-specific, accepting only male students, thereby creating a gendered dichotomy in the educational landscape of the time. This condition shows us that secondary education for women was not accessible until the 19th century, until the civil schools were opened. Also, in order to enroll in the madrasah, the students must have finished the primary school.¹⁵² In addition, there was no set schedule and time for the completion of the madrasah education. The aim was to make the student read certain religious books. However, in our investigations, it was revealed that the student who entered the madrasah received at least 1-2 years of education. The authority over the madrasah was the Shaykh al-Islam.¹⁵³

The Arabic language held the most important place in education in madrasahs. Turkish, the mother tongue of the country, was partially used in the madrasahs for verbal explanations and discussions.¹⁵⁴ The main courses given in madrasahs were religious studies, positive sciences and tool using skills. The important point to be mentioned here is that the majority of these courses were religious courses. In fact, almost all of the education provided in the madrasahs established in rural areas consisted of religious lessons. In other words, as one would move away from the city, one would also move away from science in parallel with it.

The rote learning was the leading teaching method of madrasahs. Generally, the total number of students in a madrasah would not exceed 20-30. Teacher-student relations were based on the student's absolute respect.¹⁵⁵

Madrasahs adopted a distinctive approach known as "Cerr" for disseminating their religious beliefs and perspectives. This strategy proved to be highly efficacious in extending the reach of the madrasah's teachings to rural areas. As per the tenets of the Cerr method, every year during the holy month of Ramadan, the students from the madrasah would disperse to various villages. They would then spend an entire month in these rural communities, leading the residents in prayer. This time spent was not merely limited to religious rituals; it also involved the introduction and consolidation of the madrasah's doctrines among the villagers. The students thus assumed the role of intermediaries, transmitting the viewpoints and ideologies prevalent in their institutions to these rural settlements. The villagers provided

¹⁵¹ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 21–3.

¹⁵² Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname* (İstanbul: Kabcacı Yayınevi, 2012), 448–57.

¹⁵³ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 215.

¹⁵⁴ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 24–9.

¹⁵⁵ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 69.

shelter and food for the student. There was no law compelling the villagers to feed or care for the madrasah student. They voluntarily helped the students who came to serve them.¹⁵⁶

The main reason why madrasahs affected society so deeply was that Islam had managed to run all institutions of society in the same direction. A one-way religious effect, which was started by birth and increasingly continued throughout his life in the mosque, street, school, family, legal system and in the hands of the state and its all institutions. However, this unilateral education and training played a great role in the spread of Islam and the madrasah having a great influence. Therefore, for Başgöz and Wilson, the influence of the madrasah in the Ottoman Empire was deep-rooted, and even the Turkish Republic could not erase this influence.¹⁵⁷ Despite the closure of these institutions in 1924, the societal imprint of the madrasahs remains visible even today, attesting to their enduring influence and the far-reaching impacts of their educational and religious contributions.

Tonguç, the founder of VIs also admitted in his book written in the 1940s that tens of thousands of villages that have not yet attained a teacher or an educator are still under the control and influence of imams and preachers trained in madrasah¹⁵⁸ also reveals the extent of the issue.

2.3.2 Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools

The education period of Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools was four years and they were not boarding schools. In big cities, there were primary schools opened only for girls. However, co-education was allowed in small towns and rural areas due to the economic condition. Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools were established by foundations or the public had them built together.¹⁵⁹ In rural areas, these schools were built by the people of the region through collective work. In these schools, parents paid the teacher's salary according to their income. Sometimes they made a living for the teacher by giving products such as eggs, oil, wood-coal, flour-bulgur instead of money.

In rural areas, Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools were organized in a small one-room buildings. Students would take lessons in mosque corners, masjids, imam's house, and sometimes even in barn corners. There were no classroom tools. Students would sit on their knees on dry boards or rush mats and read the Qur'an and prayer books in front of them. The

¹⁵⁶ Adivar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim*, 2–15.

¹⁵⁷ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 25–8.

¹⁵⁸ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 103.

¹⁵⁹ Osman Ergin, *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi* (İstanbul: Eser Matbaası, 1977), 75.

teacher would sit cross-legged on the mat in front of them and discipline them with a long stick.¹⁶⁰ Teaching was based on memorization. The students would memorize the lesson given by the teacher by repeating them aloud, and when their turn came, they would tell what they had learned by kneeling in front of the teacher.¹⁶¹

The basis of the teaching was to make the children adopt the main principles of Islam. Students in these schools were reading the Qur'an, learning phases of prayer, and taking some writing lessons. But the writing lesson was nothing more than a calligraphy lesson. Normally, according to the general regulation, those who would teach in Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools should have graduated from madrasahs. However, these regulations have never been complied with. In fact, it can be said that all Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools almost never could have hired a teacher who graduated from a madrasah. Literate imams, even illiterate old people who memorized parts of the Quran and prayers taught at Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools.¹⁶²

Since the Ottoman Elementary-Primary School teacher was also the imam of the neighborhood or village, he had multiple duties in the village or town he was living in. In this way, Ottoman Elementary-Primary School teachers adapted to the socio-cultural environment they were in and became a part of the society. They were dignitaries, consulted and guides, the reason of which was that they were clergy. These features meant that they would be in charge of events such as religious service, birth, death, marriage and divorce, which are important stages of the daily life of the society.¹⁶³ When considering the deep-rooted effects of the imam on Turkish society, it is necessary not to evaluate the issue only as a matter of religious education, but to know that teaching is a multilateral job, and to take into account that sometimes the teacher has to show great effort to make himself accepted in the environment he is working.

Journalist Ahmet Şerif, who visited the villages of Adana in 1910, with the metaphor below described the situation of the Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools in rural areas as follows: "I looked at the teachers and the children, and I thought with complete sadness about the future that can be built with these elements. Visiting a school in Anatolia means collecting flowers of sorrow."¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Yahya Akyüz, "Türk eğitim," in *II. Ulusal çocuk ve suç sempozyumu*, ed. Emine Akyüz and Sevdâ Uluğtekin (Ankara: Avrupa Komisyonu Türkiye Temsilciliği, 2003), 34–7.

¹⁶¹ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 15–8.

¹⁶² Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 227.

¹⁶³ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 135–47.

¹⁶⁴ Ahmed Şerif, *Anadolu'da Tanin* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), 96–102.

2.3.3 *İptidai Schools* –School of the new methods

As part of the modernization efforts initiated in the Ottoman Empire, a novel category of modern schools, known as *iptidai schools*, was established in the 1870s. This development came amid the backdrop of existing educational institutions, such as madrasahs and Ottoman Elementary-Primary Schools, which were heavily influenced by religion and under the pressure exerted by the powerful madrasahs that sought the preservation of the traditional order.¹⁶⁵ Given the formidable influence and status of the madrasahs, the ruling elite of the empire were reluctant to challenge these established institutions directly. Consequently, they chose to navigate this delicate situation by establishing an alternative, contemporary form of education, represented by the *iptidai schools*. These schools were envisioned as bastions of modern education, providing an innovative educational model that was distinct from the religious orientation of the madrasahs and other traditional educational institutions. While these new modern schools were affiliated with the Ministry of Education, the primary schools were affiliated with the Ministry of Pious Foundations.¹⁶⁶

Başaran attributes the reason for the need of these schools to the ignorance of the administration in primary schools and the unqualified teaching.¹⁶⁷ According to Ergün, these new schools were opened because it was difficult to reform the Ottoman elementary-primary schools. Because these schools generally belonged to foundations, and they had autonomy.¹⁶⁸ Zülfü Demirtaş, on the other hand, claims that these new schools were opened because the imams and the fanatics around them were against any changes to be made in these schools.¹⁶⁹ All the factors mentioned above by the researchers were effective in the opening of these new institutions of education. But unlike them, while they explained this situation with a single factor, I argue that all the factors mentioned above were effective in the opening of these institutions.

The education period of these new schools in the city was three years, in the rural areas were four years. The differential in educational duration between urban and rural *iptidai* schools in the Ottoman Empire can be attributed to a confluence of socio-economic, infrastructural, and pedagogical factors. Urban centers, with their advanced infrastructure and

¹⁶⁵ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 25–8.

¹⁶⁶ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 60–5.

¹⁶⁷ İbrahim Ethem Başaran, *Türkiye Eğitim Sistemi* (Ankara: Yargıcı Matbaası, 1994), 53–81.

¹⁶⁸ Mustafa Ergün, "Medreseden Mektebe Osmanlı Eğitim Sistemindeki Değişme," *Yeni Türkiye* 32 (2000): 737–42.

¹⁶⁹ Zülfü Demirtaş, "Osmanlı'da sıbyan mektepleri ve ilköğretimin örgütlenmesi," *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 17, no. 1 (2007): 180–1.

access to better-trained educators, could provide a more intensive and efficient curriculum; however, rural areas, characterized by agrarian economies, might have required a more extended curriculum to accommodate the agricultural responsibilities of students and possible irregular attendance due to infrastructural limitations.

Also, a certain monthly salary was given to the teacher. He would no longer make a living by receiving gifts from the families of the students. Education language would be in Turkish and the main aim was to teach students how to read and write and some basic positive sciences such as geography, history, physics etc.¹⁷⁰ The important thing to mention here is that the religious courses sharply decreased in the program of these new schools. However, this status has led to dualism in education and the emergence of institutions that provide education and apply methods in almost opposite directions. The existence of these schools simultaneously had profound effects on society for a long time. People with two different mentalities, disconnected from each other, have been raised in society.

As Binbaşıoğlu stated, the introduction of duality in the education life has shaped the society and triggered the significant changes in our history of education.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, Çelenk posits that the coexistence of two distinct educational systems without any intersecting or shared elements inhibited the planned modernization and progress of society. This lack of integration not only obstructed societal advancement, but also contributed to the further degeneration of the madrasahs. The separation of educational spheres magnified their disparities, creating an environment where both systems could not mutually benefit from each other's strengths, leading to a stagnation of progress and the exacerbation of the madrasahs' decline.¹⁷² The aforementioned evaluation may indeed be accurate, taking into account the unification of all educational institutions under a singular governing body during the republican era. This consolidation was aimed at eliminating dualistic tendencies within the educational sector. Nevertheless, the modernization attempts experienced disruptions during this same era. This interruption can be attributed to the persisting influence of previous educational structures, which is particularly evident within rural communities.

¹⁷⁰ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 281–312.

¹⁷¹ Cavit Binbaşıoğlu, *Türk Eğitim Düşüncesi Tarihi* (Ankara: Ani Yayıncılık, 2006), 51–67.

¹⁷² Suleyman Celenk, "Secularization Process in the History of Turkish Education," *Journal of Social Sciences* 19, no. 2 (2009): 105.

2.3.4 Law on Unification of all educational institutions

Subsequent to the declaration of the Turkish Republic, the year 1924 marked the termination of madrasahs and the amalgamation of all educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Culture.¹⁷³ This reorganization resulted in the cessation of all forms of religious education and training institutions, bringing them under the jurisdiction of the state.¹⁷⁴ Undeniably, the most salient feature of the educational system during the republican period is its rigorous centralization. In this period, the republican regime, which desired to break its ties with its past, put an end to the dual-education by gathering all educational institutions under Ministry of Education, inspired by the Western model. Although this policy is necessary in theory, the fact that it cannot be implemented in practice, especially in rural areas, has complicated the existing problem. Because with dual education which was implemented over 50 years, the two different groupings, two different mentalities and lifestyles, were created in the society. This polarization was also evident in the newly established single-party regime, and two different factions have emerged within the party.¹⁷⁵ On the one hand, there were the people who advocated the continuation of the reform efforts without slowing down and what I will call reformists in this paper, and on the other hand, there were the traditionalists who advocated to keep the status quo and opposed any kind of changes.¹⁷⁶

In this study, I argue that there were people of two different mentalities and these people were disconnected from each other in the society. The foundations of this were laid in the Ottoman period and continued in the republican period, and this situation negatively affected the Turkish modernization process. Because the existence of these people with different goals, caused the reform efforts to face a constant resistance, and this prevented the Turkish revolution and reforms from spreading and taking root throughout the country.

Furthermore, the extant literature principally addresses the internal conflict within a single political party and its adverse implications on the modernization of Türkiye. Specifically, Bernard Lewis and Oğuzhan Göksel assert that the intra-party struggle between traditionalist and progressive factions is a significant contributing factor to the interruption of modernization endeavors.¹⁷⁷ Oya Baydar, Engin Tonguç and Fay Kirby claimed that reform

¹⁷³ Fatma Gök, "The history and development," in *Multicultural' societies-Turkish and Swedish perspectives*, ed. Marie Carlson, Annika Rabo and Fatma Gök (Stockholm: Swedish Research Institute, 2007), 249–53.

¹⁷⁴ Gök, "The history and development," 247–8.

¹⁷⁵ Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç*, 31–2; Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 47.

¹⁷⁶ Baydar, "Sınıfsal açıdan köy enstitüleri," 19–20.

¹⁷⁷ Göksel, 'Assessing the Turkish model,' 26; Lewis, *The emergence of modern Türkiye*, 265–72.

efforts could not spread to rural areas due to the constant struggle between two factions within a single party.¹⁷⁸ In their claims, they did not mention any groupings and polarization in the society, only emphasizing that Turkish modernization was undermined due to two factions within the party. In this dissertation, I postulate that societal groupings were also prevalent and that the majority of the population residing in rural areas displayed a predilection towards traditionalist ideologies. This disposition posed significant challenges to the expansion of reform initiatives within these rural territories. Consequently, reformists have encountered consistent resistance when attempting to propagate their ideologies within rural settings.

For Uzunboylu and Küçüktamer, the 1924 Law on the Unification of Education has facilitated to remove its traditional elements from education.¹⁷⁹ Çelenk, supporting this argument, asserted that in the Ottoman period, the ministries of these two different institutions always came against each other and overwhelmed one another and this unpleasant situation was ended with this law.¹⁸⁰ The fact that these two institutions were hostile to each other, has deepened this polarization in the society. In addition, Ashkenazi suggested that a definite break from the past was made with this law, declaring that a "modern, unified, secular, egalitarian, and national" educational system were adopted to ensure that all Turkish citizens were receiving the same standard and quality of education.¹⁸¹ According to Vexliard and Aytaç, Atatürk introduced this law since he believed that dual-education would lead the Turkish society to slavery and misery.¹⁸² Also, Kapluhan claims that with this law, an important step has been taken in the process of secularization and democratization of education.¹⁸³

On the other hand, Dewey criticized the centralization in education and stresses that this is a threat to a democratic education.¹⁸⁴ Turan asserted that the intellectual and political elites who favor of uniformity in education are unaware of the crucial part that pluralistic education plays in supporting democratic education, suggesting that:

¹⁷⁸ Baydar, "Sinifsal açıdan köy enstitüleri," 47.

¹⁷⁹ Tuğba Kucuktamer and Huseyin Uzunboylu, "The conditions that enabled the foundation of the Village Institutes in Türkiye and a comparison with today," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 185 (2015): 393.

¹⁸⁰ Celenk, "Secularization Process in the History of Turkish Education," 107.

¹⁸¹ Jennifer Ashkenazi, "Reflections on educational transitions," in *International handbook of comparative education*, ed. Robert Cowen and Andreas Kazaias (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), 894.

¹⁸² Vexliard and Aytaç, "The Village Institutes in Türkiye," 42.

¹⁸³ Erol Kapluhan, "Atatürk Dönemi Eğitim Seferberliği ve Köy Enstitüleri," *Marmara Coğrafya Dergisi* 26 (2012): 179.

¹⁸⁴ John Dewey, *Report and recommendation upon Turkish education* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1960), 8.

"the republican state failed to recognize the importance of the participation of people in decision making. This failure to understand participatory democracy in a pluralistic society has resulted in the creation of an intellectual and political elite who have become gatekeepers of social and political change that might abolish their prerogatives."¹⁸⁵

In addition, Erdinç Çakıroğlu and Jale Çakıroğlu claimed that policy makers overlooked rural and urban differences due to the centralization law in education, ignoring key local differences.¹⁸⁶

As can be seen, there are two different views on centralization in education. With centralization, a major problem, duality in education has been eliminated; however, this time it has led to the spread of standardized school that ignores regional and rural differences all over the country. This situation not only failed to solve the problems of rural education, but at the same time complicates it.

2.4 Views and Ideas that has Inspired/Shaped the Foundation of VIs

In this section, views and ideas that influenced or inspired the idea of VIs are shared and discussed to what extent these views have affected the VIs.

2.4.1 İsmail Mahir Efendi's "Farmer Teachers and Teacher Farmers" view

İsmail Mahir Efendi was Kastamonu Deputy and he suggested that social change in villages would take place through 'teachers and education of villages'. In his speech within the Ottoman Assembly in 1914, he called the assembly to take action on the rural education issue. The speech was given below:

"We have about seventy sanjaks. We can build large boarding primary schools, one for boys and one for girls, in a farm or a state land in these sanjaks. No matter how many villages there are in that sanjak, wherever a school is to be built, we can take a girl and a boy from each village to this boarding school. In the girls' school, there may be many technical classes: weaving, cooking, tailoring, poultry husbandry. In boys' schools, only agricultural education would be given. We can first give these students four years of primary education. Subsequently, for three years, we can teach the

¹⁸⁵ Selahattin Turan, "John Dewey's Report of 1924 and His Recommendations on the Turkish Educational System Revisited," *History of Education* 28, no. 6 (2000): 553.

¹⁸⁶ Erdinç Çakıroğlu and Jale Çakıroğlu, "Reflections on Teacher Education in Türkiye," *European Journal of Teacher Education* 26, no. 2 (2003): 256–9.

subjects taught in the teacher's school. In the last one year, they can apply what they have learned as an internship. Eight years in total. During this time, you can oblige the villagers to build their schools and teachers' houses for up to eight years. Then we make the boy and girl we took from the same village to marry each other. They can go to their villages happily and work with a salary of 2 lira per each, because we leave the income of the sample field to be built next to the village to them. We have no choice but to do this to overcome this problem. In this way, within eight years, there will be no villages without a school and a teacher in the Ottoman empire -yelling of "enough" in the assembly-. Do not think that it will cost a lot for such teacher schools. They would eat what villagers eat and wear what villagers wear. In this way, progress can be made in a short time. However, if we do not do this and try to educate teachers from existing teacher schools, we can only have enough teachers in 300 years."¹⁸⁷

İ. Mahir Efendi's suggestion was not taken seriously in the assembly. However, it should be noted that these ideas, which were considered excessive at that time, offered radical solutions to the problem. With this plan, he not only offered to spread the education and develop the economic life of the villages, but also reduced the burden of the state.

Also, the obligation given to rural people to build school until teachers were educated and sent to these villages is important because we see that the same obligation was given to villagers with the education mobilization law enacted in 1942. When this law was enacted in 1942, it was criticized by various circles (this was examined in detail in the relevant section). If İsmail Mahir Efendi's proposal had been accepted and enacted by the parliament, he would have faced a similar reaction at that time as well.

Finally, the issue of marrying male and female students from the same village, which can be regarded as outdated, has a logical side when the conditions of the period and the problem are considered. In this way, not one but two teachers could have been sent to each village. It was obvious that the presence of female teachers in the villages would positively affect the education of female students in the villages.

2.4.2 Ethem Nejat's View of "Education for and According to the Village"

Ethem Nejat, educator and politician, was one of the first person to touch upon the subject of 'education for and according to the village' in 1910s. He suggested that a separate education

¹⁸⁷ Mehmet Saydur, *Köy Enstitülerinin Düşün babası İsmail Mahir Efendi* (Ankara: Kaynak Yayınları, 2018), 34–51.

and training system should be developed for the villagers and that in this new system, the villagers should be educated like "businessmen."¹⁸⁸ The businessman emphasis is important. Here, with the concept of businessman, there is a depiction of a person who produces and is many-minded. İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, in his work titled "*The Village to be Revived*", which was published in 1939, has repeatedly emphasized that his aim is to train businessmen in villages.¹⁸⁹ Ethem Nejat's views are given below:

"In the past, schools were opened, and teachers were sent to some villages, but these schools failed for various reasons. The main reason was that they were not boarding schools. From April onwards, parents were taking their children from school to work in the fields and "*herd oxen*" which they could not have done if the schools were boarding. In this new type of schools, which will be established in villages, great importance will be given to agricultural education. From the first grade of primary school to the last year of Ottoman Junior High School, at least 3-4 hours of agricultural education will be given weekly and all of these courses will be practical. The schoolwork would be done by students. Students also would be used for the agricultural work, and they would learn by practice. In addition, 95% of all expenses of the school, teachers and students would be covered by the student's work in agriculture."¹⁹⁰

First of all, it is an important detail that Ethem Nejat realized that families in villages took their children from school at harvest time and he made a suggestion to prevent this. VIs were also boarding and, as Ethem Nejat suggested, the expenses of the children in these schools were covered by students' work in agriculture and this way, these institutes were not a burden to the state.

There are many similarities between Ethem Nejat's view and VIs. Practical agriculture lessons, learning by doing principle, students doing the work of the institute, etc. It is obvious that Tonguç was influenced by Ethem Nejat's views while designing the VIs. However, such similarities with Ethem Nejat's views, apart from his socialist views, he was not a socialist when he put forward this suggestion, he adopted socialist views in the last period of his life. It prepared, however, the ground for İsfendiyaroğlu ve Yılmaz Elmas to accuse Tonguç of being influenced by one of the prominent Turkish leftists Ethem Nejat, who was killed with

¹⁸⁸ Ethem Nejat, "Müdafaa-i Milliye ve Terbiye," *Yeni Fikir* 2, no. 9 (1913): 270.

¹⁸⁸ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 283–95.

¹⁸⁹ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 54–6.

¹⁹⁰ Nejat, "Müdafaa-i Milliye ve Terbiye," 269–71.

his comrades in Trabzon in 1921.¹⁹¹ Karaömerlioğlu claimed that just because Tonguç knew the views of Nejat does not prove that he was a communist. Also, although Nejat accepted the communist ideas in the last years of his life, so at the time he made this suggestion he was not even a communist.¹⁹² As can be seen, these institutions were tried to be undermined by finding irrelevant links to communism.

2.4.3 İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu and his social school theory

Baltacıoğlu was the first Turkish educator to argue that education needs to be based on productivity in a paper he published in 1916. He emphasized that this new education had to be founded on production and the schools had to function as manufacturing factories to be able to implement an educational reform to empower the Ottoman state. Due to the fact that the nation was an agricultural community, schools had to be the hub of contemporary agricultural production, and the villages needed to be revitalized economically by teaching the people living there the new modes of production.¹⁹³

Baltacıoğlu, outlined his educational philosophy in 1933 in *içtimai mektep* (The Social School). He emphasized the significance of teaching production methods and urged the schools to actively participate in economic life because he believed that schools should be connected to the economic and social activities of their social environment.¹⁹⁴ He believed that products created by school should be used or sold in order to cover school expenses. It was claimed by Rasit Öymen, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, and Nusret Kernel that similar systems existed, for instance, in Bulgaria and Romania.¹⁹⁵ A solution was sought in the establishment of agricultural schools that would advance the nation's agriculture because the majority of the Turkish population lived in rural areas.¹⁹⁶

The Social School emphasizes that the teaching process must be focused on production and proposes a production-oriented approach to education. The Social School, which counts "productivity" as one of its guiding principles, directs industrial, commercial, and agricultural production to achieving economic gains. It regards the state as the capital, the

¹⁹¹ Yılmaz Elmas, "Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri," *Yeni Toplum* 1 (1976): 68.

¹⁹² Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 65–6.

¹⁹³ Sümer Aktan, *Curriculum Studies in Türkiye: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2018), 228.

¹⁹⁴ İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, *İçtimai mektep: Nazariyesi ve Prensipleri* (İstanbul: Semih Lütfü Sühulet Kütüphanesi, 1932), 37–51.

¹⁹⁵ Raşit Öymen, *Tek Öğretmenli ve Beş Sınıflı Köy Okulları* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim basımevi, 1939), 41–5.

¹⁹⁶ Ali Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," *Prospects* 29, no. 2 (1999): 270.

teachers as the foremen, and the school as a factory or production facility in which the target of the production is education.¹⁹⁷

The school is more than simply a collection of classrooms to Baltacıoğlu. With its garden and training farms, it is an all-encompassing complex. The fact that this school is run by self-government is another advantage. This school is democratic and distinguished by a libertarian (emancipatory) discipline.¹⁹⁸ The institutes had become an autonomous and self-sufficient institutions as well. In addition to the implementation of democratic values in the institute, such democratic values and practices that were not implemented in the country at the time were produced and implemented in the institutes.

Baltacıoğlu also highlights the value of acting and the performing arts as instructional tools that support the learning process in schools. To him, the school education shall include dance, music, literature, art, architecture, and sculpture.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, all branches of art were tried to be used in VIs. Interestingly, the education background of Baltacıoğlu and Tonguç is also similar. Baltacıoğlu is a calligraphy teacher and Tonguç is an art and handicraft teacher.

As can be seen, Baltacıoğlu's social school and VIs have many similarities. According to Aktan, Baltacıoğlu's educational thought played a significant role in forming the pedagogical theoretical basis for the VIs established in the 1940s. Indeed, he praised the institutes he visited in the 1940s as the practical embodiments of his own pedagogical thoughts.²⁰⁰ Erdinç and Jale Çakıroğlu, supporting this argument, claim that the institutes were built upon Baltacıoğlu's theory of social school since they were developed in response to the villagers' practical demands.²⁰¹ However, the main difference occurs in their understanding of work concept in education. Baltacıoğlu adopted the integration of work with education concept for production purposes, while in Tonguç's understanding, this method was used as a tool to provide education to villages.

2.4.4 M. Şemsettin (Günaltay)'s View that "We Should Raise Village Children as Producers"

M. Şemsettin (Günaltay) was a fervent advocate for restructuring rural education in the Ottoman Empire during the early 20th century. In 1914, he said: "The villagers cannot be

¹⁹⁷ Necmettin Tozlu, *İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu'nun Eğitim Sistemi Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1989), 71–94.

¹⁹⁸ Aktan, *Curriculum studies in Türkiye: A historical perspective*, 232.

¹⁹⁹ İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, *Terbiye İlmî* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Orhaniye, 1917), 61–103.

²⁰⁰ Aktan, *Curriculum studies in Türkiye: A historical perspective*, 234.

²⁰¹ Çakıroğlu and Çakıroğlu, "Reflections on Teacher Education in Türkiye," 255.

awakened by opening a few useless schools in Anatolia." For him, one of the most urgent measures to improve the situation of the villagers is to open regional schools. They would provide boarding primary school education and teach agriculture to the children. They would be fed with food provided by their parents. In each regional school, there would be teachers who graduated from teacher's school and an agriculture school. Şemsettin said, "We should raise the children of the villagers to live happily in their villages, to be producers, not consumers. Because the country is in need of productive elements, not workers and consumers."²⁰²

The issue of raising village children as producers, on which he insisted, is important. Similarly, Tonguç repeatedly emphasized in his works that the villagers should be producers, not consumers, for the development of rural areas.

Regional schools were established as in Semsettin's imagination, but the students' food was not demanded from their families; the expenses of the regional schools were covered by the Ministry of Education. It is necessary to emphasize that this proposal is out of date, because in Ottoman primary-elementary schools, teachers were not paid, and the teacher were making a living with the gifts given by the parents. The use of old methods with the thought of bringing a similar burden to the families shows that even if this proposal would be implemented, it would not make the desired change in villages.

2.4.5 John Dewey's report on the Turkish Education System

John Dewey is one of the great philosophers and pedagogues of his time. He came to Türkiye in the summer of 1924, examined the schools and education system and presented a comprehensive report to the government. Some notable recommendations in Dewey's report as follows:

"The Ministry of Education should first train experts who shall make decisions and plans on the issue of education, and a commission consisting of these experts should go to foreign countries and examine school buildings, educational tools, practical and professional work of schools, physical education and sports games, the situation of village primary schools and development of villages. Also, teacher salaries are very low. These should be increased rapidly, and while the school is being built, the teacher's home should also be built simultaneously."²⁰³

²⁰² Şemsettin Günaltay, *Hurâfâtın hakikate* (İstanbul: Tevsi-i Tıbaat Matbaası, 1916), 223–34.

²⁰³ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 133–6.

Dewey's views on village schools and rural education are as follows:

"The programs of village schools should be adjusted by considering the business life of the environment. The establishment of primary and secondary schools that will be closely related to village life is the most vital issue for Türkiye. The school should also be the health centre of the place where it is located."²⁰⁴

Altunya claimed that Dewey could not see the concrete processes of Turkish education and could not make an accurate assessment because the schools were closed when he visited the country. For this reason, he argued that the claims that the VIs were emerged from the educational philosophy of Dewey did not reflect the truth.²⁰⁵ Researchers like Kirby ve Yalman have accused Dewey of ignoring the realities of Turkish society.²⁰⁶

On the other hand, Akyüz and Altınyelken claimed that VIs were indeed inspired from Dewey's educational ideas and aimed to transform the rural areas and improve the conditions of rural people.²⁰⁷ Similarly, Uygun believes that the VIs were built with Dewey's proposal in mind, however, after its establishment Dewey's principles and methods were not followed and applied.²⁰⁸ In addition, Adanalı claimed that while determining and implementing the education policies of the regime, the regime constantly looked at the recommendations given in the report by Dewey.²⁰⁹ According to Topçu, Dewey's report was seen as the basis for any initiatives to carry out for the rural education of Türkiye.²¹⁰ And Turan asserted that the most visible impact of his report can be seen on the establishment of Village Teachers Schools and VIs.²¹¹ Finally, Biesta and Miedema argued that since the Turkish government wanted to establish a modern, secular, national state, they wanted to use the progressive education of Dewey to realise this aim.²¹²

²⁰⁴ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 305–11.

²⁰⁵ Niyazi Altunya, "John Dewey'in Türk Eğitim Sistemine Etkileri," in *John Dewey: Demokrasi ve Eğitim Kitabının 100. Yılı*, ed. Hasan Ünder and Cengiz Aslan (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2020), 43–8.

²⁰⁶ Kirby, *Türkiye'de Köy Enstitüleri*, 34–7; Ahmet Emin Yalman, *Yarının Türkiye'sine Seyahat* (Ankara: Cem Yayınevi, 1990), 134–5.

²⁰⁷ Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, 211–46; Hülya Kosar Altınyelken, "Student-centred pedagogy in Türkiye: conceptualisations, interpretations and practices," *Journal of Education Policy* 26, no. 2 (2011): 142.

²⁰⁸ Selçuk Uygun, "The impact of John Dewey on the teacher education system in Türkiye," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* 36, no. 4 (2008): 291–304.

²⁰⁹ Hadi Adanalı, "John Dewey's philosophy of education and Turkish educational reform," in *New millennium perspectives in the humanities*, ed. J. Upton-Ward (New York: Global Humanities Press, 2002), 104–14.

²¹⁰ Sedat Topçu, "Türkiye'de cumhuriyet dönemi eğitim hareketlerini etkileyen psikopedagojik cereyanlar," *Türk Kültürü Dergisi* 318 (1989): 584–8.

²¹¹ Turan, "John Dewey's report of 1924," 547–51.

²¹² Gert Biesta and Siebren Miedema, "Dewey in Europe: A case study on the international dimension of the turn-of-the-century educational reform," *American Journal of Education* 105, no. 1 (1996): 6–16.

Unlike the views above, Taşdemirci argued that VIs were the Türkiye-specific model of the idea of training teachers suitable for rural conditions.²¹³ I strongly support this argument because I am convinced that each country's problems, conditions, needs and solutions are different. Based on this, Tonguç developed a special solution proposal for the country's problems in accordance with Türkiye's social and economic situations and the character of rural areas, and resulting of these efforts, VIs have emerged. Yet, the researchers whose arguments were given above, deified Dewey because he is one of the most important pedagogues of the world at the time and his visit to Türkiye, has caused it to be considered as an extremely significant event and since then by some researchers any initiatives that carried out in the countryside tend to be related to Dewey somehow. However, it should be underlined that there were no remarkable recommendations in his report. First, none of the foreign experts who came to the country could understand the Turkish "revolution." Secondly, he never visited rural areas, although he made some recommendations regarding education in rural areas. His main concern was to stop the migration from rural to urban areas as in the USA. However, at the time there was no migration movement in Türkiye. Rural people started to migrate to urban areas in 1960s.

One of the most important suggestions Dewey made was that he placed a particular emphasis on the need to train special teachers for village schools.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, as can be seen above, a more comprehensive recommendation was given by the people mentioned above years before Dewey. It would therefore be wrong to give him extremely important credit for this suggestion.

Finally, Arayıcı claimed that the differences of VIs in compare to Dewey's philosophy is that the work in education was linked to practical training for Dewey; to production for VIs.²¹⁵ I strongly disagree with this claim. In his understanding, Tonguç perceived the work in education in line with Baltacıoğlu, which is the production-based education. However, Tonguç, linked the work in education both practical training (for children to complete their physical and mental development) and to production (due to the bad economic conditions of the country, it was necessary to carry out this project without being burden to the state). By linking the work to production, he aimed to cover needed expenses of institutes. Like

²¹³ Berka Özdoğan, Helga Schwenk and Selçuk Uygun, *Reform Pedagojisi, Eğitim Bilimleri, Okul Reformu, Öğretmen Eğitimi ve Halil Fikret Kanad* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Yayınları, 2002), 302.

²¹⁴ Dewey, *Report and recommendation upon Turkish education*, 14.

²¹⁵ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 273.

Baltacıoğlu, it was not ideological; it was a condition that emerged out of necessity and was used as a tool.

In short, Dewey presented a very complex report. Although there seemed to be significant suggestions when the whole report was examined, in fact, it was a report that was unaware of Türkiye's internal dynamics and reforms, and on the contrary, this report repeated the results Dewey obtained in the investigations he made in other countries.

2.4.6 Pestalozzi and his children's village

Pestalozzi is the father of the modern elementary school, the founder of social pedagogy. Pestalozzi summarized the education philosophy he developed as "to give the same value to head, heart and hand training." He had the opportunity to apply this philosophy at the boarding school in Yverdon. The progressive methods employed at the institute in Yverdon led to an influx of students from all over Europe.²¹⁶ For him, the aim of education is to ensure that the child develops in accordance with his nature. Therefore, the duty of the school and the teacher is to prepare and direct the necessary environment for the free development of the child's natural abilities. Education should be flexible to suit the characteristics of each child and should be determined in accordance with the change and development of the child. Methods that are based on observation rather than books and which enable to comprehend what is happening in the world should be followed.²¹⁷

Giorgetti asserted that Tonguç was motivated by Pestalozzi's idea that popular education should expose students to deal with the real-world problems and work to create more egalitarian societies even in the countryside. Hereby, Tonguç recognized the issue of teacher training for villages as a social, economic, political, and cultural imperative.²¹⁸

2.4.7 Kerschensteiner's work school movement

The concept of work-based education is also reminiscent of Kerschensteiner who is known as a founder of the work school movement. Kerschensteiner defined the objective of the work school as increasing student energy, capacity and enthusiasm for work to its maximum level as well as providing information for others to follow as a result of their labours. Moreover, he also addressed moral education that focused on good citizenship as one of the main objectives

²¹⁶ İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Pestalozzi Çocuklar Köyü* (Ankara: Cumhuriyet Kitapları, 2020), 12–31.

²¹⁷ Hüseyin Pekin and Mustafa Gazalçı, *Pestalozzi'nin İzinde* (Ankara, Eğit-der, 2002), 23–7.

²¹⁸ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 42.

of the work school.²¹⁹ He contended that work school teachers should be educated not through university education but through Pestalozzian educational institutions where they would combine theory and practice in an organic way.²²⁰

It is true that Kerschensteiner had an indisputable effect on educational institutions in Türkiye and on Tonguç. In the 1930s of Türkiye, the work school movement was attracting much interest in educational circles with six works by Kerschensteiner translated into Turkish at this time. Tonguç personally translated Kerschensteiner's book titled *The Soul of the Educator and the Problem of Teacher Education* into Turkish in 1931.²²¹ This work was long used as a textbook in the department of pedagogy at the Gazi Teachers Institute as a source for the teachers of the day.²²² In 1933, Tonguç published a monograph on Kerschensteiner and his approach to education.²²³

For Giorgetti, foundation of VIs were influenced by the ideas of educational reformers such as Johann Pestalozzi, Georg Kerschensteiner, and John Dewey. Pestalozzi and Kerschensteiner maintained that not only the head but also the heart and the body had to be educated, whilst Pestalozzi's emphasis on learning in real life situations were put into practice in these institutes.²²⁴

For Recep Yalçın, Hüseyin Uzunboylu and Tuğba Küçüktamer, the common point of Dewey and Pestalozzi is that they placed pragmatic education before abstract and theoretical education, a view which had an impact on Tonguç. They believed that people could contribute to their society by being trained in occupations that are appropriate for their personalities and desires.²²⁵

I claim that the philosophy of education on the job was not taken directly from Pestalozzi or Dewey as claimed by some researchers such as Giorgetti, Uygun, Arayıcı, Akyüz, Altınyelken, Yalçın, Uzunboylu and Küçüktamer but was developed by Tonguç considering the character and needs of the country. Nevertheless, VIs were an institution specific to Turks. It was originally designed in accordance with the character and needs of the country, especially the dispersed structure of the rural areas — there are 40 thousand villages,

²¹⁹ Georg Kerschensteiner, *İş Okulu Kavramı* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1947), 90–1.

²²⁰ George M. Kerschensteiner, *Mürebbinin Ruhu ve Muallim Yetiştirme Meselesi* (Ankara: Köy Hocası Matbaası, 1931), 32.

²²¹ Kerschensteiner, *Mürebbinin Ruhu ve Muallim Yetiştirme Meselesi*, 33–52.

²²² Pakize Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019), 74.

²²³ İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Kerschensteiner* (İstanbul: Türkiye Matbaası, 1933), 23–46.

²²⁴ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 44.

²²⁵ Recep Yalçın, *İsmail Hakkı Tonguç'un Türk Eğitim Sistemi Üzerine Görüşleri* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006), 45–8; Kucuktamer and Uzunboylu, "The conditions that enabled," 394.

and the socio-economic and cultural conditions and populations of these villages were distinctive from each other. In the context of teacher training, two distinct classifications have been developed to cater to the diverse population densities of rural communities. The first category, termed as "village educator," is specifically designed for villages that are home to less than 400 residents. On the other hand, the "village teacher" category is for villages with a population exceeding 400. The population of the village serves as a significant factor in determining these classifications. The delineation of village educator roles based on a population threshold of 400 was a calculated strategy. This distinction was informed by the unique socio-economic and cultural conditions inherent to each village size. Smaller villages required a specialized, adaptable educator to navigate their particular challenges, while larger villages necessitated a more formalized educational structure. Hence, the 400-person criterion was not arbitrary but grounded in the empirical realities of rural Turkish life.

Secondly, the adoption of the philosophy of integration of work with education and its application in the VIs are not ideological like the famous pedagogues Dewey, Kerschesteiner and Pestalozzi; arose out of necessity. The economic status of the country was very bad and the regime could not even provide basic services to rural areas. Utilizing this strategy, VIs are established in the most cost-efficient manner. Furthermore, the incorporation of democratic principles and values in the operations of the VIs signify a major breakthrough in pedagogical practice. Such innovative approaches include the formation of a VI Assembly, the active participation of students in administrative processes, and the implementation of co-education, among others. These pioneering practices have exceeded the expectations and visions of even the most renowned pedagogues in the field.

Finally, this multi-faceted education offered with an intensive program, general culture lessons, agriculture lessons, technical lessons, the obligation to play an instrument, the construction of the buildings in the institute, the work in the land and the vineyards and orchards, and all the work in the institute is done by the students. It should be emphasized that there was no similar institution in any country, or no educators or pedagogues suggested such initiative at the time.

2.4.8 Mustafa Necati and his Village Teachers' School Initiative

Mustafa Necati was the Minister of National Education between 1925 and 1929, previously served as the chairman of the Teachers' Union. He and his Village Teacher's School idea is important because this idea was implemented until 1932. Unfortunately, his sudden death in 1929 caused a disruption in what he was trying to accomplish.

With the law enacted in 1926, teacher schools were divided into two as city teacher schools and village teacher schools and this division prepared the legal basis for educating teachers according to the village realities.²²⁶ It has been stated that the duration of these schools would be 5 years and that a house and land would be provided to the graduates of the village teacher school in the villages. After this draft law, the Village Teachers' School was opened in Kayseri in 1926. This was the first teacher's school opened for villages in the history of Turkish education.²²⁷ The school opened in Kayseri had nearly 30 acres of fields, vineyards, vegetable gardens, apiaries and chicken coops. Only male students were accepted to these schools. The curriculum of this school consisted of cultural lessons and applied courses such as workshops, handicrafts and agriculture. Education and production were engaged with each other and maintained simultaneously. Theoretical lectures were given in the morning and practical studies and activities in the afternoon.²²⁸

Although very productive results were obtained in the years when this project was implemented, after the sudden death of M. Necati in 1929, the minister who replaced him has abandoned the village teacher schools and for this reason, these schools were closed in 1932.²²⁹

It can be said that this attempt was successful when the conditions of the period are taken into consideration. However, it should be noted that the mistakes made in the past were repeated. The students admitted to the school were of urban origin. In addition, according to the information we obtained from the memoirs of İsmail Önder, who had studied at the Village Teacher's School in Kayseri, the school was against the students' contact with the villagers. Although the students would work in the villages after graduation, they were prevented from going to the bazaar and communicating with the villagers.²³⁰ Considering that these people were from the city, did not live in the villages and were educated to be teachers in the villages, it is difficult to understand why the administration of the school has prevented any contact with villagers. However, it is still obvious that it has been an exemplary experiment for VIs and have made a great contribution to the VIs initiative in this respect.

²²⁶ İsa Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2018), 48–9.

²²⁷ Ali Arayıcı, *Kemalist Türkiye'de Eğitim Politikaları ve Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Ceylan Yayınları, 1999), 103–7.

²²⁸ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 91–9.

²²⁹ Muhammed Sarı and Esra Uz, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Köy Eğitim Kursları," *Turkish History Education Journal* 6, no. 1 (2016): 32.

²³⁰ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 397–8.

İsmail Hakkı Tongu explained the reason why this initiative was not successful as follows:

"The reason why this initiative was successful in 1940, not 1926; The fact that the republican regime raised its generation in 1940. In 1926, since the Turkish Republic could not raise its generation yet, the regime tried to make these reforms with people who grew up in the empirical order and mentality. In this case, it limited the scope of reforms. In addition, the fact that there are people who we call semi-intellectuals, who are still in the imperial mentality but seem to be defender of the new regime, and when they appointed to important positions, they act in a way that prevent to apply and disseminate reforms, has also caused this attempt to fail."²³¹

²³¹ Tongu, *Canlandırılacak Ky*, 369.

Chapter 3

3. The Period between 1930 to 1940 and the Foundation of VIs

3.1 Revived Interest in Rural Areas

Three historical events that took place in the 1930s; The World Economic Crisis of 1929, the Free Republican Party (FRP) experiment in 1930 and the Menemen Incident that took place in the same year drew the attention of the regime to rural areas.

The fact that a rapidly industrializing country was affected by the 1929 crisis so deeply demonstrated that industrialization alone would not suffice, and that agriculture should be developed alongside with industrialization. According to Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu, when Türkiye was seriously impacted by the 1929 crisis, the regime sought to overcome it through agriculture.²³² Kuruç even suggested that agriculture plays a complementary role to industrialization. According to him, 81% of the population being farmers and living in villages necessitated the development of agriculture through the usage of modern techniques.²³³ Finally, Aytemur argued that the link between agricultural growth and industrialization, as well as the latter's reliance on the former, were made clear by the Crisis.²³⁴

Another significant event was the effort to transition to a multi-party system in 1930. Mustafa Kemal, an advocate for the democratization of the nation, initiated this transition for the second time. Unlike the first instance in 1924, which was largely driven by the pressure exerted by opposition groups, this attempt was executed on a voluntary basis. The FRP, founded in 1930, was instrumental in this process. It was established by Fethi Okyar, a close associate of Mustafa Kemal, further highlighting Kemal's commitment to a more democratic political system.²³⁵ However, the fact that the FRP received widespread support from those opposed to the republican regime and reforms, and that in its inaugural rally in Izmir, these people's propaganda against M. Kemal and republican regime, horrified the republican elites. Despite the fact that Fethi Okyar went to this meeting with M. Kemal's picture and openly stated that he would support M. Kemal's revolution and reforms, propaganda against the regime and the reforms continued.²³⁶

²³² Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu, "The conditions that enabled," 394.

²³³ Bilsay Kuruç, *Mustafa Kemal Döneminde Ekonomi* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1987), 171.

²³⁴ Nuran Aytemur Sağıroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes: A Contradictory Expression of Kemalist Populism* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2009), 97.

²³⁵ Baskın Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği: Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme* (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 1988), 179.

²³⁶ Karaömerlioğlu, *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta*, 56.

Furthermore, the opposition party gained unexpected large amounts of support from the public, which set the ground for the Menemen Incident and this, as Aytemur claims, prompted fear of changes being retrogressive.²³⁷ The Menemen Incident refers to a significant event in which a faction of Sharia supporters, emboldened by the establishment of the FRP, initiated a violent rebellion in the Menemen district of Izmir. This uprising marked a period of heightened tension and unrest in the region, emphasizing the potent influence of political dynamics on social stability. According to Karaömerlioglu, the barbaric murder of three soldiers sent to suppress the incident and their hanging in the square as a message to the republican regime, revealed that the revolution and reforms of the new regime were not embraced and recognized by the masses.²³⁸ It was therefore vital to free the minds of the people from the impacts of such regressive thoughts and institutions and secure the new regime. Oran argues that as it was explicitly seen in the FRP experiment, the westernizing reforms imposed "from above" at the expense of "the people" –their "inclination" and "needs"– would cause great reactions especially in the absence of "economic prosperity."²³⁹

Additionally, reforms turned out to be superficial and baseless. Feroz Ahmad claimed that demonstrations during the FRP's meeting in İzmir and the Menemen Incident itself showed that the bigotry was still present all around the country and it terrified reformers.²⁴⁰ For this reason, Köker argues that maintaining security and safeguarding national unity, became more important than maintaining the democratic character of the nation-state²⁴¹ and the attempt to transit to the multi-party system was suspended.

The reason why these events are given such importance and have an important place in history is that since these three events occurred one after the other, their effect was catastrophic. Furthermore, both the governing regime and the elite strata recognized that the nation's prevailing issues could only be addressed effectively through the development and education of the rural populace. However, despite identifying the problem, the underlying causes remained elusive. In a state of alarm, previous errors were inadvertently replicated, and the "People's Houses" initiative was launched with the mentality of serving the people, paradoxically, despite the people's own inclinations or objections. Undeniably, an optimal solution would entail the creation and extension of a project that considers the dispersed

²³⁷ Sağıroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 97–102.

²³⁸ Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 68–9.

²³⁹ Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği: Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme*, 179.

²⁴⁰ Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy: 1950-1975* (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1977), 108.

²⁴¹ Levent Köker, *Modernleşme, Kemalizm ve Demokrasi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1990), 159.

structure, requirements, and challenges endemic to rural regions. The VIs were essentially a project which has all the components that would enable rural development to take place. For this reason, although it was short-lived, it was able to raise thousands of teachers and make such important contributions to the country.

3.2 People's Houses initiative and the reason of its failure

In response to these events, the newly instituted regime embarked on a series of initiatives aimed at reaching out to the broader populace. Among these efforts, the establishment of the People's Houses in 1932 stood out as the most notable. The regime planned the People's Houses as education centers for adults in order to operate in the fields of culture, sports and education.²⁴² For Başgöz and Wilson, another aim of the regime was to make People's Houses a bridge between cities and villages.²⁴³ Although İğdemir claimed that The People's Houses were not "political institutions"²⁴⁴ since People's Houses were organized and financed by the regime, Çetin claimed that they spread the principles and values of the regime in general.²⁴⁵ It is surely inevitable that the regime would use it to pursue its goals from such a large-scale project carried out during the single-party period.

Karaömerlioğlu claimed that these cultural centers opened in both cities and rural areas were successful at a certain level in cities but failed in villages.²⁴⁶ The reason for this was that the work of the People's Houses towards the villages was superficial, they considered peasants as objects of social engineering, and the employees of the People's Houses and the intellectuals were not sincere in their attitudes towards the villagers. To give an example, most of the visits from People's Houses to villages can be considered as domestic tourism. Kirby articulated that experts, intellectuals, and politicians embarked on expeditions to rural villages, adopting an approach akin to the exploration of an unfamiliar mainland.²⁴⁷ Nevertheless, since 1940, small public chambers have been established in the villages to include the work of the People's Houses and their numbers reached to 4066 in 1946, however, they could not be a part of the village since they could not meet the needs of the village.²⁴⁸

²⁴² Necla Özçelik, *Anadolu Aydınlanmasının Kilittişi: Köy Enstitüleri* (Ankara: Can Yayınları, 2019), 70.

²⁴³ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 183–96.

²⁴⁴ Uluğ İğdemir, *Atatürk ve Halkevleri Atatürkçü Düşünce Üzerine Denemeler* (Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1974), 119–20.

²⁴⁵ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 153–66.

²⁴⁶ Karaömerlioğlu, *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta*, 82–3.

²⁴⁷ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 104–5.

²⁴⁸ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 269–70.

Oran posits that the primary contributing factor to the perceived failure of the People's Houses was the inability to bridge the divide between the elites and the masses. In other words, these institutions functioned primarily as a conduit for transmitting government directives to the public, rather than fostering an environment that encouraged dialogue and engagement among diverse social strata.²⁴⁹ In addition, Kemal Karpat claimed that after this project, the gap between peasant and city dwellers were deepened.²⁵⁰

On the other side, for Kandemir, the failure was inevitable because the expectations from this initiative were too immense and unrealistic and such goals could only be achieved with the full-scale government assistance and mobilization.²⁵¹ Besides, Karaömerlioglu attributed the failure to "for the people, despite the people" mentality.²⁵² Lastly, according to Aysal, the failure of the People's Houses in the countryside caused the regime to take this matter more seriously and VIs emerged as a result of subsequent studies and efforts.²⁵³

In my assessment, despite the elites' endeavors to foster rural development, their initiatives were largely unsuccessful due to their detachment from the realities of rural life. Owing to their non-peasant backgrounds, they faced challenges in accurately diagnosing the problems faced by rural communities. Further exacerbating this issue was the perception of villagers as uneducated and ignorant, which led to their exclusion from participatory processes. A noteworthy exception can be seen in the success of the VIs. This success is, in part, attributable to the rural origins of their founder, Tonguç, which likely provided him with a nuanced understanding of the challenges and needs of these communities.

3.3 The process leading to VIs: 1935-1940

Saffet Arıkan was appointed as the Minister of Culture in 1935. It is interesting that Arıkan took the office even though he was not an educator. Arıkan, who had a military background, was M. Kemal's aide-de-camp at the time²⁵⁴ was appointed to this position to make the ministry functional and purify it from politics.²⁵⁵ As soon as Arıkan took office, he appointed İsmail Hakkı Tonguç as the General Directorate of Primary Education.

²⁴⁹ Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği: Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme*, 180–1.

²⁵⁰ Karpat, "The People's Houses in Türkiye," 65.

²⁵¹ Selahattin Kandemir, "Köycülüğümüz," *Ülkü* 4, no. 21 (1934): 236.

²⁵² Karaömerlioglu, "The People's Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Türkiye," 83–4.

²⁵³ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 270.

²⁵⁴ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 516.

²⁵⁵ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 154.

In the realization of this appointment, besides Tongu's personal knowledge, skills and the philosophy of integration of work with education concept he was developing,²⁵⁶ politicians such as Nâfi Atuf Kansu and Cevat Dursunođlu, who knew Tongu and his thoughts on village education well and stated that he is qualified to achieve an educational development that Atatürk desired, were also influential.²⁵⁷ Looking at Tongu's background, it is as if he has been prepared for this task all his life. Having originated from a rural setting, Tongu was inherently familiar with the socio-cultural structures, the distinct characteristics, the specific needs of the villages, and importantly, the villagers' expectations from the state. His intimate understanding provided him with a valuable perspective when devising policies and initiatives that accurately addressed the needs of these communities.²⁵⁸

He also developed a unique method, integration of work with education concept, to educate children and build schools in the villages in the fastest and least costly way. He applied this principle by adapting it to the Turkish character.²⁵⁹ In contrast to managing the institutes and village schools from a remote location in Ankara, Tongu opted for a hands-on approach, frequently visiting these institutions and villages. He personally assessed the status and needs of the schools and villages, an effort that further underscores his deep commitment to the task. The fact that he visited approximately 11,000 villages over a span of a decade is a testament to the seriousness with which he approached his responsibilities.²⁶⁰

According to Ali Arayıcı, Tongu, with his rhetoric, was a good, determined, brave, revolutionary and militant Kemalist; with his behavior, disposition, hard work, productivity and efficiency, was a good socialist.²⁶¹ In the context of 1930s Türkiye, being labeled a "socialist" did not strictly imply adherence to Marxist ideology. Instead, it often denoted support for state-led modernization, secularism, and national development initiatives. When Arayıcı describes Tongu as a "socialist", it likely underscores Tongu's advocacy for state-driven educational reforms and national progress, rather than a full embrace of Marxist socialism. On the other side, for Karaömerliođlu, Tongu was an fervent supporter of the Kemalism of his day. Moreover, if he must be identified in any way, he adhered to corporatism, a political philosophy with deeper roots in Türkiye and the late Ottoman Empire.

²⁵⁶ Arayıcı, *Kemalist Türkiye 'de Eğitim Politikaları ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 137.

²⁵⁷ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 56.

²⁵⁸ Türkođlu, *Tongu ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 40–51.

²⁵⁹ Tongu, *Köyde Eğitim*, 87–93.

²⁶⁰ Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *Köy Sorunu ve Gençlik* (Ankara: Türkiye Milli Gençlik Teşkilatı, 1967), 20–1.

²⁶¹ Arayıcı, *Kemalist Türkiye 'de Eğitim Politikaları ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 141.

To him, Tongu envisioned a society based on the division of labor on the basis of professions.²⁶²

In a meeting held one day, Arıkan complained that there were schools in about a thousand villages but there were no teachers to be employed in them. Mustafa Kemal suggested that sergeants and corporals who were trained in the Turkish army and returned to their villages after completing their military service, could be benefited in this regard and wanted the applicability of this suggestion to be investigated. Arıkan immediately shared this idea with Tongu and asked whether it was applicable.²⁶³ Tongu asked for some time to research this suggestion and for this purpose, he made investigations in the villages of Kayseri, Yozgat, orum and Eskiehir. In these investigations, he also enabled sergeants and corporals who had served in the military to give exemplary lessons. After the examinations, he saw that there were such personnel in the villages, and some of these people already voluntarily started to teach how to read and write to children.²⁶⁴

3.3.1 Research Commission

Tongu's return with positive results from his examinations paved the way for the subject to be discussed more broadly. For this purpose, a research commission was established and the members of the commission –Tongu being one of them– visited the villages around Ankara and made further investigations.²⁶⁵ In these examinations, the conditions and needs of the rural areas, the expectations of the villagers, and whether the village youth who had done their military service as sergeants had the necessary skills and qualifications were investigated. In the report, the following details were noted:

1. People who graduated from Western-style schools in Trkiye and then moved to the rural areas to work either struggled to adapt to village life or quickly returned to the cities when given the chance.²⁶⁶
2. Within 4-5 years of leaving school, the villagers who had learnt how to read and write as well as related skills and information had forgotten those things.²⁶⁷
3. People of the countryside who had served in the military and had learnt how to read

²⁶² Karamerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Trkiye," 65–6.

²⁶³ Trkođlu, *Tongu ve Ky Enstitleri*, 102–26.

²⁶⁴ Aydın, *Ky Enstitleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 167–76.

²⁶⁵ Engin Tongu, *Bir Eđitim Devrimcisi İsmail Hakkı Tongu: Yaşamı, đretisi, Eylemi* (İzmir: Yeni Kuşak Ky Enstitller Derneđi Yayınları, 2007), 180–2.

²⁶⁶ Ky đretmen ve Eđitmen Yetiřtirme İři, Training Necessary Personnel for the Village, ca. 1936a, 4.

²⁶⁷ Hasan Gnder, "The versatile," in *A Haza Szolglatban*, ed. N. Barth, P. Kovcs, V. Novk-Varr and A. Urbanovics (Budapest: Doktoranduszok Orszgos Szvetsge, 2021), 203.

and write, were teaching those skills to children voluntarily when they returned to their villages. Additionally, they taught that mosquitos carry malaria and that the republic was a system without a Sultan."²⁶⁸

After reviewing the report, the regime decided to train villagers who had previously served in the military as educators.

3.3.2 Educator Experiment

The first educator's course was launched in July 1936 at Çifteler, Eskisehir with the involvement of 84 candidates following the favorable findings of the research report. The reason why Çifteler was chosen for this course was to benefit from stud farms and the agricultural staff there. The participants were selected among the candidates from the villages of Ankara and Tunceli who had done their military service as sergeants or corporals and were engaged in agricultural work in their village.²⁶⁹ When the education started, the course did not have a program or any books. The research commission was given the task of preparing them. The necessary principles would be determined according to the observation, experience and results to be obtained during the implementation and would be matured by making the necessary changes.²⁷⁰ This is a very important detail. Tonguç and his team, who wanted to prepare an effective program, observed the first courses opened and changed/improved the parts they thought not good enough and tried to make these courses and institutions perfect. Therefore, the course administration notified Tonguç about the course schedules, course work and status report every 15 days.

The program included courses in both culture and agriculture. Culture lessons: alphabet, reading, written expression, calculus, homeland and life knowledge, while agriculture lessons: field and garden agriculture, agricultural arts and animal breeding.²⁷¹ The education in the course was done in groups of 8-10 persons rather than in a class setting. An experienced teacher graduated from a teacher's school and an agricultural officer graduated from an agricultural school were assigned to each set. There was only the cook and his assistant as servants. Apart from cooking, all other works of the course such as environmental

²⁶⁸ Eyüboğlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine*, 62-3.

²⁶⁹ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 35-6.

²⁷⁰ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 514-9.

²⁷¹ Niyazi Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış* (Ankara: Umut Matbaacılık, 2009), 25.

cleaning and whitewashing were done by the candidates. Educator candidates would go to the villages near Mahmudiye for village examinations and make interviews with the villagers.²⁷²

Although it was planned to give 8 months of training, but the management, who wanted to see the outcomes as soon as possible, gave a training period of only 4.5 months for the first course. On November 16, 1936, in an organization attended by ministers in Ankara, trainee educator candidates gave exemplary trial lessons.²⁷³ The educators, who received the appreciation of the ministers and experts in the trial lesson, were assigned to their own villages. Following this trial lesson, Falih Rıfık Atay made the following comment about the educators: "I saw one of them teaching, I can assure you that I and my generation have never had the enjoyment of finding such a teacher in the primary schools of the greatest Ottoman cities."²⁷⁴

In addition, a region was formed from 8-10 villages where the educators worked, and an Itinerant Head Teachers (IHTs) was appointed to that region, and it was ensured that the education of the educators continued even after graduation.²⁷⁵ Educators were expected to teach literacy, basic mathematics, and civics, as well as introduce and disseminate modern techniques in agriculture to children and villagers.²⁷⁶

When the first attempt was successful, it was decided to expand the educator courses. But before that, Tonguç sent two of his colleagues to these villages for various examinations to determine how successful the educators were in the villages they were assigned to. As a result of these investigations, the courses were rapidly expanded when the instructors were observed to be successful.²⁷⁷ One of Tonguç's personal characteristics was to make sure that the current step was successful before moving on to the next step. Perhaps this was the secret behind his accomplishments.

3.4 Village Educator Law

In order to ensure the nationwide propagation of the Village Educator courses, it was necessary to establish a solid legal foundation. Consequently, the Village Educator Law was enacted in the Turkish Grand National Assembly on June 11, 1937, under the legislative

²⁷² İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüsü Yılları* (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1976), 13.

²⁷³ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 174.

²⁷⁴ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 224–9.

²⁷⁵ İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *İlköğretim Kavramı* (Ankara: Piramit Yayıncılık, 2004), 310.

²⁷⁶ Köy Öğretmen ve Eğitimci Yetiştirme İşleri, *Training Necessary Personnel for the Village*, ca.1936a, 4.

²⁷⁷ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 67.

statute number 3238²⁷⁸ This law consisted of 22 articles in total however, only the important articles are noted in this study:

"Article 1- Village educators are employed to guide the villagers to carry out the education and training works of the villages whose population status are not suitable for sending teachers, and to ensure that the agricultural works are carried out in a professional way.

Article 4- A region is formed from 8-10 villages where the village educators are located. A primary school teacher who has participated in village educator training courses is employed as an IHTs in each region.

Article 5- Village educators are given a monthly fee of not less than 10 liras per month from the budget of the Ministry of Culture and some samples to increase production such as seeds, saplings, breeding stock and agricultural tools from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture."²⁷⁹

According to Türkan Çetin, the objectives of this project, were to spread the republican regime's principles throughout the villages, make peasants aware of their citizenship rights, provide primary school education for village children, and lead the transition to scientific agriculture in the countryside through educators.²⁸⁰

The point to be noted here is that the section "to guide the villagers" was added in the first article of this law. Thus, it is seen that the aim of this project is not only to increase the level of education, but also to social transformation through the guidance of village educators. After the enactment of the law, educator courses started to be opened rapidly. By 1940, the number of them increased to 19.²⁸¹

3.5 Village Teachers' Schools Experiment: Çifteler and Kızılçullu

Necessary personnel began to be trained for villages with a population of less than 400. The next step was to train staff for villages with a population of more than 400. As in the educator's

²⁷⁸ Eğitimci hakkında kanun metni by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 11 June 1937, C01-X-67, Legal Regulations, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–3. (hereafter cited as Eğitimci hakkında kanun metni, Legal regulations)

²⁷⁹ Köy eğitimci kanun tasarısı by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. ca. 1937, C01-54-14F, legal regulations for the educators, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2. (hereafter cited as Köy eğitimci kanun tasarısı, legal regulations for the educators)

²⁸⁰ Türkan Çetin, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde Köycülük Politikaları: Köye Doğru Hareketi* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1999), 229.

²⁸¹ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 7.

experiment, the trial-and-error method would be used while training this staff as well. For this purpose, it was decided to open a village teacher's school in two different places.

Among the institutions established under this initiative, one Village Teacher School was inaugurated in 1937 in Kızılcıllu, in the vicinity of İzmir, utilizing the facilities of a former American college acquired from American proprietors. Concurrently, another such institution was set up in the village of Mahmudiye, located in Eskişehir. These establishments represented significant milestones in the effort to advance rural education. With the opening of these schools, village education was seized in two different ways. With the staff to be trained in these schools, the teacher needs of the villages with a population of more than 400 would be met, and the teachers needed by the regional schools to be established in the villages with a population of less than 400 would be trained. (Students in these regional schools would be able to complete their primary school education in five years. The educators gave only three years of primary school education.)²⁸² Tonguç explained the purpose of this experiment as filling the gap between village and urban societies and eliminating the distinctions in the life opportunities of village and urban children.²⁸³

Two different programs and views were applied in these schools. In Çifteler, which is one of the two preliminary trials of the main project, Tonguç's "education-on-the-job, through the job, for the job" was based. Meanwhile, Emin Soysal, who was under the influence of pedagogue Halil Fikret Kanad, tried to implement a different system in Kızılcıllu. For him, "education was the goal; job was to be used as a means of doing this. Education on the job, through the job, for the job was a fantasy." With this in mind, Soysal tried to use Kızılcıllu as a different model laboratory designed by Kanad.²⁸⁴ To illustrate this point of view, if one wanted to teach how to make a table in technical courses in Kızılcıllu, the student would make a miniature of the table and throw that miniature table away after making it. It is seen that the resources used here are wasted. On the other hand, in Çifteler, the table that the student would use in the classroom was made in the classroom and then used in the institute. The philosophy of the method used in Çifteler was to use the scarce resources efficiently.

The Çifteler experiment was essentially a continuation of the successful Educator Experiment, but a more comprehensive and advanced version. The aim of this experiment was to improve the economic conditions of the village, as in the educator experiment, and to

²⁸² Tonguç, *İlköğretim Kavramı*, 312–3.

²⁸³ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 194–5.

²⁸⁴ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 94–5.

train people from various professions required by a village economy on the way to modernization. Tongu formulated this view in the memorandum he sent to the managers in ifteler in 1937.²⁸⁵

Conversely, in Kızılcıllu, Soysal and Kanad asserted that a program implemented out of exigency, such as the educator's experiment, could not be made a permanent solution. From their perspective, it seemed untenable to establish an institute in a location devoid of fundamental facilities such as a dedicated building, laboratory, and cultural center, and seemingly detached from the broader, developed world. They maintained that the prospective village teachers ought to be exposed to an environment conducive to the demonstration of best pedagogical practices. In light of these considerations, the ifteler Experiment was deemed to be imprudent. This was primarily because the heavy emphasis on manual labor, such as digging holes or manufacturing bricks, was believed to distract the students from focusing on their academic pursuits.²⁸⁶

Soysal and Kanad's views would make more sense in today's standards. Because, while ifteler set out with the motto "one school for each village, one teacher for each school", taking into account the current situation and conditions of the country with insufficient financial means, Kızılcıllu, ignoring the financial situation of the country, implemented the education system that should be present in a developed and modern country. It is also worth mentioning that the Kızılcıllu school was established on fertile lands where transportation infrastructure was developed, market access was possible, railways were available. It can be said that the villagers in this region were more conscious compared to the villagers in other parts of the country. In addition, the fact that it was established in the buildings where the old American college was located, in short, that everything was ready and that the administration and students did not encounter any difficulties, can explain their thinking and acting in this direction.

In contrast, the teachers and students in ifteler had to do everything themselves. In order to be able to teach, they had to first construct their buildings, classrooms, dining halls, and dormitories. When this is the case, it is normal for those who find everything ready to criticize those who find nothing ready and have to do everything on their own. However, what renders the VIs indelible in contemporary discourse is the application of the methods and principles first introduced in the ifteler experiment, later adopted in institutes nationwide.

²⁸⁵ Tongu, *Köyde Eđitim*, 307–11.

²⁸⁶ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 209–23.

Had the methods and principles employed in Kızılçullu been utilized across all other institutes, these institutions might likely have faded into the annals of history, much like past attempts at similar initiatives. In such a scenario, the conception of this dissertation might not have arisen, illustrating the impact and legacy of the VIs' distinct approach.

The experiment in Kızılçullu ended in 1942 when Soysal was appointed to another mission.²⁸⁷

3.6 The Foundation of VIs

After the experiment of Çifteler Teachers' School gave positive results, preparations for the law of VIs were started. In an environment where WWII started, it was not easy to stay neutral and to initiate a project of vital importance for rural areas.

3.6.1 Reactions in the Parliament Discussions

During a period when parliamentary attention was concentrated primarily on wartime considerations, and the country's resources were largely committed to military mobilization, the call for resource allocation and budgetary support for the establishment of these institutions in rural areas understandably incited the dissent of certain factions within the parliament. To counter this, attempts were made to gain their endorsement by articulating the necessity of these institutions and emphasizing the urgency of their expedient establishment. It has been demonstrated with the support of related data that the rural areas where the majority of the population lived were still the center of reactionary and conservative thoughts; the number of students who could go to school in rural areas were quite low, and there was no improvement or development in the social, economic and cultural conditions of villages since the proclamation of the republican regime.²⁸⁸ It has been stated that with these new institutions, a teacher representing the new and advanced human type would be trained to create an advanced level in the cultural and general life of the villages.

The promoters argued that learning from the past, students were taken from the villages only and they would be raised in an environment that was not much different from the village life itself.²⁸⁹ These institutions were designed in a way that they would be even

²⁸⁷ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 519.

²⁸⁸ Köy Öğretmeni Yetiştirmek Maksudile Açılacak Enstitüler Hakkında Not, Village Institutes legal regulations, 1.

²⁸⁹ Köy Enstitüleri Yasa Tasarısı ve Gerekçe by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940a, D01-76-3, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitüleri Yasa Tasarısı ve Gerekçe, Legal regulations and Works, 1940a).

able to build their own schools, dormitories, and cafeterias, produce the necessary products for their food, clothing, and other subsistence they needed, in short, almost everything on their own²⁹⁰ and they would soon become self-sufficient institutions. In this way, these institutions would only receive a very small budget and resources from the government in the beginning, and then they would not be a burden to the state. Seeing that the financial dimension of the work would be affordable, the president İnönü supported these institutions and his backing facilitated the legalization of this initiative.

Throughout the parliamentary debate, and even subsequent to the legalization of the law and establishment of these institutions, numerous inquiries were posed and critiques were articulated. Of particular interest was the nomenclature of these establishments. Specifically, questions arose as to why these were designated as "institutes" as opposed to "village schools." Yücel explained that these schools would not only raise teachers but also the needed other personnel to revive the rural life and improve the rural economy.²⁹¹

Another question was about the origin of this institutes. A deputy asked: where did we obtained this system from? Yücel replied: "This is not a copy, but it is neither a fabrication. We have not taken the precautions that any country has taken while solving the primary education problems. We are not ignorant. This is ours; we did not take it from anyone, let them take it from us,'" and emphasized that these institutions were unique.²⁹²

Işıl Ünal and Seçkin Özsoy claimed that left-wing sympathisers of the period, criticised the obligatory service clause of 20 years. They believed that this would place an undue burden on the students, who were denied equality with teacher's training school graduates and who would be disallowed from engaging in social action in other spheres.²⁹³ However for Giorgetti, this requirement was viewed as insurance to keep rural students in the village once they graduated.²⁹⁴

The harshest criticism was the claim that these institutions tried to create a peasant-urban duality. Kazım Karabekir claimed that the institutes making a village-urban distinction

²⁹⁰ Köy Enstitüleri Yasa Tasarısı by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940b, D01-6-1, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitüleri Yasa Tasarısı, Legal regulations and Works, 1940b)

²⁹¹ Tonguç, *İlköğretim Kavramı*, 326.

²⁹² Köy Estitüleri yasa tasarısı ve TBMM encümen mazbataları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940d, D01-26-2, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 7–8. (hereafter cited as Köy Estitüleri yasa tasarısı ve TBMM encümen mazbataları, Legal regulations and Works, 1940d)

²⁹³ Işıl L. Ünal and Seçkin Özsoy, "Modern Türkiye'nin Sisyphos Miti: Eğitimde Fırsat Eşitliği," in *75 Yılda Eğitim*, ed. Fatma Gök (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1999): 49–58.

²⁹⁴ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 47.

in the selection of students (citing that only rural children could be enrolled) and this would increase the gap between the village and the city.²⁹⁵ Aysal stated that the deputies' disfavor of this law has not supported it with the suspicion that a new social class is being created.²⁹⁶ In response to this criticism, Yücel stated that the regime did not accept classes and privileges, but that there were occupational groups in terms of lifestyle, and that these were not groups expressing political separation, but some work and business groups. He emphasized that the matter was to raise village children without losing their ruralness in terms of life.²⁹⁷

I think that the underlying message of this criticism from these politicians and experts: A different type of people would be raised in villages with these institutions, and that this new type of person could harm the current order and ongoing interests of the citizens of the city. In other words, it was feared that the cities where the elites lived and had access to all kinds of services, and the villagers, who bore all the burden of the state and yet received no or very limited service from the state, would be enlightened through these institutions and realize this unjust order that has been going on for centuries, that they would do something to change this order. For this reason, elites and landlords opposed this initiative in order to ensure the continuation of the existing order.

3.6.2 VIs Law and its articles

The VIs draft law no. 3803 was accepted and legalized with 278 votes in the last ballot held on April 17, 1940. The important point to mention here is that although there were 428 deputies in total in the parliament, 148 deputies did not participate in this vote, demonstrating that they do not support this law.²⁹⁸ Among those were Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes, who were going to be fiercely opposed to these organizations in 1946 and were going to be in power starting from 1950. From this perspective, it can be inferred that approximately one third of the parliamentary body did not endorse this law. Given this resistance, it would not be inaccurate to state that these institutions were confronted with inherent challenges from their inception.

²⁹⁵ Fevzi Çakmak, "Kuruluşundan kapatılışına kadar Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi içerisinde köy enstitülerine yönelik muhalefet," *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, no. 15 (2007): 225–6.

²⁹⁶ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 250.

²⁹⁷ Köy Enstitüleri yasası hakkında konuşma ve Hakkı Tonguç el yazısı notları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940c, D01-66-23, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 4–9. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitüleri yasası hakkında konuşma ve Hakkı Tonguç el yazısı notları, Legal regulations and Works, 1940c)

²⁹⁸ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 195–251.

The important articles of the VIs Law are given below:

"Article 1- VIs are opened by the Ministry of Education in places where there is suitable land for agricultural work in order to educate village teachers and other professionals who are useful to the village.

Article 5- Healthy and skilled village children who have completed village primary schools are selected and admitted to the institutes. The education period of the institutes is at least five years.

Article 7- Those who are appointed as teachers after completing their education in these institutions are obliged to work for twenty years in places indicated by the Ministry of Education. Those who didn't finish the required service term had to reimburse their school expenses twice over to the government.

Article 8- Teachers graduated from VIs do all kinds of education and training works in the villages. They also teach advance agricultural techniques to villagers and do their profession they have learned in the VIs professionally.

Article 9- Teachers graduating from VIs are paid 20 lira per month. As their degrees increase, their salaries increase in parallel.

Article 11- Male teachers graduated from VIs do their compulsory military service as reserve officers.

Article 18- The buildings and teacher houses of the schools where village teachers will be appointed are built by the village councils of elders according to the plans given by the Ministry of Education, and the villages where the teachers will be appointed are informed three years in advance."²⁹⁹

When the articles of the law are examined, it is seen that the village and the villagers are in the center of this initiative, it is prepared in accordance with the village character, all the professions that the village needs will enter the villages through the teacher. The agricultural productivity will be increased by teaching advanced techniques in agriculture, which is the main source of income of the villagers. In fact, the goal was to educate 40.000 people with these qualifications in 40.000 villages, to enlighten villagers and improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of the villages.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Köy Enstitüsü yasanısı tasaranısı ile ilgili belgeler by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940e, D01-110-23F, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–4. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitüsü yasanısı tasaranısı ile ilgili belgeler, Legal regulations and Works, 1940e)

³⁰⁰ Niyazi Altunya, "Köy Enstitüleri Sisteminde Yönetim," *MSGSÜ Sosyal Bilimler* 10 (2014): 29–34.

3.6.3 Establishment of Institutes around the country

As soon as the law was enacted, four existing village teacher schools were converted into VIs, as stipulated in the temporary article of the law. Students studying in these schools would graduate from VIs by studying for 5 years instead of 3 years. This included the final year students of Kızılçullu and Çifteler Village Teacher's Schools, which they were a few months away from their graduation. They graduated in 1942 by studying two more years to become a graduate of the Village Institute.³⁰¹

Afterwards, a competition between architects started for the buildings of 12 new institutes. As a condition of participation in the competition, it was obligatory to stay for 3 days at the place where the institute was going to be built. We think that the reason behind for this is that the architects were expected to examine the characteristics of the region and the weather well and design the buildings accordingly. For this purpose, 12 different competitions were held for 12 institutes. The buildings for which the architects would plan were as follows: school building, dormitory, workshop, kitchen, laundry, bathroom, administration building, barns and coops, warehouses, infirmary, teachers' houses, etc. On average, it was planned to have 45 to 55 buildings in an institute.³⁰² Later, the architects who won the competitions explained the plans of these buildings to be built to the teachers and students, and closely followed the construction.

While choosing the places where the VIs would be opened, the country was divided into 21 regions and each region was arranged to cover 3-4 provinces. Institutes would be opened in the centers of these regions.³⁰³ 14 of the 21 institutes were established in its very first year and started their activities. 5000 students were admitted to these institutes in the first year. With the transfer of 1000 students from four village schools, which were previously operating as village teacher schools and were converted into VIs by law, to institutes, there were 6000 students in total in the institutes in its first year.³⁰⁴

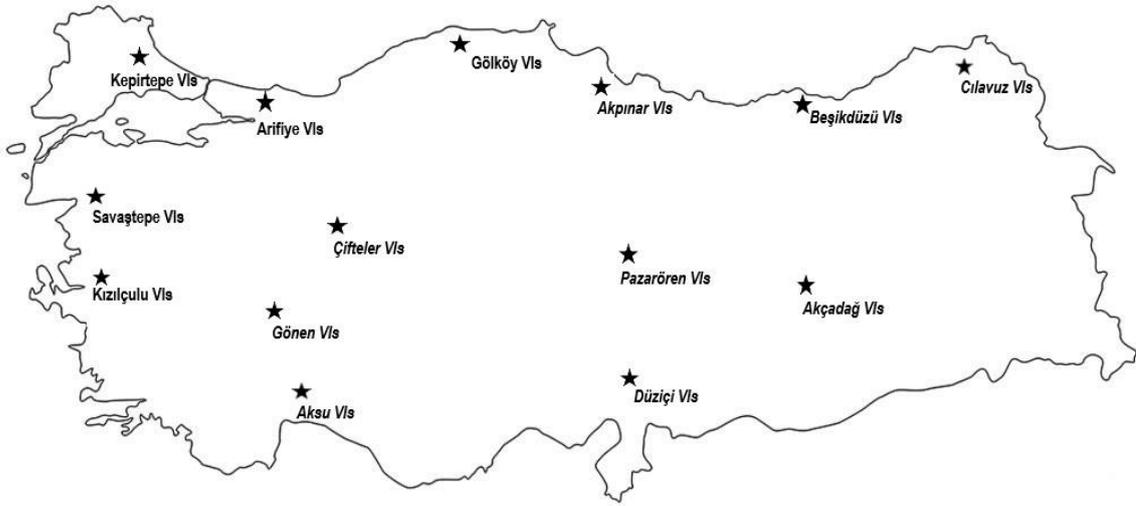
³⁰¹ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 117.

³⁰² Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 25–35.

³⁰³ Köy Enstitüleri yasası ve gerekçesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940a, D01-53-3, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitüleri yasası ve gerekçesi, Legal regulations and Works, 1940a)

³⁰⁴ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 13.

Figure 1: The VI and the specific locations where they were established



This figure was generated utilizing the following resource: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri Dergisi I-VIII: 1945-1947* (Ankara: Güner Matbaacılık, 2005), 97–102.

Surely, some serious problems were encountered in the establishment of these institutions. The first of these was the problem of collection of appropriations. The fact that even the allowance had to be approved, due to bureaucracy, institutes received it very late and this situation has decelerated the activities of the VIs.³⁰⁵

Another notable challenge pertained to the recruitment of qualified teachers. As the VIs were tasked with providing secondary-level education, there was a necessity for staff who possessed an advanced degree of vocational preparedness. This proved to be a considerable hurdle in the effective operation of these institutions. Because, many highly qualified teachers with secondary school teaching qualifications did not want to leave their comfortable lives in the cities and work in these institutions established in villages.³⁰⁶ Başaran, a graduate of the institute, states that since Hasanoğlan Higher VI could not find the needed teachers, despite being very close to Ankara, institute students went to Ankara University to get lecture, and that university students looked at them in a very strange and cynical way.³⁰⁷

In addition, due to the conditions of the World War II (WWII), the existing problems were worsened. To give an example; after the military mobilization in 1940, many teachers,

³⁰⁵ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 287.

³⁰⁶ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 14–7.

³⁰⁷ Mehmet Başaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öğretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019), 9.

educators and principals were conscripted into the military. The institutes, which had difficulties in finding teachers, had to send their current teachers to the military. This situation was resolved with an agreement with the Ministry of National Defense, and it was decided that those working in VIs would not be called up for military service, except for emergency situations.³⁰⁸

Although the institutes faced serious problems and opposition in its establishment, the activities and success of these institutions went beyond expectations. Fay Kirby describes the law of institutes as a complete Kemalist revolution.³⁰⁹ I, however, propose that with this legislation, the regime eventually discovered the formula to nurture individuals of revolutionary thought. Yücel's following proclamation corroborates my contention:

"We aim to foster individuals who will carry the significant revolutions that we have instigated in our social life to the villages, since our struggle for independence. This is because the Ummah (Ottoman) revolution possesses such an individual. That person is the imam. We intended to dispatch a man of revolutionary thought to the village, in place of the imam. This is how the concept of the VIs were conceived."³¹⁰

Thus, the intent behind the VIs initiative were not merely educational reform, but a means to disseminate revolutionary ideas throughout rural areas, effecting socio-cultural transformation.

³⁰⁸ Köy Enstitülerinden mezun olacakların çalıştırılmalarına dair yasa tasarısı ve ekleri by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1940f, D01-99-1, Legal regulations and works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2–6. (hereafter cited as Köy Enstitülerinden mezun olacakların çalıştırılmalarına dair yasa tasarısı ve ekleri, Legal regulations and Works, 1940f)

³⁰⁹ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 270.

³¹⁰ Engin Çınar İlker, *Köy Enstitüsünden Günümüze Bir Öğretmen* (İstanbul: Beyaz Yayınları, 2003), 4.

Chapter 4

4. Organization and Functioning in VIs

4.1 Arrival of Students to the Institutes

In the student selection process for the institutes, female students were accorded certain privileges. Sadık Kartal, however, claims that Tonguç desired to eliminate the gender inequality between men and women with the VIs program.³¹¹ Nuri Eren attributes the reason for this to both the low number of female students who have completed primary school, and the fact that families did not favor educating their daughters due to the patriarchal social structure of the country.³¹²

Despite the regime initiating a mobilization effort to ensure the education of female students in these institutions,³¹³ the number of female students in the institutes remained below 10%, regardless of the state's concerted efforts and incentives. Specifically, in the 1944-1945 academic year, there were 1,475 female students, accounting for approximately 10.3% of the total student population. The transition process to the multi-party regime commencing in 1945 began to loosen the regime's determination in this area, influenced in part by the political voices opposing co-education. As a result, the number of female students began to decline gradually. The total dropped to 1,078 in 1947 and further decreased to 721 (comprising 5.2% of the total student population) in the 1949-1950 academic year, the last year in which co-education was implemented.³¹⁴

Initially, the majority of the children who sought admission to these institutions did so primarily to escape the grueling conditions of village labor and attain a degree of physical comfort.³¹⁵ Upon their arrival, however, they discovered that these institutes did not align with their preconceived expectations. Consequently, a period of adaptation ensued which spanned a few months. This adjustment period proved to be even more prolonged for female students, attributable to their upbringing in more restrictive environments relative to their male counterparts.³¹⁶

³¹¹ Kartal, "Toplum kalkınmasında," 28.

³¹² Nuri Eren, "The Village Institutes of Türkiye," *Journal of The Royal Central Asian Society* 33, no. 3-4 (1946): 283.

³¹³ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 33.

³¹⁴ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 170.

³¹⁵ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 114.

³¹⁶ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 176-7.

Rural children has brought their bad habits with themselves to the institutes and directors and teachers have spent great efforts to change their bad habits such as not using cutlery, taking each other's belongings without permission, smoking, lying, beating their weaker friends, damaging the institute's tools and equipment, not using the toilet or washing their hands after using the toilet.³¹⁷ The following incident witnessed by an Institute teacher clearly shows the situation:

"One day, an older and strong student beats a little boy in the courtyard of the institute and leaves him covered in blood. However, the child who was beaten does not report this incident to his teachers. He steps aside crying. Teachers call the beaten boy:

-What is wrong with you, what happened?

-Nothing.

-What do you mean by nothing, we saw it! Halim beat you.

-No, he did not. We were joking with each other."³¹⁸

Tekben argued that the reason for this behavior of the student stemmed from the fact that the villagers for centuries thought that there was no place to apply to correct an injustice.³¹⁹ This assessment is indeed incisive. Throughout the Ottoman Empire's reign, and persisting into the republican era, villagers experienced generations of oppression at the hands of the powerful. An illustration of this lack of recourse in the face of injustice can be seen in the failure of the gendarmerie, which was ostensibly established to safeguard villagers' rights. Furthermore, the judicial system to which villagers would turn was often under the sway of these dominant groups. Consequently, the villagers were left with little choice but to resign themselves to their circumstances and acquiesce to their fate.

Below are the parts that we think are important from the information that we obtained from the documents in Tonguç's archive and that two students shared their experiences and impressions on the first day they came to the institute.

Mustafa Gurbetçi set out from his village on March 20, 1939 and arrived at Gököy Village Institute on March 28, 1939, 8 days later. Mustafa, who had to walk for days to reach the institute, went downstairs after registering to the institute and witnessed the following events that surprised him:

³¹⁷ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 306.

³¹⁸ Şerif Tekben, *Canlandırılacak Köy Yolunda* (Akçadağ: Akçadağ Köy Enstitüsü Basımevi, 1947), 53–4.

³¹⁹ Tekben, *Canlandırılacak Köy Yolunda*, 52–5.

"After registering at the Institute, I went down. And what should I see, two students got under a tree that was too big for a pair of oxen to carry, and they were carrying it! It was as if their necks were about to snap off. The other two students hung 4 cans of water on a stick and carried it over their shoulders, their feet trembling under the load as they went. (...) The next morning, they assigned me to work in the cafeteria building. I started to carry the construction mortar. After 8-10 wheelbarrows carrying mortar, my hands started bleeding and were very sore. Anyway, 2-3 days passed like this. I immediately wrote a letter to my village. I couldn't get used to it here, I said, come and get me. My father came and talked to our manager and convinced me to stay here. (...) I'm used to it now and I regret what I did. Now I am working hard at our precious institute."³²⁰

İsmail Sönmez conveys his impressions of the day he came to the institute as follows: "After I enrolled in school, they sent me directly to the Turkish bath. When I came out of the bath, I was given clean clothes. (...) While eating in the cafeteria, a loud noise was heard. The person next to me said, the radio is on, let's listen. My friend gave me information about this device, the name of which I heard for the first time. (...) I woke up the next morning to the ringing of the bell. I washed my hands and face and brushed my teeth for the first time."³²¹

4.2 VIs Curriculum

Prior to 1943, VIs did not have a standardized program that was implemented uniformly across all institutions.³²² The main reason for this should be sought in the basic principle of institutes, "education within the work, through the work, for the work." In the light of this principle, a perfect program was tried to be created for institutes by using trial and error method. Tonguç only drew the framework of the lessons and activities with directives and circulars and provided flexibility to the institutes in other subjects according to their own opportunities and conditions. In the light of the observations and results of the first applications, a comprehensive curriculum was prepared and entered into force in 1943.³²³

³²⁰ Gölköy için Araştırma ve planlar by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 17 January 1942, D03-82-3C, Project and plans, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 3–7. (hereafter cited as Gölköy için Araştırma ve planlar, Project and plans, 1942a)

³²¹ Gölköy için Araştırma ve planlar, Project and plans, 1942a, 24–5.

³²² İlker, *Köy Enstitüsünden Günümüze Bir Öğretmen*, 5.

³²³ Ankara stajyer öğretmenleri hakkında rapor by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1943, C10-49-1C, reports about schools with educators, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 24. (hereafter cited as Ankara stajyer öğretmenleri hakkında rapor, reports about schools with educators, 1943).

According to this program, 114 weeks of the 5-year teaching period were devoted to culture courses, 58 weeks to agricultural courses and studies, and 58 weeks to technical courses and studies. VIs program oriented on three main lines: general culture and teaching knowledge courses (Turkish, history, geography, civics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, nature and school health knowledge, handwriting, foreign language, painting-art, physical education and national dances, music, military service, housekeeping and child care, agricultural business economics and cooperatives, arts, sociology, business education, child and business psychology, teaching method and practice, history of education and business education); agriculture courses and studies (field agriculture, horticulture, industrial plants agriculture and agricultural arts, zootechnics, poultry breeding, beekeeping and silkworm breeding); and technical courses and studies (ironworking and blacksmithing, woodworking and carpentry, construction, village and handicrafts, using of machinery and engines, sewing, cutting and knitting and weaving).³²⁴

At the institutes, a total of 44 hours per week are allocated to educational activities and work. Of this duration, 22 hours are dedicated to lessons in general culture, 11 hours are reserved for agricultural lessons and studies, and the remaining 11 hours are assigned to technical lessons and studies.³²⁵ Kemal Tahir and Nureddin Ergin criticized the program claiming that very little time was devoted to general culture classes.³²⁶ In the article published in 1964, Vexliard and Aytaç emphasized, however, that the time allocated to general culture courses was sufficient by revealing the total hours allocated to each course.³²⁷ In addition, in the interview with Sabriye Yaşar,³²⁸ she claimed that the culture courses given in the institutes were sufficient: "There was a competition between high schools, and I remember we said that why other schools had less cultural courses than us? Because, in comparison with ours, their knowledge was poor."³²⁹

The main purpose of the agricultural courses and practices given in the institutes was to introduce modern agricultural education into the villages by using modern agricultural

³²⁴ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 212–26.

³²⁵ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 52–3.

³²⁶ Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç*, 532; Nureddin Ergin, *Arifiye Öğretmen Okulu ve Tarihçesi*, 34–61.

³²⁷ Vexliard and Aytaç, "The Village Institutes in Türkiye," 44.

³²⁸ Sabriye Yaşar, born in 1928, embarked on her academic journey at the Savaştepe VI in 1940, completing her studies in 1946. Following her graduation, she dedicated her life to serving in various village communities, showcasing her commitment to grassroots education and development.

³²⁹ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

knowledge and methods.³³⁰ In addition, 81% of the population was constituted of farmers. For this reason, these institutions had to have an agricultural dimension.³³¹ Every boy and girl was obliged to participate in agricultural work activities. This activity was arranged according to the agricultural situation of the environment where the institute was located. In this respect, some institutes attached importance to field agriculture, some to fruit growing, and fisheries in institutes located on or near the seacoast. Animal care works were given priority in institutes located in neighborhoods suitable for animal care.³³²

The addition of technical courses to the program is both out of necessity and in order to bring the professions needed in the villages. This was a necessity because, through technical courses, the institutes were able to build their own buildings, cafeterias and dormitories at minimal expense. There was a construction team of 17 people, which was a pioneer in the construction works of the institutes and was established in the Çifteler Village Institute. The team was led by the Hungarian master, Sili Lajos³³³. This construction team was dispatched to all of the institutes to commence building works. Concurrently, Sili Lajos offered both theoretical and practical instruction to the students at each institute.³³⁴

Kapluhan claimed that VIs' program makers perceive the students as adults, not as "children."³³⁵ Kemal Tahir, on the other hand, who is a leftist, asserted in his book *Bozkırdaki Çekirdek* that the institute program did not yield any results other than the exploitation of the village children.³³⁶ It can be said that there are two extreme views on the curriculum of the institutes. While one side glorified this program by focusing on the successes achieved through this program, the other side criticized it by ignoring the conditions of the period and judging it with today's conditions. It is obvious that this program was difficult for children aged between 12-18. However, it should not be ignored that it emerged out of necessity due to the conditions of the period.

In my interview with the graduates of the VIs, the graduates commented on the education curriculum of the VIs as follows:

³³⁰ Şevket Gedikoğlu, *Evreleri, Getirdikleri ve Yankularıyla Köy Enstitüleri* (Ankara: İş Matbaacılık ve Ticaret, 1971), 88.

³³¹ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 3.

³³² Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 13-5.

³³³ Within the confines of Turkish archival sources, the individual is referred to as "Sili". Despite rigorous research endeavors, I have regrettably been unable to uncover the Hungarian counterpart for this name. Nevertheless, it might conceivably correspond to "Szili" or "Szily."

³³⁴ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 141-3.

³³⁵ Kapluhan, "Atatürk dönemi eğitim seferberliği ve köy enstitüleri," 187.

³³⁶ Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç*, 532.

Pakize Türkoğlu³³⁷:

"The curriculum of the VIs were miscellaneous. This program was prepared and developed in line with the realities and needs of the villages."³³⁸

Tahsin Yücel³³⁹:

"The institutes functioned as business schools. In a business school, students are directed to continuous activities in the classroom, library, laboratory, nature, agricultural fields, and workshops. Since the institutes would educate village teachers, it was necessary to give more efforts, time and energy to agriculture and the crafts needed by the villages."³⁴⁰

Hayri Doğan³⁴¹:

"The curriculum of the 1st and 2nd grades of the VIs were taken from the secondary school curriculum, the 3rd grade from the high school curriculum, and the 4th and 5th grades from the university curriculum. In this aspect, our curriculum was crowded. This was the reason why VI graduates did their military service as reserve officers. Because they considered us, who graduated from VIs, as semi-university graduates (only university students could do their military service as reserve officers). In the last year, we were studying Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws* in philosophy or sociology class. However, this course was taken by those studying at the law faculties of universities. In other words, many courses in the university were given to us in the fourth and fifth years of the institute. In this respect, our curriculum was very useful."³⁴²

³³⁷ Pakize Türkoğlu was born in 1927 in the Çile village, situated in Antalya. After successfully completing her education from the Antalya Aksu Village Institute in 1944, she pursued further studies at the Ankara Hasanoğlan High Village Institute, graduating in 1947. Instead of immediately entering the workforce, Türkoğlu chose to continue her higher education. Upon its completion, she dedicated her professional life to education, teaching in Antalya for 2 years and subsequently in Istanbul for 31 years. By the time of her retirement in 1985, she held the esteemed position of an educational sciences lecturer at Marmara University's Atatürk Education Faculty.

³³⁸ Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

³³⁹ Tahsin Yücel, born on August 1, 1926, in Kütahya-Emet, completed his primary education in 1939. He pursued further studies at the Eskişehir-Çifteler Village Institute, graduating in 1944, and subsequently at the Ankara-Hasanoğlan High Village Institute by 1947. Yücel held a series of educational roles, including a traveling head teacher position in Zonguldak between 1947-1950 and a primary school teacher in Kütahya villages from 1951-1955. He later specialized as an agriculture instructor at the Isparta-Gönen Teacher's School from 1955-1961 and served as a science teacher until his decision to retire voluntarily in 1973.

³⁴⁰ Excerpt from the interview with Tahsin Yücel on October 7, 2021.

³⁴¹ Hayri Doğan was born in 1933 in the Çatılı village of Tokat. After completing his primary education in 1947, he enrolled in the Ladik Akpınar VI, from which he graduated in 1952. Doğan dedicated 32 years to the teaching profession. He spent the initial 10 years of his career working in villages, and subsequently, he served as a teacher in urban high schools.

³⁴² Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

At the center of the criticism of the institute program was the weight of the work done and the debate about how right it was to have children between the ages of 12-17 do these things. When I asked the graduates of the institutes I interviewed about this subject, they gave the following answers.

Sabriye Yaşar:

"In truth, we didn't have any difficulty. Because our director would put on his working overalls and go to work first before anyone else. After him, the teachers (in their field of expertise) would go to work with great enthusiasm. In fact, we learned by following our elders."³⁴³

Hayri Doğan:

"The program was a bit difficult. That's why we worked day and night. To cope with this intensity, some students worked under petroleum lamps at night. Of course, this was a sacrifice made by peasant children. Such a necessity arose because the government's budget was very limited. If this had not been done, neither these schools could have been opened nor could teachers have been educated."³⁴⁴

Ahmet Usta³⁴⁵:

"It was needed back then. WWII was going on and the allowances for schools were very limited. These schools could not have been built unless human power contributed to them. Children participated in this process, they helped. At least they carried the bricks and made the mortar. Of course, they had master trainers with them. Materials were purchased with the help of the state, and everything was built with the help of children."³⁴⁶

Many of the graduates of the institute accepted the intensity of the work done, but they stated that this was a necessity due to the conditions of the period. This may also have arisen because of their deep bond with these organizations. Similarly, Aysal attempted to rationalize the use of child labor within the institutes in the following manner: in the event of a war, men were recruited, scarce and limited resources were reserved for the war, and since only women and children remained in the villages, it was necessary to establish these schools with child

³⁴³ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

³⁴⁴ Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

³⁴⁵ Ahmet Usta was born in 1935 in the Kolay village of Amasya. He began his education at the Samsun Ladik Akpınar VI in 1947 and graduated in 1952. Usta devoted 13 years to teaching, primarily in rural settings. Subsequently, he embarked on a career as a primary education inspector, a role he held for 30 years. Usta retired from his distinguished service in 1995.

³⁴⁶ Excerpt from the interview with Ahmet Usta on October 10, 2021.

labor.³⁴⁷ On the other hand, Avcı, a graduate of the Institute, stated in his work that there were people who could not stand the harsh living conditions in the institutes and escaped.³⁴⁸ Nureddin Ergin, also, claimed that the health of the students was damaged due to the harsh working conditions of the institutes.³⁴⁹

4.3 Life at the Institutes

Life in VIs were quite different from other schools in terms of working hours and annual education calendar, or rather; it had an unusual structure in the Turkish school system. In the VIs, all tasks were undertaken by the students, who even produced their own food, including fruits and vegetables. A standard day at the institutes would unfold in the following manner:

"The daily schedule at the institute commenced at 6 am and persisted until 9 pm. With the sound of a bell, students would awaken and initiate their day with 15-20 minutes of gymnastics accompanied by music. After breakfast and a period of free time, one group of students would begin their four-hour culture classes, most often held outdoors. Meanwhile, another group would attend four-hour practical agricultural or technical courses, working alongside their teachers, the workday punctuated with sung anthems. After lunch, those who went to the culture classes in the morning section would go to the agricultural or technical areas, while the others would go to the culture classes. Afterwards, students would rest until dinner and a 2-hour study would be conducted after dinner. At 9 pm, the daily program would end with the bedtime bell."³⁵⁰

4.3.1 Free reading hours

The free reading hours were deemed as integral as the lectures and practical sessions in the VIs. It was mandatory for each student to complete a book every fortnight. Subsequently, they were required to compose a summary and critique of the book from a critical perspective. This critique would then be discussed with both their peers and their teacher.

While İsmet İnönü visiting the Savaştepe Village Institute, he saw Hatice Kolukısa, who was working on the poultry watch, and asked what she was carrying in her bag. Hatice says that she has bread, cheese and meatballs. When İsmet İnönü asks what else she has,

³⁴⁷ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 275–6.

³⁴⁸ Avcı, "Akçadağ Köy Enstitüsü Yılları," 21.

³⁴⁹ Ergin, *Arifiye Öğretmen Okulu Ve Tarihçesi*, 74–7.

³⁵⁰ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 31–42.

Sophocles' book titled *Antigone* comes out of the bag. According to those who witnessed the event, İnönü's eyes filled with tears as he saw the book, and he said to the Chief of General Staff Abdurrahman Gürman Pasha, "Dear Pasha, you see, these classics have just been released. It is not read even in Ankara. But my children are reading them at VIs. Whenever our villagers, townspeople, and generals will be able to add the book to their rations, that day Türkiye will truly be saved."³⁵¹

The habit of reading, inculcated during their time in the institutes, allowed the students to augment their cultural knowledge. This practice constituted one of the most significant cornerstones that facilitated the formation of an intellectual group within the rural community.

4.4 Comparison of VIs and teacher schools established in the city

I indicated in this study that VIs differ from teacher schools. A comparison of VIs with teacher schools is provided below.

³⁵¹ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 146.

Table 2: Comparison of VIs and teacher schools established in the city

	VIs	Teacher Schools
Structure of the institution	A large-scale institution with vineyards, gardens, and other similar units.	A single structure with two doors.
Teaching technique	Integration of work with education	Classical teaching model
Curriculum	Consists of cultural, agricultural, and technical courses and studies.	Only cultural lessons are taught.
The nature of the institution	A self-sufficient and productive institution	A consumer institution
Responsibility for graduate teachers	Aside from cultural courses, VIs graduates taught courses and studies in agriculture and one craft that they have specialized in.	Only teaches cultural courses
Annual teaching time	46 weeks	33 weeks
Number of lessons per day	8	6
The institution's open time	Open all year	Closed during the summer months and between two semesters
Holiday period given to students	45 days a year	Summer and semester break: approximately 105 days
Participation of students in management	Yes	No
Presence of democratic practice and criticism meetings	Yes	No
Closeness to the public	Close	They are distancing themselves from the public because they view themselves as intellectuals.

The author's compilation based on the following sources: İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020), 250–311; Fay Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri* (Ankara: Tarihçi Kitabevi, 2018), 241–305; İlhan Başgöz and Howard E. Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk* (Ankara: Dost Yayınevi, 1968), 93–126; Pakize Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019), 202–46; Engin Tonguç, *Bir Eğitim Devrimcisi İsmail Hakkı Tonguç: Yaşamı, Öğretisi, Eylemi* (İzmir: Yeni Kuşak Köy Enstitüleri Derneği Yayınları, 2007), 380–412.

When the table above is evaluated, several disparities between VIs and teacher schools could be found. The major distinction, which also explains the establishment of VIs,

stems from the fact that teacher schools were intended to educate children in large cities. Consequently, deploying teachers to rural settings was economically prohibitive. Teachers, unfamiliar with the rural milieu and unable to adapt to the challenging conditions prevalent in these areas, often retreated to the cities at their earliest convenience. Furthermore, the dispersed structure of rural areas, as well as the existence of 40 thousand villages, aggravated the issue. In order to overcome these difficulties, the institutes' idea of on-the-job education arose out of necessity. When seen through this lens, there are numerous distinctions between these institutions in terms of aim, nature of the institution, curriculum, and the quality of the teacher to be educated. Due to these differences, there was a conflict of interest between the teachers studying in these two institutions, especially after 1946, when the institutes were undermined, and the teachers studying at the teacher's school underestimated the teachers of the Institute and did not consider them worthy of the teaching profession.

I asked the institute's graduates if they had worked with graduates of teacher schools after 1946, and if so, if they had encountered any complications. The answers are as follows:

Pakize Türkoğlu:

"I also worked for a short time with teachers' school grads. I considered them as colleagues, but I was more thoroughbred than they were. For example, because I used the mandolin in my music lessons, the pupils preferred to take the music lecture from me."³⁵²

Sabriye Yaşar:

"The teachers in the school where I worked did not even talk to me in the beginning. They belittled me just because I received my education from the Village Institute. Then I looked for their shortcomings, to gain some respect. I realized that they did not understand the art, music and they did not have any reading habits. When I'd give lecture, I'd benefit from every branch of art. Of course, my students liked it very much. And after these teachers heard about my methods, they started inviting me to their meetings."³⁵³

³⁵² Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2021.

³⁵³ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

Mahmut Koç³⁵⁴:

"Teachers' school graduates looked down on us, saying that 'they became teachers by carrying bricks and plowing fields'. When we were successful in providing education at school, we were able to break their prejudices over time."³⁵⁵

Hayri Doğan also emphasized in the interview that like the others, teachers' school graduates considered themselves superior and did not even receive the greetings from the institutes.³⁵⁶

4.5 Comparison of Village Educators and Village Teachers

The educators and rural teachers educated by the institutes were examined in this section. Despite having received their education at the same university, these two lecturers had some differences. The following is a detailed comparison between these two lecturers.

³⁵⁴ Mahmut Koç, born on September 17, 1932, in Bahçe village, Malatya, completed his education at the Malatya Akçadağ VI in June 1948. Upon graduation, he was designated to a village in Adıyaman, serving for six years before transferring to his native village in Malatya. However, after only a year, Koç was relocated again, prompted by his public criticisms of the prevailing DP. Subsequent to his military obligations, he was appointed to another village in which the construction of the school has not finished yet and he himself finished it. Despite his efforts, Koç was soon transferred to an urban environment due to his non-support of DP, where he diligently taught in diverse primary schools until his retirement in 1994.

³⁵⁵ Excerpt from the interview with Mahmut Koç on November 1, 2021.

³⁵⁶ Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

Table 3: Comparison of the Village Educator and the Village Teacher

	Village Educator	Village Teacher
Education period	6-8 months	5 years
Necessary Criteria	To be literate villagers	To be healthy village children
Visibility of women	Very low	High
Assigned location after graduation	Their own villages	Their own villages
Their contribution to rural areas	Low	High
Wage	10 liras	20 liras
Qualification of the schools they were assigned to	Schools giving the three-year primary education	Schools giving the five-year primary education
Inspection	IHTs and Primary Education Inspectors	Primary Education Inspectors
Internship period	At least 4 months	1-3 years
Duration of the service	They can work until of 55	At least 20 years
The quality of the education to be received/ given	Literacy, math, and social studies are taught. They also gave introductory education in modern agricultural techniques.	Teaching cultural and technical courses, specializing them in a vocation of their choice at the VIs, and preparing them to practice that profession in the villages. They would also teach modern agriculture techniques.
Graduates	8.765	Approx. 16.400 ³⁵⁷
The approach of peasants	Positive, generally respected	Biased, often negative
The aims	To increase the literacy-rate	To modernize villages
Teaching technique	Integration of work with education	Integration of work with education
Their success rate	Low	High

The author's compilation based on the following sources: Ankara stajyer öğretmenleri hakkında rapor by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1943, C10-49-1C, reports about schools with educators, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 3-5; Köy üretiminin kalkınması ve öğretmenlerle arttırılması by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. ca. 1938a, C09-36-1, course work, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1-3. (hereafter cited as Köy üretiminin kalkınması ve öğretmenlerle arttırılması, course work, ca. 1938a.

³⁵⁷ Researchers have a disagreement on the number of teachers graduated from VIs. According to Avcı, as of 1954, the number was 17,341 (1308 of them were female); and for Kapluhan, 16,400. On the other hand, although Altunya and Avcı agreed on the total number of teachers, they disagreed on the number of female teachers. According to Altunya, 1398 of them were female teachers.

Although the initial aims and functions are similar, VIs are an enhanced form of Village Instructor Courses established and equipped with experience; looking at the table above, there are some significant differences between these instructors.

When the quality and duration of education provided are considered, it is evident that educators could not have brought about significant changes in rural areas. In that way, the village educator project might be viewed as a temporary effort to educate village people until village teachers are raised and sent back to those areas. As a result, village educators assisted in raising the literacy rate in rural areas to a specific level. However, it cannot be argued that this effort has brought about the intended improvement in rural areas.

In the interviews, I asked if they worked with educators and if there was a distinction between educators and village teachers. The following are the grads' responses:

Sabriye Yaşar:

"I worked with educators. We were giving them first grades. They had very little experience. For example, if a youngster was misbehaving, they would come to me and complain. They had a lot of trouble speaking with the students. I believe they just knew how to educate literacy."³⁵⁸

Tahsin Yücel:

"As their IHT, I supervised the educators in my region for three years. Among the educators, there were individuals who contributed to the villages' social, economic, and cultural growth. Some of the pupils who completed the schools with educators continued their study and graduated from higher education institutions. They were effective in village development."³⁵⁹

Ahmet Usta:

"When I was a teacher, I didn't work with educators, but when I became an inspector, there were educators working in my region, and I was inspecting them as well. Of course, it would be preferable if educators had acquired more education, but there were also educators who did an excellent job. Those who couldn't do the job had already quitted. We owe a great deal to our educators. Hundreds of thousands of students have been educated by them."³⁶⁰

³⁵⁸ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

³⁵⁹ Excerpt from the interview with Tahsin Yücel on October 7, 2021.

³⁶⁰ Excerpt from the interview with Ahmet Usta on October 10, 2021.

4.6 Law on Village Education Mobilization

By 1942, the educator courses and VIs had become operational to a large extent, more than 4,000 educators were sent to the villages, and the number of students in the institutes approached 10 thousand. However, a comprehensive primary education mobilization was needed in the village so that the trained educators and teachers could do what was expected of them. As mentioned before, a school and teacher's house had to be built in the villages where the graduated teachers and educators would be assigned. For this reason, in 1942, the law on "Educational Mobilization in the Village" was passed in order to provide schools for nearly 30 thousand villages without schools.³⁶¹

This law consisted of 71 articles, but only two important articles were mentioned in this study. Firstly, with this law, it was stipulated that men and women between the ages of 18 and 50 are obliged to work for a maximum of 20 days a year in the works of school building, road construction and repair, garden and water supply to the school. The other one stated that the law did not see the village institute teacher as a school teacher, rather regarded them as a means of modernizing village and community life through work and increased the authority of teachers.³⁶²

The initial article mentioned previously has been subject to stringent criticisms. The chief grievance, primarily emanating from rural residents, stems from the disparity in their obligation to pay taxes and perform mandatory work while their urban counterparts enjoy a variety of superior educational opportunities free of charge.³⁶³ As this work was obligatory, allegations surfaced accusing the state of exploiting unpaid labor. In this context, Karaömerlioğlu reproached such practices, characterizing them as the cornerstone of an educational system predicated upon "coerced" rural labor. He also claimed, however, that such practices were not unique to Türkiye and that laws were passed to use coerced labor all over the world in the 1930s.³⁶⁴ As in the case of Türkiye, the VIs were the core for the discipline

³⁶¹ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 272.

³⁶² Bakan'a rapor; Köy Enstitülerine öğretmen yetiştirilmesi hakkında by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 19 September 1942, P03-500-122, reports and memorandum, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2. (hereafter cited as Bakan'a rapor; Köy Enstitülerine öğretmen yetiştirilmesi hakkında, reports and memorandums, 19 September 1942).

³⁶³ Karaömerlioğlu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 56.

³⁶⁴ During 1920s, Bulgarian men were required to spare eight months of their lifetime to public works, which was four months period of time for women. The idea was to organize the labour force of the country and accomplish public works which were supposedly for the benefit of the people. Aside from working in labor camps, Bulgarian people were expected to be literate in order to learn to be a good citizen. A similar law was enacted in Germany in 1936 during the Nazi era. The German government required all young people who were aged between 18 to 25 to work for the government for at least six months. The goal was essentially the same,

and organization of rural labour along the same paths. Majority of countries would extend similar work campaigns to the entire nation, whereas Türkiye only had the rural people involved, rather than the city dwellers.³⁶⁵

Avcı, a graduate of the institute, stated that the villagers were forced to work and they were not happy with this situation.³⁶⁶ In addition, Hayri Doğan, a graduate of the institute we interviewed, stated that he witnessed a similar incident and that "the gendarmerie forced the villager to work for about 20 days."³⁶⁷

Yücel stated that villagers would be served through these schools, so school building must not be regarded as forced labor.³⁶⁸ Kirby argued that the regime did not want to put a heavy burden on the villagers, therefore, a tax system that would impose a similar burden on the city dwellers was being worked on to correct this injustice. However, she argued that such a regulation has never been put into effect, since such a comprehensive task as tax reform could not have been organized by the Ministry of Education itself.³⁶⁹

During the legislative deliberations concerning this issue in parliament, a number of representatives proposed not to burden the villagers with school construction duties. President İnönü responded by stating, "Isn't there a mosque in every village? Schools will be constructed in the same manner as these mosques."³⁷⁰ This statement implies that mosques were erected using the voluntary labor of villagers. Motivated by their faith, villagers willingly participated in the building of the mosques, providing significant contributions. İnönü evidently anticipated a similar level of contribution from the villagers towards the erection of schools. It is striking that while there were no criticisms from villagers or intellectuals regarding the construction of mosques — which relied heavily on the labor of villagers, often under challenging conditions — contributions to the building of schools were perceived as coerced labor.

4.6.1 Arrangement for training health officers

The expression "training other professionals who are useful to the village" in the law on VIs indicated that staff would be educated in other fields besides the main purpose of educating

but in Germany a substantial portion of this effort also included intense Nazi propaganda. (Tonguç, *Devrim Açısından Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç*, 209.)

³⁶⁵ Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 61.

³⁶⁶ Avcı, "Akçadağ Köy Enstitüsü Yılları," 48.

³⁶⁷ Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

³⁶⁸ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 96.

³⁶⁹ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 397.

³⁷⁰ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 16.

teachers. The last regulation regarding VIs was the law dated 19/7/1943 and numbered 4459 on the organization of village midwives and health officers. This law was a complementary law to the VIs law.

The fourth article of the regulation includes the following provision: "Village midwives and health officers will work exclusively in villages (...) They are obliged to provide birth assistance, to monitor the health status of pregnant women, to take care of childcare and other health affairs in the village and village groups where they are civil servants. They cannot receive a fee from the public for the services they will provide."³⁷¹ Following this directive, health branches were swiftly established in seven institutes within the span of a single year. Although the law included the branch of midwifery besides the health officer, the opening of this branch was not realized due to the prohibition of the Ministry of Health, and only the branch of health officer could be opened apart from the teaching branch in the 14-year activity period of the VIs.³⁷²

VIs students would choose one of the branches of "education" or "health" at the end of their third year of education. Health courses trained 521 health personnel until 1946.³⁷³ The achievement of this number in a short period of three years reveals the success of the institutes.

Giorgetti posits that the institutes substantially contributed to rural health care by training relevant personnel. This has resulted in noticeable improvements in the health status of villagers thereafter.³⁷⁴ Gedikoğlu, supported this view and added the following statement: The villagers in thousands of villages now understood the importance of immunization, personal hygiene, and medical checkups, as well as the usefulness of scientific medicine in place of amulets.³⁷⁵

The strategic significance of training health personnel in the institutes extends beyond improving sanitary conditions and reducing mortality rates in villages: it also involves the crucial task of eradicating medieval herbivory which was prevalent in these areas and

³⁷¹ Maarif Vekaleti Sağlık Teşkilatı Kanunu gerekçesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1942, B01-118-14, Legislative studies, drafts, laws, plans, official correspondence, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2. (hereafter cited as Maarif Vekaleti Sağlık Teşkilatı Kanunu gerekçesi, Legislative studies, drafts, laws, plans, official correspondence, 1942).

³⁷² Kapluhan, "Atatürk dönemi eğitim seferberliği ve köy enstitüleri," 187.

³⁷³ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 28–9.

³⁷⁴ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 50.

³⁷⁵ Gedikoğlu, *Evreleri, Getirdikleri ve Yankularıyla Köy Enstitüleri*, 229.

promoting the adoption of modern medical methods in its place.³⁷⁶ Thus, the influence of the clergy who preached the understanding of fatalism would also decrease in the villages.³⁷⁷

4.7 Contributions of the VIs

In an effort to demonstrate the accomplishments of these institutions over a brief span of three years (1941-1944), the following information, derived verbatim from the book "Village Institutes I-II", has been incorporated into this study.

1. The number of VIs increased to 20. The number of male and female students of these institutions has reached 16400.
2. Two thousand of these students will graduate from the institute at the beginning of this academic year and will be appointed as teachers to village schools.
3. A total of 306 edifices, encompassing classrooms, dormitories, kitchens, workshops, barns, warehouses, garages, and teachers' residences, were constructed to fulfill the necessities of the institutes.
4. 15,000 acres of land has been cultivated and planted within these institutions. 250,000 saplings with and without fruit were planted on the lands belonging to these institutions. Some institutes created forests around them. 1,500 acres of land has been made suitable for vegetable farming. 1200 acres of vineyards were made. There are 9,000 animals in the institutes.
5. The ateliers of the institutes have been brought to a position where they can make clothes for 16,400 students, and all kinds of works related to construction, blacksmithing and agriculture. These workshops started to meet the needs of the villages around them.
6. 16 institutes got electricity with the efforts of teachers and students.
7. A higher village institute was opened in Hasanoğlan to educate teachers to work in VIs. 130 students from the graduates of the institute were admitted.³⁷⁸

VIs have undeniably made significant contributions to Turkish education. Over a remarkably brief period, they have educated an approximate total of 16,400 teachers, 8,765 educators, and 1,248 village health officers. This was the first time in the history of the country that such rapid progress has been made in the field of education. This progress is also

³⁷⁶ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 50–51.

³⁷⁷ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 13–5.

³⁷⁸ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 63–4.

supported by the following data: the percentage of students attending elementary school in 1940 was 37.1 percent while in 1950 this percentage had increased to 65.5 percent.³⁷⁹

Sadık Kartal stated that the system carried out by VIs made great contributions regarding the elimination of gender inequality between men and women, which were supported by the numerical data on the literacy rates he had published.³⁸⁰ Endorsing this perspective, Türkoğlu argued that the VIs effectively dismantled the inequality of opportunity.³⁸¹ In an article, Yılmaz says that VIs were a learner-centered institution, that these institutions were an invaluable tool in realizing the most important of the aims of democratic education, and that a paradigm shift had taken place in these institutions, from "top-down" to "bottom-up."³⁸² Pedro Orata proposed that the VIs model could serve as an exemplar for countries lacking a primary education infrastructure and needing to establish one from the ground up.³⁸³ Moreover, according to Sabah Kartekin and Enver Kartekin, VIs have contributed to spread the national culture. The national folk dances and folksongs taught within these institutes through educators helped spreading this cultural treasure to the entire country.³⁸⁴

On the other hand, I posit emphatically that the VIs fostered the emergence of a unique intellectual cohort, solely composed of individuals from rural areas.³⁸⁵ These new types of intellectuals have made various contributions to Turkish society and have deeply influenced it; as, in a very short time, they raised nearly 20 thousand teachers and educators. In the studies

³⁷⁹ Nuri Kodaman, *Türkiye'de Eğitim, 1923-1960* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1964), 44.

³⁸⁰ Kartal, "Toplum kalkınmasında farklı bir eğitim kurumu: Köy Enstitüleri," 28.

³⁸¹ Türkoğlu, "Dünden bugüne eğitimimiz ve Köy Enstitüleri," 23–5.

³⁸² Yılmaz, "Democracy through learner-centered education," 23–30.

³⁸³ Orata, "Facts, problems and progress of education in the World of today," 7.

³⁸⁴ Sabahat Kartekin and Enver Kartekin, "Köy Enstitülerinde Usta Öğreticiler," in *Köy Enstitülerinde Usta Öğreticilik*, ed. Bahattin Fırtına (İzmir: Yeni Kuşak Köy Enstitüleri Yayınları, 2005), 13.

³⁸⁵ In Karaömerlioğlu's article, he stated that one of the unexpected consequences of VIs were that the Village Institute students, by living, working and learning together, paved the way for developing a sense of collective mentality (Karaömerlioğlu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 51.) which supports my argument.

of some researchers such as Nuri Eren,³⁸⁶ Karaömerlioglu,³⁸⁷ Arayıcı,³⁸⁸ Kapluhan,³⁸⁹ have emphasized that a new human type is tried to be raised through VIs. Based on these claims and also considering the education they have received and the contributions they have made to the country and society in various aspects,³⁹⁰ I argue that they formed a rural intellectual group because of their large number and their continuing mobilization after graduation.³⁹¹ The creation of a rural intellectual group has had various consequences. First, this intellectual group has revealed the real "village" in Türkiye and the life in these villages,³⁹² not only to Türkiye but to the whole world,³⁹³ with the works they have produced. Intellectuals from VIs organized and established the first teachers' union in the country and in a very short time spread all over the country and united all teachers under one roof, both accelerating the professionalization of the teaching profession and improving the working conditions of teachers.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁶ He stated that for what the village institutes in Türkiye are trying to do is not just to contribute to the economic welfare of the ordinary peasant, but to build up an individual who will be a civilized being and an upholder of society as an individual, and not as a mere unit of the whole community. (Eren, "The village institutes of Türkiye," 281).

³⁸⁷ He stated that the education in the Village Institutes began to create a type of student who happened to be too disobedient and self-confident despite the mainstream norms of the single-party regime. This was probably because the students were given more initiative compared to their counterparts in mainstream schools, since they were 'learning by doing' which required initiative. (Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 69–71.)

³⁸⁸ He explains the reason of the closing of VIs in his article as follows: During the brief period of their existence, the greatest success of the Village Institutes, and also the main reason for closing them down, was that they educated a new type of intellectual promoting awareness among primary schoolteachers who were of peasant origin but did not on that account aspire to be upwardly mobile (Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 278).

³⁸⁹ Kapluhan claims that the secret of Tonguç's success is his realization that a new type of intellectual who understands the language of the villagers is needed (Kapluhan, "Atatürk dönemi eğitim seferberliği ve köy enstitüleri," 182).

³⁹⁰ Graduates of the institute brought together hundreds of thousands of children who could not go to school in rural areas with school. They also helped thousands of village children become doctors, professors, and teachers with the quality education they provided. According to a data given by Keseroğlu, while the number of authors coming out of the VIs, which was open for 13 years between 1937-1950, was 49, the number of authors who appeared in the literature faculties of the country's 2 largest universities between 1933-2000 was 133 (Hasan Keseroğlu, "Köy enstitülerinde okuma ve kütüphane," *Türk Kütüphaneciliği* 19, no. 1 (2005): 24–40). This data reveals the success of the institutes. Examples like this can easily be multiplied.

³⁹¹ The first union in the country, TÖS was established at the initiative of teachers and they were closely involved in the country's problems, not only in improving the rights and conditions of teachers and students (Cemil Oktay, *Siyaset bilimi incelemeleri* (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2003), 257–60).

³⁹² When Mahmut Makal published his book "Our Village" in 1950, it created a bombshell effect in Turkish society and the people living in the city did not want to believe that 80 percent of the country was the people described in the book and that they lived under these difficult conditions (Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 151–72). Mahmut Makal was imprisoned for a short time for writing this book. ("Mahmut Makal Kimdir," *Gazete Duvar*, accessed February 4, 2022, <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/kitap/2018/08/10/mahmut-makal-kimdir>)

³⁹³ The works written by VIs graduates have been translated into various languages. For example, Mahmut Makal's *Our Village* has been translated into 10 languages.

³⁹⁴ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 44.

Chapter 5

5. Values and principles of VIs

The unique characteristics of the VIs and the principles they nurtured are what set this initiative apart, explaining its continued relevance and discussion in contemporary times. The key attributes include: integration of work with education, provision of democratic education, promotion of co-education, and the fostering of cooperatives. Each of these concepts and their corresponding import will be explicated in the sections that follow.

5.1 Integration of work within the work

With this method, the difficult conditions of the period were overcome, and these institutions were established. The "learning by doing" method, which has been used in villages for centuries, has been effective in the implementation of this technique. In rural areas, there is custom that rural people learn to do any kind of work by practicing from a very young age.³⁹⁵ Karaömerlioğlu emphasizes that this is one of the characteristic features of the villagers.³⁹⁶ Based on this, Tonguç applied this approach to overcome the various economic difficulties of the period. For him, integration of work with education takes place with the coordinated use of mental and manual dexterity. People who lack these skills, could not contribute to society and these people were generally consumers.³⁹⁷ The point to be emphasized here is that Tonguç's understanding of 'work' did not only include works performed without qualifications, but also included theoretical knowledge, art and music etc. In other words, the integration of work with education method in VIs are a direct result of Tonguç's long-term research, analysis and observations combined with his past experience. Real work tools have also included in the lectures besides textbooks. This method did not contain only an economic character which is production-oriented; it also had a pedagogical, social, psychological and cultural character.

Also, due to the poor economic conditions and resources of the country, the implementation of a large-scale project such as VIs were only possible if the education was to be within the work. Thus, institutes both overcame these obstacles through the principle of integration of work with education and ensured that these institutions were established at the

³⁹⁵ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 96.

³⁹⁶ Karaömerlioğlu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 57–8.

³⁹⁷ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, XXI.

least cost, as well as transformed students, teachers and schools into producers so that they could serve as means of building an independent national economy.³⁹⁸

Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu claimed that this concept was a product that derived from Ismail Hakkı Tonguç's views on education. This means that students were not being limited with the education theories only, but also they had the chance to apply what they learn.³⁹⁹ For Ahmet Korur, another aim of this concept was to introduce the agricultural techniques and various crafts they learned in VIs, thus civilization, to their families.⁴⁰⁰ The principle of integrating work within education has been the focal point of extensive criticism regarding the VIs. Two distinct perspectives emerge in the literature on this topic. One critique centers around the Institutes' employment of children, arguing that it amounted to exploitation. Conversely, the other perspective, largely articulated by VI graduates, contends that this approach was a necessity stemming from the period's specific conditions and that students engaged in these work activities willingly and with a sense of satisfaction.

Karaömerlioğlu claimed that the application of this method showed that these institutions were not intellectual ones, and that the development of cultural and intellectual abilities of children has been neglected by this method.⁴⁰¹ In the letters Tonguç sent to the directors of the institutes at different times, there were statements stating that all the time in the institutes should be spent on the construction of buildings or agriculture,⁴⁰² if necessary, led to questioning whether these institutions were educational or work institutions. However, Tütengil claimed that concentrating on building infrastructure of the Institutes during the initial years was the most natural thing to do. He stated that producing wheat was more important during the WWII than reading.⁴⁰³ I have seen from the memoirs of graduate students that their interrupted cultural lessons were compensated later.⁴⁰⁴

The other criticism is the issue of employing children, which I have discussed in detail in the previous chapters. In the conditions of the WWII, these institutions could not have been established without the use of child labor because men were conscripted and only women and children remained in the villages.⁴⁰⁵ Türkoğlu argues that the labor exerted by the students

³⁹⁸ Eyuboğlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine*, 95.

³⁹⁹ Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu, "The conditions that enabled," 397–9.

⁴⁰⁰ Ahmet Feyzi Korur, "Democratic education, the village institutes system in Türkiye and its art education component" (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2002), 14.

⁴⁰¹ Karaömerlioğlu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 58–61.

⁴⁰² Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüleri Yılları*, 54.

⁴⁰³ Tütengil, *Köy Sorunu ve Gençlik*, 23–9.

⁴⁰⁴ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 66–75.

⁴⁰⁵ Tonguç, *Köyde Eğitim*, 105–8.

was utilized for "the students' own needs." She asserts that in an establishment where production is conducted for the benefit of students, there would exist a culture of "equal treatment" and "solidarity," rather than a dynamic of "coercion" and "exploitation."⁴⁰⁶

Indeed, there exist considerable parallels between the work ethic and discipline inherent in Türkiye's VIs and the "Stakhanovism" phenomenon observed in Soviet Russia. A miner from Soviet Russia, Stakhanov, consistently surpassed production records of Soviet Russia during the 1930s, and the Stalinist dictatorship strived for dissemination of the phenomena known as "Stakhanovism" over the entire Soviet Union.⁴⁰⁷ Despite all the shortcomings, the high expectations caused these institutions to be associated with Stakhanovism.

Tonguç's understanding of work in education differed from Dewey, Kerschesteiner, and Pestalozzi. Their understanding of the work was more ideological, however, Tonguç's inclusion of work in education arose out of necessity. He neither perceived the work within education only for production purposes like Baltacıoğlu and Blonsky,⁴⁰⁸ nor practical education as Dewey,⁴⁰⁹ or linking production to the idea of a work school as in Kerschesteiner and Pestalozzi.⁴¹⁰ In the understanding of the pedagogues given above, while the students worked and produced for others in general, in VIs they worked, produced and used what they produced for themselves. Thus, making production in institutes also increases the quality of education. Because the expenses were covered by the work of the students themselves, and the products that were not needed were sold. Educational and artistic tools such as mandolins and motorcycles, which were considered as luxury at that time and needed by the students, were purchased. Türkoğlu claimed that institutes were "rich" in "course materials" and "technology" since work tools were transformed into educational appliance.⁴¹¹

I sought the views of the Institute's graduates on the principle of integrating work within education that was implemented at their institution. Their responses are presented as follows:

⁴⁰⁶ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 58.

⁴⁰⁷ Moshe Lewin, *The Making of the Soviet System, Essays in the Social History of Interwar Russia* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 38.

⁴⁰⁸ Osman Kafadar, *Türk eğitim düşüncesinde batılılaşma* (Ankara: Vadi Yayıncılık, 1997), 61–8.

⁴⁰⁹ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 273.

⁴¹⁰ George M. Kerchensteiner, *İlk mektep Çerçevesi İçinde İş Mektebi Tecrübesi* (İstanbul: Resimli Ay Matbaası, 1932), 81.

⁴¹¹ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 121–6.

Tahsin Yücel:

"With the integration of work with education, the student would be kept in constant production activity in the fields of classrooms, laboratories, libraries, nature, workshops and agriculture, and would acquire knowledge and skills through his own activity. These activities aimed to develop the brain abilities and hand skills of the students, simultaneously. For this reason, it was a right call to have agriculture, craft and art classes together with culture classes in VIs. In every job, in every profession, the most solid education is the one given within the work. When a person is doing a job, the brain also provides a great contribution to it, and seeks for better ways to do that job, to carry out a stronger and faster process, and to improve the tools that are being used. Therefore, the brain and the hand develop together. In addition, the information learned by practice is firmly engraved in the memory and is not easily forgotten."⁴¹²

Hayri Doğan:

"First, we were learning the theoretical knowledge of that work in agriculture and technical lessons in the classroom. Afterwards, we were doing the exercises in the relevant application areas. It was very logical that this principle was included in the educational curriculum of the institutes. Because when we went to the village, the most necessary things were this applicable information."⁴¹³

With the implementation of the integration of work with education principle, these institutes were opened with the least cost and spread all over the country. After the institutes began to function, they created their own resources so as to achieve, and even go beyond, the stage of self-sufficiency.⁴¹⁴ The institutes soon became self-sufficient and did not require any financial assistance from the state. Thus, they achieved their partial autonomy.

5.2 The principle of Democratic Education

The most important principle of the institutes is the democratic character and values that make these institutions special. Although the studies in the literature highlight the principle of integration of work with education due to its different characteristics, in fact, the most original

⁴¹² Excerpt from the interview with Tahsin Yücel on October 7, 2021.

⁴¹³ Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

⁴¹⁴ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 276.

feature of these institutions is that they are the first education institutions that incorporated democratic values.

There was no strict hierarchical management in VIs. When we look at the management approach adopted, we see an understanding that incorporates students, division of labor and sharing principles and is participatory, transparent, and based on democracy.

In VIs, students were a part of the administration. After the principal, the most authoritative person in the institute was the student president. The administrative students involved in the student administration, including the president, were determined not by the will of the institute administrators, but by the democratic elections held annually by all students.⁴¹⁵ Arayıcı, states that student participation in Turkish education has been done effectively for the first time in the educational history of Türkiye.⁴¹⁶

Tonguç designed the model of democratic management with student participation, which he had implemented in the institutes, and made efforts to train the young administrators he appointed in this regard. For example, in the official letter dated 4.12.1944 and numbered 20.297 he sent to the institute directors, he stated:

"A development based on the principle of self-management of students will be aimed in the internal structures of the institutes. For this reason, all teachers employed by the institutes should strive to protect these institutions from any type of personal management style."⁴¹⁷

We see in Tonguç's work "*The Village to be Revived*," published in 1939, that the main goal of the institute system was essentially *to liberate* the villagers. This liberation refers to the liberation of both mind, thought and behavior. Liberation of mind and thought is possible with scientific and democratic education and freedom of expression. Behaviors, on the other hand, take place by exercising the right to democratic participation and criticism. Instead of liberation, Tonguç uses the concepts of "reviving and raising awareness." He shared his opinion on the subject in 1939 as follows:

"The village issue is not a village development in appearance, as some think, but a meaningful and conscious revitalization of the village. It should enliven and raise awareness of the villagers so that no force (...) can ruthlessly exploit them on their own account. Villagers should not become unconscious and unpaid work animals. Just

⁴¹⁵ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 153–5.

⁴¹⁶ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 274.

⁴¹⁷ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 42–3.

like every citizen, they should always have their rights. This is what is meant when referring to the village issue."⁴¹⁸

It can be seen in the letters Tonguç wrote that he personally adopted and tried to implement these democratic values in the institutes. In the letter he wrote to Emin Soysal on 8 December 1938, his reply to his disrespectful words shows his belief in democratic values:

"You have a number of words that were said in a very intemperate way. But since these are arrows that can finally hit me, I can ignore those words without any regrets. Because, I am in a position to think that while I should not have thrown the arrows, I am the one who had given them with my own hands."⁴¹⁹

The literature presents a divergence of viewpoints regarding the democratic nature of these institutions. Gedikoğlu posits that the manifestation of democratic education necessitates more than just the presence of political and legal democracy; it also requires the existence of democratic conditions within society. Consequently, he argues that the institutes were neither inherently democratic nor capable of becoming so.⁴²⁰ The absence of democratic atmosphere and political democracy in the country at that time caused Gedikoğlu to strongly defend this view.

On the other hand, according to Apaydın and Makal, graduates of the Institute, democratic education was practiced in the VIs through everyone's involvement in administration, criticism meetings, debates on many subjects, and reading outside of textbooks.⁴²¹ Further, according to Gökçe Gökalp, Tonguç used democratic management practices to use these institutions as a tool for modernizing rural areas, and therefore, the students actively involved in the decision-making processes.⁴²² Furthermore, Aytemur claimed that institutes played an important role in establishing democracy over the entire country.⁴²³ The fact that the democratic values applied in the institutes at that time were not implemented in the country and in Europe was effective in Aytemur making this claim. In this respect, the opponents, encouraged by the democratic environment of the institutes, started to work to bring political democracy to the country and they succeeded in 1946. Although the entry of multiple democracies into the country indirectly led to the undermining

⁴¹⁸ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 46–61.

⁴¹⁹ Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüleri Yılları 1936-1946*, 27.

⁴²⁰ Gedikoğlu, *Evreleri, Getirdikleri ve Yankılarıyla Köy Enstitüleri*, 30–2.

⁴²¹ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 63; Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 123–37.

⁴²² Gökçe Gökalp, "Cifteler, the First Village Institute (Türkiye 1937–1954)," in *Pedagogies and Curriculums to (Re) imagine Public Education*, ed. Encarna Rodriguez (Singapore: Springer, 2015), 135.

⁴²³ Sağiroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 109.

of the institutes, it can be said that one of the factors contributing to the entry of political democracy into the country was the democratic character of the institutes.

In addition, Türkoğlu claims that graduates of the institute influenced the villagers with their democratic behavior.⁴²⁴ The arrival of an educated person who constantly raised awareness of the villagers and defended their rights, indirectly caused these people to be exposed to democratic values, and thus democratic values were able to enter the villages.

I claim that VIs have exceeded their purpose of emergence in a very short time and have come to a position where they could produce their own democratic practices and values. In such a short time, VIs have moved from being a carrier and distributor of contemporary values and practices to a producer role and this is one of the greatest achievements of these institutions.

5.2.1 Assembly of VIs

There used to be meetings held at regular intervals at VIs. These meetings were held at different times and under different names: in some institutes once a week, in others every two weeks, in some, every Saturday. In Akpınar Village Institute, it was held on Mondays under the name of "village talks."⁴²⁵ Given that the term "assembly" aptly aligns with the function of these gatherings, this research will henceforth refer to them as the Assembly of Institutes. All members of the institute, ranging from the principal to the cook and the students, participated in these assemblies. These meetings served as a platform for evaluating weekly events and tasks. Furthermore, any errors that had occurred were brought to light and subjected to critique.⁴²⁶ The most important feature of these meetings was that everyone was given an equal right to speak and the rank of the people attending the meeting did not matter. Students could speak as they wished and criticize those who they thought were doing their task incorrectly or incompletely. Afterwards, those who were criticized were given a voice and expected to explain the situation. Türkoğlu states that principals or teachers were also frequently criticized, and they would answer these criticisms seriously.⁴²⁷ However, these criticisms had to be based on solid evidence.

⁴²⁴ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 223.

⁴²⁵ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 17–22.

⁴²⁶ Hürrem Arman, *Piramidin Tabanı: Köy Enstitüleri ve Tonguç I-II: Anılar* (Ankara: İş Matbaacılık ve Ticaret, 1969), 143–55.

⁴²⁷ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 333–42.

In these meetings, not only criticisms were made, but also those who successfully fulfilled their duties were rewarded and congratulated. To give an example, students working in the construction of a place realized that there would be rain the next day and worked all night to cover the construction. Thus, they saved the institute from great damage. These students were thanked at the meeting and their hard work was rewarded.⁴²⁸

The objective of the Assembly of Institutes was to foster the development of students and villagers into contemporary individuals. This transformation was sought by challenging anti-reformist and traditional mindsets. Moreover, the assembly aimed to promulgate democratic values throughout rural regions.⁴²⁹ Baykurt stated that the purpose of these meetings was to enable students to express themselves clearly and to eliminate their shyness.⁴³⁰

As an example, below is one of the discussions that took place at the Assembly of Institutes, given unchanged:

"-One of the students took the floor: Guys, I just saw two pickaxes near the water tank. I'm asking you, are these not numbered? Why are they not collected? Guards, please, explain this situation!

-Guard Mustafa Buğday responds to this criticism as follows: While inspecting the place, I saw the pickaxes and took them and put them back to their place. But I'm not thanking you. You saw the pickaxes before me, why didn't you take them? Isn't this our home? Shouldn't we work without wasting a single nail?"⁴³¹

In addition, the students criticized the principal Rauf İnan in one of these meetings, because a special meal was prepared for the President İnönü, who came to visit the Çifteler Village Institute. Rauf İnan, instead of getting angry, explained that "President İnönü had diabetes, for this reason, a special meal was served for him, and such practices were made for students in the same situation as well." Thereupon, the students thanked him for his explanation.⁴³² The parity of students' participation in these meetings emerged from the fact that they were solely responsible for all labor and productivity within the institutes.

Binbaşıoğlu claimed that these meetings aimed not only to provide students with problem solving and management skills, but also to make them better understand and

⁴²⁸ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 371.

⁴²⁹ Hasan Gönder, "Initiative to Create Ideal Citizens in Rural Areas of Türkiye: Assembly of Village Institutes," *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021): 39–41.

⁴³⁰ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 91.

⁴³¹ Abdullah Özkucur, *Köy Enstitüleri Destanı* (Ankara: Öğretmen Yayınları, 1985), 94.

⁴³² Rauf İnan, *Bir Ömrün Öyküsü* (Ankara: Öğretmen Yayınları, 1986), 61–8.

implement "democracy through practice," which was a new concept at that time and was not yet implemented in the country. Öztürk, on the other hand, stated that with these meetings, the institutes implemented self-government and self-criticism, thus educating students as citizens of a democratic society.⁴³³ On the other hand, Türkoğlu stated that the Assembly of Institutes raised sensitive and conscious individuals regarding social, cultural and political issues. These people continued their sensitivities in their lives after graduation.⁴³⁴ The best example of this is the TÖS, which was founded by graduates from institutes. I, on the other hand, argued that with these meetings, students who were meek, subservient, insecure, and ignorant were transformed into self-reliant individuals who were aware of and fought for their rights and any kind of injustice they have faced.

In our interview with Pakize Türkoğlu, a graduate of the institute, Türkoğlu described her memory with Sabahattin Eyyüboğlu, who worked as a teacher at the institute:

"Student protests began in 1968 and spread across Europe. At that time, I was going to speak at a conference. When I met with our teacher Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, I consulted about what to talk about at the conference. And he said to me: Can't you see? Students across Europe have recently been advocating for their voices to be heard within universities; a movement reminiscent of the approach taken by the VIs a quarter of a century ago. It is incumbent upon you to share this historical precedence."⁴³⁵

5.2.2 Student-centered institution

Garuso, Astuto, and Clark assert that student-centered institutions uphold principles such as freedom, participation, self-governance, and empowerment.⁴³⁶ They took decisions with an autonomous, bottom-up mechanism.⁴³⁷ The VIs system were based on 'the bottom', that is, the student. In this type of organization, there is no distinction between the ruler and the ruled. Since all the work was done by the students who were also actively involved in the decision-making processes. According to Arman, this organization was defined by "equality" in all aspects of life, participation in production according to one's "duty," "strength," and "capacity," and the thought of consuming according to one's own "needs."⁴³⁸

⁴³³ Cavit Binbaşoğlu, *Çağdaş Eğitim ve Köy Enstitüleri: Tarihsel Bir Çerçeve* (İzmir: Dikili Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1997), 37.

⁴³⁴ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 52.

⁴³⁵ Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

⁴³⁶ Yılmaz, "Democracy," 24.

⁴³⁷ İsmail Safa Güner, *Köy Enstitüleri Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Kervan Matbaası, 1980), 22.

⁴³⁸ Arman, *Piramidin Tabanı*, 121.

Within VIs system, a paradigm shift occurred from a top-down approach to a bottom-up strategy. However, the actualization of this transformation was not without its challenges. Notably, the teachers exhibited considerable resistance during this transitional phase. There were some resistances, such as the insistence of some teachers assigned to the institutes to teach using old techniques or beating students and threatening them with failing from certain classes.⁴³⁹ The first reason for this was that the teachers were educated in institutions where traditional methods were applied, and they were not open to innovation. The other is that the patriarchal structure of society, especially rural areas, was not yet ready for such a change. Even Tonguç's friends, who later worked as a director at the Institutes, initially opposed such a change and said that it was a big mistake.⁴⁴⁰

Tonguç tried to ensure that these institutions implemented these principles and values by constantly intervening with teachers and administrators who acted outside the values and principles of the institute in the letters he sent to the institute directors. In the letter he sent to all institute directors dated 13.12.1943, he wrote that all the works of the institutes should be done by the students and warned the principals who did not give a role to the students.⁴⁴¹

In my interview with Pakize Türkoğlu, a graduate of the institute, I asked how the democratic participation and culture they adopted and practiced in the institutes affected their post-graduation life and work. Her response is given below:

"Participation of students in the administration was not just showing off as in classical schools. Students really ruled, they took authority and responsibility, so they had the right to speak and express their opinions in return. This democratic education culture developed by the Institutes has trained us to be democratic teachers. Our relations with the students were not meant to scold them, we were cool with students."⁴⁴²

5.3 Boarding Coed Education

Co-education signifies an advanced stage of education in the modern world. In Türkiye, co-education was first introduced in secondary education institutions in 1927, during the tenure of Education Minister Mustafa Necati. By the 1930s, separate boarding schools for girls and boys existed across the country. The remote locations of the institutes and the provision of

⁴³⁹ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 372–85.

⁴⁴⁰ İnan, *Bir Ömriin Öyküsü*, 71–82.

⁴⁴¹ Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüleri Yılları 1936-1946*, 77.

⁴⁴² Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

boarding education rendered the transition to co-education more challenging.⁴⁴³ However, in 1937, co-education was legally implemented in village teacher schools. With the inauguration of the VIs in 1940, all institutes offered mixed, boarding education. The necessity for girls to receive an education, coupled with the state's incapacity to establish separate schools for girls, contributed to this transition towards co-education. Therefore, the first implementation of a co-educational boarding system in Türkiye was carried out by the VIs.⁴⁴⁴

Pedagogical methods were used in the co-education given in the institutes. Any problem that may have arisen due to the implementation of mixed and boarding education was tried to be overcome by using pedagogical methods.

The following words of the institute director are interesting in that they show the pedagogical approach applied in co-education:

"Building a thick wall between girls and boys, creating a skeptical environment when they touch each other and come eye to eye, and separating cafeterias and places of opinion may have had negative consequences in co-educational practice. For this reason, from the first days of the institutes, we have given students a remotely controlled freedom. On the other hand, we ensured that female students were close with their female teachers, and that these teachers gave the necessary information and suggestions to the students."⁴⁴⁵

The introduction of co-educational boarding in the institutes prompted disquiet among conservative factions, leading them to engage in various provocations in an attempt to forestall this progression. The following are the claims put forth by these groups in an effort to incite public opposition: claiming that a female student got pregnant at the institute, male and female students exchanged letters and had romantic relationships with each other, teachers had intercourse with female students, female students wore communist-style skirts and jackets, etc.⁴⁴⁶ However, no source could be found to show the accuracy of these claims. Only the administration, which caught a female student and a male student's correspondence, punished them by giving the male student a one-month and the female student a 15-day suspension.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴³ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 169–70.

⁴⁴⁴ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 101–2.

⁴⁴⁵ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 168–70.

⁴⁴⁶ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 278.

⁴⁴⁷ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 34.

Even the uttering of such allegations disturbed the villagers, who had a patriarchal social structure, and the number of female students in the institute began to decline sharply starting from the date these allegations were made. The number of girls, corresponding to 10% of the students in 1944, decreased to 5% with 721 students in 1950.⁴⁴⁸ In the same year, female and male students were separated, and female students were gathered in two institutes and co-education in the institutes was ended.

Institutes notably challenged the conventional structure of Turkish village life through their innovative approaches. During an era when girls often remained unschooled and were customarily married by the ages of 13-14, the decision to promote education for them was undeniably a strategic risk, anticipated to confront substantial resistance. Given the society's deeply rooted patriarchal background, the VIs' audacity to introduce boarding co-education stands as a remarkable feat, illustrating their commitment to societal transformation despite the prevailing opposition.

5.4 The Cooperative System

The village institutes played an instrumental role in advancing the concept of cooperatives in rural regions. This claim is substantiated by the structured educational framework of the institutes which included comprehensive lectures on the core principles and operations of cooperatives, complemented by hands-on training.⁴⁴⁹ The educational objective was twofold: firstly, to arm graduates with the expertise to initiate cooperatives in their designated villages, and secondly, to bolster rural economic growth by facilitating loans to villagers, either for sustenance or business expansion. Moreover, the establishment of these cooperatives was intended to dismantle the traditional intermediary system. Historically, these intermediaries would purchase agricultural produce from villagers at minimal costs and capitalize on selling them at marked-up prices in urban markets. As a direct consequence, there was not only a notable rise in the number of cooperatives established in Türkiye during the 1940s but also an enhanced participation rate within these existing cooperatives. Hence, the rise of cooperatives during the 1940s not only indicates an increase in their number but also hints at a shift in the economic dynamics of Turkish agriculture.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁸ Sağıroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 112.

⁴⁴⁹ Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü haftalık ders cetveli ilk projesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. ca. 1942b, E03-105-45, Teaching principles, programs, texts, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 7. (hereafter cited as Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü haftalık ders cetveli ilk projesi, Teaching principles, programs, texts, ca. 1942b)

⁴⁵⁰ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 77–82.

This responsibility given to the institutes and teachers was also registered with the "Organization Law of Village Schools and Institutes" numbered 4274, which was enacted in 1942. According to this law, production and consumption cooperatives and their unions could be established under the control of the Ministry, serving the village people of the surrounding villagers of teachers, trainers and students in VIs and village schools.⁴⁵¹ Cooperatives are very important in terms of establishing unity between the village people and the system, creating a unity of fate between the villagers and the institute, and they have become very successful solidarity organizations.

Kirby claimed that, with the exception of some specialized agricultural regions in Türkiye, it was the VIs where cooperatives were first practiced spontaneously.⁴⁵² Baykurt, a graduate of the institute, states in his work that the graduates of the institute organized the villagers and established cooperatives across the country.⁴⁵³

In my interview with the graduates of the Institute, I asked them whether they were involved in any cooperative activity in order to organize the villagers, whether they took any courses on cooperatives while studying at the Institute, or whether they participated in any activity. Their response was as follows:

Pakize Türkoğlu:

"There was a cooperative course in VIs. The teachers of this course were highly educated. However, since the institutes were closed in a short time, much work could not be done on this matter. Later, I learned from the press that some of the teachers who wanted to do such a study in Thrace were put on trial for uprising the villagers, were tried for many years, and then were acquitted."⁴⁵⁴

Mahmut Koç:

"I tried to do this in the village where I was first assigned, but it was not possible due to the large lands that the landlord owned. Later, we established a cooperative and most of the villagers became members. There was a cooperative building in our institute. We used to go shopping there. We were producing everything. We used what we needed, sold the surplus through the cooperative and generated income for the other expenses of the Institute."⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 84.

⁴⁵² Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 303.

⁴⁵³ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 65.

⁴⁵⁴ Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

⁴⁵⁵ Excerpt from the interview with Mahmut Koç on November 1, 2021.

Cooperatives stimulated production in rural areas and contributed positively to the rural economy. Through the cooperatives, the villagers got rid of the intermediaries and were then able to sell their products to distant markets.

Arayıcı noted, however, that as a result of the institutes developing a cooperative spirit in the villages, the fact that they were given a long-term economic role by the regime was a source of discomfort for the large landowners.⁴⁵⁶ The landowners, who saw that their own interests were in danger, tried to prevent the cooperatives of institute teachers by making various attempts to preserve the existing order.

⁴⁵⁶ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 272.

Chapter 6

6. Comparison of Hasanođlan Higher VI and Eötvös József Collegium

6.1 Hasanođlan Higher VI

Hasanođlan is a village situated along the Ankara-Kayseri railway line. Its proximity to Ankara, being just 32 kilometers away, and its strategic location on the railway line significantly influenced the decision to establish the Higher Village Institute in this locality. This institution, which was opened at the higher education level, has become the symbol of VIs.⁴⁵⁷ The constructions in Hasanođlan Higher VI, which were made with a limited state budget, were completed by teams consisting of students and educators from 14 other institutes. Each team consisted of 30 people, including 20 students and 10 educators.⁴⁵⁸ Students from other institutes who successfully completed the construction task were given a free 10-15-day study trip as a reward.⁴⁵⁹ Thus, it was aimed for the teacher candidate to get to know the country and enlighten their vision.

The Hasanođlan was established near Ankara due to the difficulty in finding teachers who could teach at the higher educational level. As a result, faculty members from Ankara's universities and colleges offered their assistance. Higher VI students often benefited from the laboratories and other facilities of these institutions and took lessons from the country's most valuable academics.⁴⁶⁰

Tongu explains the reason for the establishment of Hasanođlan as follows:

"The Hasanođlan Higher VI represent our vision for the future of universities. These institutes are tasked with cultivating the citizens of the 21st century. With the current state of higher education in Türkiye, traditional universities are ill-equipped to resolve the prevailing issues due to their inactivity. These institutions are insufficient for preparing the country for the demands of the 21st century. We require an institution

⁴⁵⁷ Ahmet Emre Ateş, "1940-1946 yılları arasında Türkiye'de köylü eğitimi" (PhD diss., İstanbul University, 2011), 103.

⁴⁵⁸ Hasanođlan Köy Enstitüsüne 1944 yılı inşaat mevsiminde diđer Enstitülerden gelen imece ekipleri by Mustafa Güneri. December 26, 1944, D04-62-1, building works, İsmail Hakkı Tongu Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1. (hereafter cited as 'Hasanođlan Köy Enstitüsüne 1944 yılı inşaat mevsiminde diđer Enstitülerden gelen imece ekipleri, building works, December 26, 1944).

⁴⁵⁹ Niyazi Altunya and Ali Kınacı, *Hasanođlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü* (Ankara: Telgrafhane Yayınları, 2019), 14.

⁴⁶⁰ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 193–5.

that is more dynamic, vibrant, integrated with the community, and influential within society. Hasanođlan Higher VI is being developed to fulfill these expectations."⁴⁶¹

In the document we obtained from İsmail Hakkı Tongu's archive, the aims of the Hasanođlan are stated as follows:

"To train teachers to work in VIs, to raise IHTs and regional primary education inspectors to supervise the regions where institute graduates will work, to make necessary researches on all kinds of issues concerning villages, village schools and institutes, and to disseminate them in ways that can be benefited by those concerned, in order to constitute a center for village studies."⁴⁶²

The first students to study at the Hasanođlan were admitted without examination. Although it was originally designed as a 6-month training course, after the examinations, it was decided that 6 months would not be enough, and the opened course was converted into a High Village Institute and it was found appropriate to provide training for 3 years.⁴⁶³ Afterwards, the selection of candidates to be admitted to the Hasanođlan was rearranged according to the regulation dated 1943:

Among the successful students who will graduate from VIs, the teacher boards of the VIs select at least twice of the quota given as candidates and notify to the Hasanođlan directorate. Candidates pass a two-stage examination. The first exam is a common exam for all departments. Those who are successful in this exam pass another theoretical and practical exam at the Hasanođlan according to the field of specialization they will choose, and those who are successful are in this exam are accepted to the Hasanođlan.⁴⁶⁴

The common written exam question asked to those who applied to the Hasanođlan in 1944 was given below:

"What kind of a change would there be in terms of belief, knowledge, technique, and life in a village where all children have completed at least primary school? What will our nation win from this change? How do you think we can do this in a quickest way?"⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶¹ Bařaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öğretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel*, 140.

⁴⁶² Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi by İsmail Hakkı Tongu. August 9, 1943, E01-47-4, legal regulations, İsmail Hakkı Tongu Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2. (hereafter cited as Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi, August 9, 1943).

⁴⁶³ Eřme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 195.

⁴⁶⁴ Altunya and Kınacı, *Hasanođlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü*, 29–30.

⁴⁶⁵ Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi by İsmail Hakkı Tongu. July 24, 1943, E01-56-4, legal regulations, İsmail Hakkı Tongu Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2. (hereafter cited as Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi, legal regulations, July 24, 1943).

The Higher Village Institute has eight specialties. The names of these areas of specialization and who will be recruited are as follows: fine arts branch -male and female students will be admitted; construction branch -males only; mining branch -males only; animal care branch -males only; poultry branch - females only; field and garden agriculture branch -males only; agricultural business economics branch -both male and female students, and finally, village housework and handicrafts branch -only females.⁴⁶⁶

The courses to be given at Hasanođlan Higher VI were divided into two categories. The first was culture courses, and the other was specialization courses varying according to their branches. The courses, which were called culture courses, and which were compulsory for everyone, were 15 hours per week. The main courses were history of revolution and Turkish Republic, teaching knowledge courses, Turkish, foreign language (English, French, German) and military service courses. The specialization courses according to the branches were 29 hours in total. These courses differed according to the fields.⁴⁶⁷ The following table lists the courses given according to their fields of specialization.

⁴⁶⁶ Vexliard and Aytaç, "The Village Institutes in Türkiye," 45.

⁴⁶⁷ Hasanođlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsünde Köy Enstitülerine öğretmen yetiřtirmek üzere açılacak birinci yıl, birinci dönemde gösterilecek kurslar by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç. ca. 1942a, E03-105-45, Teaching principles, programs, texts, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–2. (hereafter cited as Hasanođlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsünde Köy Enstitülerine öğretmen yetiřtirmek üzere açılacak birinci yıl, birinci dönemde gösterilecek kurslar, Teaching principles, programs, texts, ca. 1942a).

Table 4: Courses given according to the specializations chosen by the students

<p>Fine Arts Branch: Music, histrionism, history of civilization and art, national games and rhythmic gymnastics, painting-modelling, seminar studies</p>	<p>Construction Branch: Architectural knowledge, agricultural construction, mechanical drawing, interior decoration, history of art and civilization, workshop and seminar studies.</p>
<p>Mining Branch: Technology, mechanical drawing, plumbery, technology and practical chemistry, technical historical and artistic mine works, workshop and seminar studies</p>	<p>Animal-Care Branch: Animal science, biology, participation and health information, animal feed information and pasturage, seminars, studies in barns and corrals.</p>
<p>Poultry Farming Branch: Poultry care, biology, child-care, cooking, tailoring, food chemistry, studies in seminar, kitchen and poultry house.</p>	<p>Village Housework and Crafts Branch: Work knowledge of raw materials used in village housework and handicrafts, food chemistry and histochemistry, mechanical painting, child-care, tailoring, embroidery, weaving, knitting, interior decoration, seminar and workshop studies.</p>
<p>Field and Garden Agriculture Branch: Agricultural knowledge and history, botanical and soil biology, mineralogy and agricultural chemistry, economics and cooperatives, economic geography, land surveying and trade arithmetic, seminars, studies in fields and gardens.</p>	<p>Agricultural Management Economy Branch: Agricultural production equipment transport and towing equipment and their knowledge, agricultural machinery and engines, economic geography, business economics, trade arithmetic and land surveying knowledge, economics and cooperatives, seminars, workshops and laboratory studies.</p>

The author's compilation based on the following sources: Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç. August 9, 1943, E01-47-4, legal regulations, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2; Hasanoğlu Yüksek Köy Enstitüsünde Köy Enstitülerine öğretmen yetiştirmek üzere açılacak birinci yıl, birinci dönemde gösterilecek kurslar by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç. ca. 1942a, E03-105-45, Teaching principles, programs, texts, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 3.

Talip Apaydın, a student at the Higher VI, made the following comment on how the courses were being taught:

"Some of our classes were very interactive. For example, in the western literature class, our teacher Sabahattin Eyüboğlu would have had a selection of texts from great western writers duplicated from the beginning and handed them out to us one week beforehand. We would read and study the text over and over. Then, in the lesson, we would discuss the period that the author has lived, the new understanding he brought,

and the world view of the thinkers of that time. These texts would often be the works of philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Montaigne, and Voltaire."⁴⁶⁸

Vedat Günyol, who taught French at the Hasanoğlan, conveys his impression of the first lesson he gave at this institution as follows:

"I entered the classroom. I got used to it from high school that my students would stand up when I would have entered the classroom. In Hasanoğlan, no one stood up. Then, when I went towards the blackboard and started to talk, the atmosphere of the class changed. I went crazy with that joy. The questions they were asking were more than flesh and blood could bear. What a curiosity! I learned a lot from my students at Hasanoğlan. It turned out that the student could educate the teacher just as the teacher educated the student. VIs enabled me to experience that pleasure. My major was French, but they asked me such questions about literature, life and politics other than French that I would have had prepared myself before the class to be able to answer their questions. After all this experience, I say that it is the students who make the teacher a teacher; students who ask questions, exercise their minds, and critically scrutinize the information presented to them."⁴⁶⁹

At the Higher VI, which also functioned as a research center, considerable emphasis was placed on foreign language education. Students who were enrolled in French, English, and German language classes were proficient enough by their third year to translate materials within their academic fields. The first issue of the Journal of Village Institute featured numerous translations contributed by students, serving as a testament to the high caliber of foreign language instruction provided by the Higher VI.

Internship was another element that had an important place in the education given at the Hasanoğlan. Students were required to carry out an internship for 2 months at the end of each academic year.⁴⁷⁰ Students were sent to either VIs or regional schools. It was aimed that the students who were educated in the Higher VI were sent there for internship, to share and disseminate the techniques and information they learned with other teachers and students in these institutions.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁸ Talip Apaydın, *Köy Enstitüleri Yılları* (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 2021), 61–4.

⁴⁶⁹ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 205.

⁴⁷⁰ Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi, legal regulations, August 9, 1943, 1–2.

⁴⁷¹ Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü öğrencilerinin stajları by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç. ca.1944, E07-108-32A, High Village Institute internships and interns, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1–4. (hereafter cited as Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü öğrencilerinin stajları, High Village Institute internships and interns, ca.1944).

Until 1947, the year that the Hasanoğlan was closed, 213 graduates (18 women and 195 men) were admitted between 1945-47. These people were appointed to VIs as teachers, primary education inspectors or IHTs. A few students also started working at the Hasanoğlan as assistants.⁴⁷² Although the Higher VI had a very short life, it left permanent traces in Türkiye's educational, cultural and political history. To briefly mention, these traces are as follows: providing poor and talented village children with higher education opportunities; exemplifying a new understanding of education centered on scientific, democratic and active human profile; by raising many writers, artists and thinkers, and making village children more active in social, cultural and political life; having started researches in the fields of village and agriculture by giving scientific research awareness and skills to its students; bringing new types of staff to education, especially in the village, with the 213 young people it graduated, and giving new type of teachers to VIs from within.⁴⁷³

In addition, with the Village Institutes Journal published by the Higher VI, a scientific journal focusing on the village and the villagers and published by the village children was put forward for the first time in the country. The Village Institutes Journal was published in 8 issues in total between 1945-1947. To be published quarterly, 17000 copies of each issue were printed and distributed to all VIs and relevant circles in the country. The journal, issued eight times, comprised a total of 133 articles. Among these articles, 117 were contributed by students from various institutes. Each issue of the journal was partitioned into three sections: village examinations, institute studies, and institute news. The first section contained scientific studies related to rural communities. The second section encompassed various literary works, including poetry and narratives, while the third section disseminated current news from the institutes.⁴⁷⁴

The articles in the journal were a collection of articles selected from 20 institutes. Eşme claims that with this nature of the journal, it caused a competition among the institute students who wanted to see their names on its pages, and that it also served as an incentive to read and write.⁴⁷⁵ This situation was effective in the students' view of social events and provided them with the opportunity to write and announce their thoughts through the journal. According to Başaran, the journal presented "the products of those who know what they live

⁴⁷² Altunya, "Köy Enstitüleri Sisteminde Yönetim," 39.

⁴⁷³ Altunya and Kınacı, *Hasanoğlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü*, 49.

⁴⁷⁴ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 11–26.

⁴⁷⁵ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 209.

for."⁴⁷⁶ It was the same year that the journal of VIs stopped publishing and the Hasanođlan Higher VI was closed down. Ahmet Emre Ateş claimed in his study that VIs journal acted as a publication organ Hasanođlan and other VIs.⁴⁷⁷

Hıfzı Veldet Velidedeođlu made the following assessment about the Village Institute Journal in his article titled *An Undermined Development Move*:

"The number of pages of the first volume of the journal of VIs, which was published in 1945, is 623. Today, in no school, high school or even in the faculties of universities, not one journal is published in a single year to this extent. The main value of this journal is not the quantity of leaves, that is, its quality of the articles, village studies, stories and poems in it."⁴⁷⁸

With the opening of the Hasanođlan, Tongu also put into effect an important project: preparing a pedagogical dictionary according to the principles of integration of work with education concept. The students of Hasanođlan made great contributions to the preparation of the articles of this encyclopedic dictionary. Some of the prepared articles were also published in the journal of VIs. Before this project was completed, Tongu was dismissed and the Higher VI was closed. Afterwards, Tongu completed this dictionary by himself with his own efforts and published it in 1952 under the name *Teacher's Encyclopedia and Pedagogical Dictionary* without using his own name.⁴⁷⁹ As it is known, the principle of integration of work with education concept is the most basic principle of VIs. The fact that Tongu prepared the pedagogy dictionary according to this principle together with teachers and students of Hasanođlan shows that he not only adopted this philosophy in the practical part but also examined it theoretically and contributed to the philosophy of integration of work with education concept.

Eyübođlu claimed that with the Higher VI, which annually selected forty people from among tens of thousands of young people, a door was opened to the most distinguished type of enlightenment.⁴⁸⁰ Lütfi Engin also stated that the Hasanođlan was an institution that had sworn to defeat the bad luck of the Turkish villagers for centuries.⁴⁸¹ On the other hand, Tongu posited that Hasanođlan functioned as the 'brain and heart' of the other VIs. He held the conviction that if Hasanođlan were to lose its purpose and significance, VIs would rapidly

⁴⁷⁶ Bařaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öđretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel*, 73.

⁴⁷⁷ Ateş, "1940-1946 yılları arasında Türkiye'de köylü eğitimi," 112.

⁴⁷⁸ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çađdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 177-94.

⁴⁷⁹ Altunya and Kınacı, *Hasanođlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü*, 41-2.

⁴⁸⁰ Eyübođlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine*, 52.

⁴⁸¹ Köy Enstitüleri ve Çađdaş Eğitim Vakfı, *Köy Enstitüleri I-II*, 244.

devolve into conventional types of schools.⁴⁸² Hasanođlan was the only institution in the country that made higher education accessible for talented village children in the shortest way. There, by applying the main principles of democratic education, students were sent to creative work and trained as citizens who desire to change the traditional structure and disseminate democratic values to rural areas.

Since the criticisms directed at the Higher VI were the same as the criticisms directed at the VIs, these criticisms are not given in this section. However, due to the close location of the Hasanođlan to the capital, it caused bureaucrats and especially those who were against these institutions to come to Hasanođlan frequently, making it easier for them to look for the necessary justification to undermine these institutions.

6.2 Eötvös József Collegium

Eötvös József Collegium was founded in 1895 in Budapest, Hungary. The shortage of teachers, which was a chronic problem in the country, has been effective in the establishment of this institution. To solve this chronic problem, Loránd Eötvös, in 1878, following and inspired by the French pattern, proposed to establish an organization to educate elite teachers, which did not receive enough attention that year. By the 1890s, the problem of teacher training became more serious and the number of teachers who would retire was higher than the number of newly graduated teachers, causing the intellectuals of the period to understand and advocate that the teacher training system should have been reformed.⁴⁸³

During the ministry of Loránd Eötvös and Gyula Wlassics between 1894 and 1903, the proposal made by Loránd Eötvös in 1878 was implemented and on September 21, 1895, the Baron Eötvös József Collegium in the rooms of the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Kerkápoly Foundation building in Csillag Street was opened and put into operation. This Collegium, which was established for experimental purposes, aimed to solve the existing problems in teacher training by organizing seminars in small groups for selected students and using different methods in this regard.⁴⁸⁴ The Collegium has given education in the higher education level and produced highly qualified specialists that the government needed.⁴⁸⁵ Most of the

⁴⁸² Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 273.

⁴⁸³ Imre Garai, *An Elite Teacher Training Institute: The History of Eötvös József Collegium 1895–1950* (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös József Collegium, 2019), 45.

⁴⁸⁴ Gábor Tóth, "Az Eötvös József Collegium," in *Szabadon szolgál a szellem*, ed. László Kósa (Budapest: Gift Kft, 1995), 23–5.

⁴⁸⁵ Imre Garai, Zoltán András Szabo and András Németh, "Movement of Special Colleges for Advanced Studies and its Current Challenges in Hungary," *Historia Scholastica* 1 (2020): 125–7.

students who studied and graduated from this institution became either scholars or well-educated elite teachers, improving the quality of public education.⁴⁸⁶

Although the Collegium was inspired by the *École Normale Supérieure* in Paris, it was not the only copy of the home institution.⁴⁸⁷ The Collegium has evolved into something that inspired other institutions, exceeding its founding goals and expectations in a very short time. To give an example, even the French Minister of Education visited and examined the Collegium in 1904 to develop institutions in their own countries.⁴⁸⁸ The examinations made inspired the reforms made at the *École Normale* in Paris.⁴⁸⁹ Although the relations between Hungary and France in the 20th century came to the breaking point from time to time, the Collegium continued its relationship with French culture and its representatives without interruption.⁴⁹⁰

As being the one who planned and established this Collegium, Loránd Eötvös is an important figure. His true intention and purpose in founding the Collegium have been questioned for many years. But to put it simply, "his aim was to provide a new generation of highly educated teachers for this nation."⁴⁹¹ He did not stay in this position long enough to implement his ideas because the government he served resigned and he did not want to be a part of the government that replaced it. Therefore, his ideas and plans were implemented by his successor, Gyula Wlassics⁴⁹² who remained the Head of the Secondary-School Teacher Training Institute until November 3, 1903. Wlassics, like Eötvös, argued that universities were not only responsible for educating scientists, that teachers and scientists were interconnected, and therefore teacher training programs should have been organized with this in mind.⁴⁹³ After Gyula Wlassics, Loránd Eötvös, son of József Eötvös, who founded the Collegium, took over his position.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁸⁶ Béla Lekli, "Szemelvények a régi Eötvös Kollégium utolsó éveinek történetéhez 1945–1950," *Levéltári Szemle* 45, no. 3 (1995): 41.

⁴⁸⁷ Viktor Karády, *A francia egyetem Napóleontól Vichyig* (Budapest: Felsőoktatási Kutatóintézet, 2005), 182–7.

⁴⁸⁸ Béla Pukánszky, "A tanárképző intézet szerepének alakulása a magyarországi tanárképzés történetében," *Pedagógusképzés* 10-11, no. 39-40 (2012-2013): 81.

⁴⁸⁹ Garai, Szabo and Németh, "Movement of Special Colleges," 128.

⁴⁹⁰ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 11.

⁴⁹¹ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 376.

⁴⁹² Miklós Mann, *Kultúrpolitikások a dualizmus korában* (Budapest: National Educational Library and Museum, 1993), 80–2.

⁴⁹³ Mann, *Kultúrpolitikások a dualizmus korában*, 99–100.

⁴⁹⁴ Imre Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium as an elite teacher training institute," *History of Education & Children's Literature* 8, no. 1 (2013): 216.

In 1928, after the Collegium gave positive results and realized that it was training qualified elite teachers, the educational purposes of the Collegium changed. As of this year, students have been started to be educated in order to meet the academic elites required for the country, and similar institutions have started to be opened throughout the country.⁴⁹⁵ The newly established institutions in Debrecen and Szeged were inaugurated, following the model of the Collegium.⁴⁹⁶

Three main pillars constituted the foundation of Collegium: first, the faculty of philosophy provided the subject-specific knowledge; second, this knowledge was followed by pedagogical courses that the teacher training institute provided and a pedagogical exercise that was supposed to proceed for a year; and third, the selected students could acquire scientific knowledge at the Collegium through which they could shore up unsystematic university education.⁴⁹⁷ Up until 1948, when communists took the lead, Collegium encouraged critical thought and permitted a humble approach to the humanities and the sciences.⁴⁹⁸

The primary objective of the Collegium was to foster the development of elite educators. As such, students with existing knowledge, prior education from esteemed institutions, and who were successful in entrance examinations were admitted into the Collegium. Moreover, prospective students were required to pay an annual tuition fee. Consequently, the Collegium mainly catered to children from white-collar families who had the financial means to afford these tuition fees. It is imperative to note, however, that this circumstance altered in 1948, concurrent with the amplifying influence of communists within the Collegium, and the political shift that occurred in the same year. Subsequent to these changes, the majority of the student population began to comprise of children from working-class backgrounds. It should be emphasized that the acceptance rate for applications to the Collegium stood at approximately 25-30%. To illustrate, over the course of the first 15 years, 1045 applications were received, of which only 274 were accepted, resulting in the rejection of 741 applications.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁵ Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium," 217.

⁴⁹⁶ Garai, Szabo and Németh, "Movement of Special Colleges," 129.

⁴⁹⁷ Imre Garai and András Németh, "Construction of the national state and the institutionalization processes of the modern Hungarian secondary school teacher training system," *Espacio Tiempo y Educación* 5, no.1 (2018): 227.

⁴⁹⁸ Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium," 226.

⁴⁹⁹ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 49.

We observed that the Collegium, which accepted applications from all regions of Hungary, mostly accepted applications from places with a dense school network.⁵⁰⁰ In addition, it should be noted that only male students were admitted to the Collegium. Due to the patriarchal structure of the society, female students were not accepted to this institution.

Considering the fields of specialization chosen by the students admitted in the first 15 years, 68% of these students had chosen humanities – Classical Philology, Hungarian-German, French-Hungarian, Latin, History, Geography, etc; 23% chose to specialize in natural sciences – Mathematics, Physics, Astrology, Natural History, Chemistry, etc. Only 213 out of 274 students managed to successfully complete their education. Those who could not complete their education are thought to leave because the education given at the Collegium was heavy or because they failed in the exams. Moreover, some students had to leave the Collegium because their families could not afford more due to their changing financial situation.⁵⁰¹

Also, at the end of each academic term, a committee was convened to evaluate the academic performance of the students and to decide whether they were qualified to attend the Collegium. In the first 15 years, enrolment of 7% of the Collegium students were terminated as a result of these meetings.⁵⁰²

The Collegium adopted a structure known as the 'family system,' which significantly influenced its internal dynamics and daily life. The constituents of this family system were delineated as follows: "father" graduating member of the institute, "mother" 3rd year student, "freshman" 2nd year student and "novice" 1st year student. The system provided four interconnected rooms for Collegium students. "First room belonged to the freshers, whereas the inner room belonged to fourth-year students. Officially, each suite was referred to as a family. Each family then would have selected a family head from among the fourth-year students, consisting of a father to represent the suite to the director and a mother to maintain the suite's internal order."⁵⁰³ Upper-class students introduced the new students to the Collegium, instilling their values, helping them adapt to the inner life of the Collegium and also with their lessons. The responsibility of watching over moral and ethical matters was also given to family members.⁵⁰⁴ The Collegium used this kind of paradigm in an effort to create

⁵⁰⁰ Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium," 219–22.

⁵⁰¹ Garai, *An Elite Teacher Training Institute*, 57–61.

⁵⁰² Garai, *An Elite Teacher Training Institute*, 61.

⁵⁰³ Géza Laczkó, *Királyhágó* (Budapest: Károly Grill Publishing Company, 1938), 246.

⁵⁰⁴ Garai, *An Elite Teacher Training Institute*, 77.

a new archetype for secondary school teachers. As it enabled new students to be quickly adapted, the family structure had been a helpful instrument for the Collegium in achieving its objectives.⁵⁰⁵ The family system had been a facilitating tool for the Collegium to achieve its goals, as it enabled the rapid adaptation of new students.

Another important detail was that not every student admitted to the Collegium was considered a member of this institution. In the first week that the student entered this institution, he would have an exam and if he did not pass, his relationship with the institution would have been terminated. It has been stated that each year 1-2 students could not be able to pass this exam. In addition, students could become full members in this institution at the end of their second year of education. Students who won the full membership would have had the right to vote in the meetings held in these institutions and were awarded the title of "teacher."⁵⁰⁶ Until the fresh student would have had a full membership, he could only be on par with the upper classes and teachers in the library. It should be said that the Collegium had a hierarchy in this respect, but the transition between layers was not difficult.⁵⁰⁷ Some social activities were held in order to improve the relations of students with each other and with their teachers; some of which were cabaret and beer dinners. Those activities involved students performing a play with musical inserts, which would mostly be followed by merriment. Students and teachers could have had the opportunity to create informal conversations with each other through these activities.⁵⁰⁸

Although the Collegium was subordinate to the ministry and received a budget from it, Collegium retained its autonomy until the 27th Act of Parliament in 1924, as the Curator acted as a bridge between the ministry and the Collegium and protected the Collegium from political criticism. With this law change, the autonomy of the Collegium had been ceased and it was given under the supervision of Secondary School Teacher Training. But until the communist takeover in 1948, the Collegium retained a certain level of educational autonomy.⁵⁰⁹ In his doctoral work, Garai noted that the autonomous character of Collegium students was emphasized in memoirs published by Collegium students and teachers.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁵ Garai, Szabo and Németh, "Movement of Special Colleges," 128–9.

⁵⁰⁶ Árpád Kucsman, *Egy kémikus a régi Eötvös Collegiumban* (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös József Collegium and Petőfi Literary Museum, 2006), 62.

⁵⁰⁷ Domokos Kosáry, "Az Eötvös Collegium történetéből. Az első évtizedek 1895–1927," in *Tanulmányok az Eötvös Kollégium történetéből*, ed. József Zsigmond Nagy and István Szijártó (Budapest: József Eötvös Kollégium, 1989), 18–9.

⁵⁰⁸ Kucsman, *Egy kémikus a régi Eötvös Collegiumban*, 146–7.

⁵⁰⁹ Garai and Németh, "Construction of the national state," 228.

⁵¹⁰ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 126.

In 1910, the Collegium extended its enrollment to include international students. A specific quota was established for Bosnian and Turkish students, permitting ten such individuals to enroll. As a result, two Bosnian and one Turkish student gained admission to the Collegium. This practice was interrupted when the World War I (WWI) broke out and the Ministry demanded that citizens of warring countries not be in the Collegium, and likewise, these students were ordered by their own countries to return back. During the war years, the Ministry used the Collegium to accommodate refugee families for a while.⁵¹¹

From 1945, Hungary was included in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) sphere of interest. The political change in the country in 1948 also affected the Collegium and as a result of the pressures, there was a tendency towards communist type education in the Collegium. By 1948, most of the students were no longer the children of wealthy white-collar families, but the children of workers. The power struggle between communists and non-communists was also reflected in the 1948 student presidential election. One of the candidates was a communist and the other represented the former *ecole*. The election resulted in the communist candidate losing. However, he who had the support of other communists, threatened the winner. The winner, who could not withstand the pressures, was forced to resign. The communist candidate, who entered the re-election as the only candidate, won this time and demanded that non-communist students who did not support him to be expelled from the Collegium. When the Collegium's Director Dezső Keresztury refused this request, this time he wanted the director's resignation and Keresztury, who could not stand the pressure, was forced to resign.⁵¹² After 1948, the Collegium acted as an organ of the communist party. Because members and teachers who entered the Collegium before 1948 were made to resign by communists.⁵¹³

From the discourses of Tibor Lutter, it is evident that certain Marxists had an aspiration to transform the Collegium into an institute for Marxist doctoral candidates.⁵¹⁴ However, in January 1949, the cabinet council created the legal framework that precipitated the termination of the Collegium. A new Act of Parliament abolished the teacher training system structure administered by the Collegium. As a result, during the second university reform in 1950, the disestablishment of the Collegium became inevitable. The first dissolution

⁵¹¹ Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium," 221–9.

⁵¹² András Fodor, *A kollégium. Napló, 1947–1950* (Budapest: Magvető, 1991), 113–5.

⁵¹³ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 359–60.

⁵¹⁴ László Kósa, "Dokumentumok az Eötvös József Collegium történetéből," in *Szabadon szolgál a szellem. Tanulmányok és dokumentumok a száz esztendeje alapított Eötvös József Collegium történetéből 1895–1995*, ed. László Kósa (Budapest: Gift Kft., 1995), 228–31.

of the Eötvös Collegium Former Members' Association occurred in May 1950, which eventually led to the legal dissolution of the Collegium in 1951.⁵¹⁵

There are some different views on the closing of the Collegium. According to Kelevéz, the majority of Collegium graduates believed that Lutter had the directorship with specific intentions to shut down the school.⁵¹⁶ Róbert Frankl, on the other side, claimed that the Collegium was closed because it could not keep up with the new order that emerged after WWII.⁵¹⁷ I do not agree with Frankl's view because the Collegium's voluntary orientation towards communist style education meant abandoning its own values and principles that made this institution unique. Thus, perhaps the Collegium would not be closed as Frankl had hoped, but the new establishment that emerged would not be the 'Collegium' either.

It is possible to summarize the contributions of the Collegium to the country as follows: First, the Collegium performed the function first outlined by its founders by producing highly qualified secondary school teachers for a secular state until 1948. In addition, the Collegium's education provided by the university and the Secondary Teacher Training Institution had given its students access to some special courses and a well-equipped library. This situation caused the students to be more knowledgeable and skilled compared to the students studying at the university.

Second, the presence of native language teachers in the Collegium also increased the quality of the education provided at the institution. Not only French and German language teachers but also Italian, English, Estonian, and Finnish lecturers were invited and welcomed to the Collegium.⁵¹⁸ The fact that 18 people found a job abroad after their graduation also reveals the quality of the foreign language education provided.

Third, the Collegium also contributed to the professionalization of the teaching profession. The Collegium played a significant part in institutionalizing secondary school teaching in Hungary.⁵¹⁹

Lastly, by 1950, the Collegium admitted 1204 people, of whom only 730 graduated by completing their studies by 1945. When the jobs that graduate students worked after graduation were examined, it was revealed how qualified these people were. 115 of the

⁵¹⁵ Andor Ladányi, *Felsőoktatási politika 1949–1958* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1986), 62–4.

⁵¹⁶ Ágnes Kelevéz, "János Benyhe (1945–1949)," in *Ahol a maximum volt a minimum. Emlékezések a régi Eötvös Collegiumra*, ed. Ágnes Kelevéz (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös József Collegium – Petőfi Institute for Literary Studies, 2007), 202–4.

⁵¹⁷ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 359–60.

⁵¹⁸ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 371–2.

⁵¹⁹ Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium," 215–6.

graduates became professors at universities or colleges; 60 people worked as researchers in scientific institutions; 44 people became members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; 25 people served as bureaucrats in the ministry; 18 people worked abroad; 20 alumni worked as writers or artists; 58 people became principals in secondary schools; and about 400 people became teachers in secondary schools, raising the level of teaching standards of the Hungarian secondary school.⁵²⁰

It is noteworthy that during 1910-1911, the Turkish imperial government undertook a study on the functions of the Collegium. This was in response to the Hungarian side's offer to educate Turkish candidates, financed by the Hungarian government. This proposal was part of a competition amongst European universities seeking to attract students from Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Türkiye. Hungary joined this competition relatively late, and the generous offer was made to overcome the competitive disadvantage. Nevertheless, the Turkish government did not fully comprehend the operations and objectives of the Collegium, as they intended to send industrial school students for training. After the Hungarian side drew attention to this misunderstanding, the Turkish government sent a student named Ata Refik, who unfortunately passed away during the WWI, although he had operated in his home country for one to one-and-a-half years.⁵²¹ It is clear that through the Collegium, the Hungarian side aimed to exert influence on the Turkish government, akin to how other foreign countries sought to influence Türkiye through foreign schools. Despite comprehensive archival research, I was unable to find any pertinent information regarding Ata Benli's work on this subject.

It is noteworthy to acknowledge two additional Hungarian institutions, which although not the main focus of this thesis, are important to consider. Despite facing similar challenges during the 19th century, Hungary established distinct institutions that were not identical to those in other countries. This reflects the ability of these institutions to successfully integrate and adapt to local conditions and historical traditions. On the other hand, it suggests that the VI's efforts were exceptionally innovative and forward-thinking, as demonstrated by the distinctiveness of these institutions.

In Hungary, the institution known as a "népfőiskola," or folk high school in English, is a crucial part of the adult education institution. It was conceived by Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, a Danish Lutheran minister, in the early 19th century. These schools were

⁵²⁰ Lekli, "Szemelvények a régi Eötvös Kollégium," 40–3.

⁵²¹ Garai, "An Elite Teacher Training Institute," 114–7.

established to modernize and educate young peasants between the ages of 18 and 30, with the goal of integrating them into society.⁵²² The schools are renowned for their unconventional and informal approach to education, emphasizing community learning and experiential education. They offer a diverse range of courses in areas such as culture, art, literature, history, philosophy, and social sciences. The first Hungarian residential folk high school was established in Szada in 1925. The folk high school idea in Hungary was initially promoted by churchmen with a strong interest in public education, and later by intellectuals and farmers who recognized the urgent need for social reform.⁵²³ The WWII had a significant impact on the Hungarian folk high schools, and although some survived under difficult circumstances, most were closed by the Communist government in the early 1950s.⁵²⁴ The folk colleges in Hungary were non-secular, non-state-supported, and primarily associated with civil movements. Despite this, their goals were similar to those of VIs.

The National Association of People's Colleges (NÉKOSZ) represents another significant facet of the educational institution. Established on June 8, 1946, this association functioned as the primary organization within the People's Colleges movement. This educational initiative aimed to offer resident secondary and higher education to talented young members of the peasantry and working class in Hungary. Drawing on the traditions of Protestant colleges, as well as inspiration from populist writers and the labor movement, the People's Colleges sought to provide a unique educational experience that fostered personal growth, self-discovery, and community building.⁵²⁵

NÉKOSZ adopted democratic statutes that promoted self-governance and collective leadership within the People's Colleges. An essential component of the movement's success was the active recruitment of talented peasants, who underwent rigorous testing before being admitted. Collegians organized application camps each summer, providing opportunities for potential students from rural areas throughout Hungary to learn about and participate in the People's Colleges program. In addition to their educational mission, members of the People's Colleges played a role in organizing the Hungarian Democratic Youth League and participating in land reform efforts as government commissioners. The People's Colleges

⁵²² "Népfőiskola," Arcanum, accessed February 17, 2023, <https://www.arcanum.com/hu/online-kiadvanyok/Lexikonok-magyar-neprajzi-lexikon-71DCC/n-734DB/nepfoiskola-73562/>

⁵²³ Jindra Kulich, "Residential folk high schools in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 21, no. 2 (2002): 186.

⁵²⁴ Janos Toth, "Folk high schools and civil society in Hungary," *Lifelong Learning in Europe* 3 (1999): 178–80.

⁵²⁵ Katalin R. Forray, "Colleges for Roma in higher education," *HERJ Hungarian Educational Research Journal* 3, no. 3 (2013): 2–4.

cultivated a range of values, including collective self-governance, conscious self-instruction, critical thinking, and the dissemination of cultural and national knowledge. Despite its commendable commitment to fostering freedom of thought, the movement encountered significant opposition from communist authorities. This resistance led to its eventual dissolution in 1949, thereby stalling the momentum it had built over the years.⁵²⁶

The VIs were some combination of these (including the Eötvös Collegium), with the essential feature that the VIs were secular, self-governing, co-educated, with a mixed educational theme, i.e., partly work-based, and for a long time they were also supported by the state. The question arises: To what extent did the Eötvös Collegium influence the establishment of the village institutes in Türkiye? Upon review of the available sources, there is no clear indication that the Eötvös Collegium played a role in the inception of Türkiye's VIs. No significant evidence or records currently substantiate such a claim. Furthermore, there is no indication that Tonguç, the pioneer behind these institutes, was acquainted with or influenced by the Hungarian Collegium. It's noteworthy that during the Ottoman era, only a select group of students attended the Collegium. Yet, with the onset of WWI, these students ceased their education and repatriated to Türkiye. Following Türkiye's declaration as a republic, no subsequent research or associations relating to the Collegium have been documented.

6.3 The Comparison of Eötvös Jozsef Collegium and Hasanoğlan Higher VI

The Collegium and Hasanoğlan, although established in different countries and time periods, confronted similar issues using different methodologies, yet exhibited a multitude of commonalities. The focus of this study includes a comparative analysis of these two institutions. The substantial similarities between these institutions can be attributed to the structural parallels present in the countries where they were established. The country profile, the social, economic and cultural conditions of them. Both countries were developing countries at the time, which bore the intention of catching up with the developed ones. Both are the successors of empires (Hungary is successor of Austro-Hungarian Empire and Türkiye is successor of Ottoman Empire) and both were defeated in the WWI and after that both made an attempt to establish democratic regimes (For Turkish case, it was successful to some

⁵²⁶ Dini Metro-Roland, "The recollections of a movement: memory and history of the National Organization of People's Colleges," *Hungarian Studies: A Journal of the International Association for Hungarian Studies and Balassi Institute* 15, no. 1 (2001): 49–62.

degree, however, the Hungarian case was constantly interrupted). Both countries grappled with considerable difficulties in their teacher training systems and were unable to generate the requisite number of teachers. To counter these challenges, Hungary established the Collegium, while Türkiye founded the VIs. Despite the distinct methods deployed by these institutions, the striking similarities between them are noteworthy.

The common points of Eötvös József Collegium and Hasanoğlan Higher VI are given below:

- a. Both have taught at the higher education level.
- b. Both were boarding institutions.
- c. Both had accepted students from all over the country.
- d. Both had enjoyed institutional and educational autonomy for a certain period of time.
- e. Both were subject to political criticism and interference before dissolution.
- f. There are similarities in the social structure of both countries. The majority of the population of both countries were rural (60% of Hungary, 80% of Türkiye).
- g. Both have educated elite teachers and scholars.
- h. Similar reasons were effective in the emergence of these two institutions: there were chronic problems in the teacher training system of both countries at that time. The existing number of teachers did not meet the number of teachers needed, and the number of teachers retiring was higher than the number of newly graduated teachers.
- i. These two institutions have tried to solve the teacher training problem in their countries by applying a different approach and method that has not been tried in their countries before.
- j. These two institutions emerged as a reaction to the organizations that educated teachers with traditional methods in their countries and had a conflict with these organizations for a while.
- k. Both the Collegium and Higher VI was discontinued during comparable timeframes, coinciding with the emergence of a new global order following the WWII. (The Collegium was ruled out in 1948; the Higher VI was shut down in 1946.) Because both were too democrat in compared to their bloc and were fond of their autonomy.
- l. Both of these organizations were secular.
- m. Both of them frequently made study trips in the country, aiming for their students to get to know their country.
- n. Both encouraged their students to think critically.

o. Even after both were closed, they were presented as a solution to their countries' ongoing problems in the field of education at different time intervals.

p. Both have made great contributions to their countries in training teachers and scholars and have played a major role in the institutionalization of the teaching profession.

q. Both contributed to the professionalization of the teaching profession.

r. The admissions processes in both were similar: students were required to have passed a two-stage examination and were expected to have a certain amount of knowledge.

s. Both of these institutions were more democratic and innovative institutions compared to the institutions in the period they emerged.

t. Dual education or (for Turkish case) the traces of dual education still existed in both countries, and it was aimed to put an end to dual education through these institutions.

u. In both institutions, students who failed in their courses and studies were immediately cut off from the institution. The Collegium expelled them directly from the school, while the VIs appointed these students to the villages as teachers.

v. Similar theories have been put forward by some researchers for the dissolution of these two organizations: not being able to keep up with the change and the new order. Although they were in different poles after WWII, we find it noteworthy that they were closed at the same time and that similar theories were put forward regarding their closure. The reasons would be worth further research, especially due to the different political environment and yet the similar outcomes.

w. Both have exceeded their organization's expectations and developed the organizations or methods from which they were founded.

The table below shows the points where these institutions differ from each other.

Table 5: Differences between Eötvös József Collegium and Hasanoğlan Higher VI

	Eötvös József Collegium	Hasanoğlan Higher VI
Enrolment Criteria	Only men	Both men and women
Aims	To raise secondary teachers, elite teachers and scholars	To raise teachers for VIs, inspectors and IHTs
Tuition Fee	Yes	No- free
Hierarchy	There is	There is not- all equal
Democratic Atmosphere	Limited	Yes
Voting Right at the General Assembly	Must be earned	Everyone has an equal say
Method of Education Provided	Classical methods	On the job training
The Access of the Poor and the Villagers	Very limited since most of them could not afford the tuition fee	There is- only students with rural origin were welcomed
Degree of Contribution to the Modernization of Their Country	Low	High
The access of poors and villagers	Very limited since most of them cannot afford the tuition fee	Yes- only students with rural origin welcome
To what degree they have contributed the modernization of their country	Low	High

The author's compilation based on the following sources: Imre Garai, "The Baron József Eötvös Collegium as an elite teacher training institute. The analysis of the admitted members between 1895 and 1950", *History of Education & Children's Literature* 8, no.1 (2013): 215–46; Imre Garai, *An Elite Teacher Training Institute: The History of Eötvös József Collegium 1895–1950* (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös József Collegium, 2019), 371–2; Imre Garai, Zoltán András Szabo and András Németh, "Movement of Special Colleges for Advanced Studies and its Current Challenges in Hungary," *Historia Scholastica* 1 (2020): 118–24; Niyazi Altunya and Ali Kınacı, *Hasanoğlan Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü* (Ankara: Telgrafhane Yayınları, 2019), 42; İsa Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2018), 219–31.

As can be seen, both institutions left a great mark in the education history of their countries. Even today, the fact that these institutions are still discussed from time to time and presented as a solution to the educational problems of their countries reveals that these institutions were modern institutions ahead of their time. The main difference between them

is that VIs only received children residing in villages; on the other hand, the Collegium recruited people who had sufficient knowledge and could pay the tuition fees. Both institutions, however, set out with the motto of establishing the university of the future. For this purpose, they provided a democratic environment that did not exist in their country at that time, to some degree within their own institutions. They raised their students as scholar teachers using interactive learning tools. The fact that graduates took up important positions in both countries could be explained by the quality education they had received.

On the other hand, while both institutions have significantly contributed to the professionalization of the teaching profession, their contributions to the modernization of their respective nations can be considered somewhat limited. Given that one of the founding purposes of the VIs were to modernize rural areas, a degree of contribution can be acknowledged. However, it should be underlined that the Collegium was not established with a similar intent. Consequently, it would be accurate to assert that the Collegium's contribution to the modernization of rural areas was considerably minimal.

It is also worth noting that there was a well-established hierarchy in the Collegium. First- and second-year students were not on par with their teachers and upper-class friends, except in the library. To be on par with them, they had to do well in their courses and pass the exams at the end of the second year, in short, they had to earn that right. We think that this situation negatively affected the environment and internal dynamics of the Collegium. In contrast to this situation, in Hasanoğlan, every student was considered equal with everyone from the first minute they entered the institute, and they had an equal right to speak in the general assembly and criticism meetings. This situation enabled the students to cling to democratic values more tightly and to see these values as a way of life. Yet, this was not the case for Collegium students.

Finally, VIs were established nearly 40 years after the Collegium. Of course, it was not easy for the institutes to implement boarding coeducation due to the conditions of the period and the strong patriarchal family structure of the rural areas. Institutes have faced severe criticism as a result of this revolutionary practice, which was one of the reasons for their closure. However, the fact that the Collegium kept its doors closed to female students until 1950 reveals that this institution, which was ahead of its time and provided secular education, was not open to innovation in this matter.

Chapter 7

7. The Demolition Process of the Institutes

In order to thoroughly comprehend the deconstruction process that began in 1946 and culminated in the transformation of the VIs into the initial Village Teachers' School in 1954, it is essential to carefully examine the criticisms and allegations that were leveled against these institutions prior to 1946. The previous chapters have analyzed the criticisms voiced in the parliament related to technical issues, the program implemented by these institutions, and the additional responsibilities they imposed on the villagers. This chapter will scrutinize the allegations and denunciations that these institutions propagated communist ideologies and inculcated students in this vein, separate from the technical aspects.

The initial spark for these allegations was ignited by the "Çifteler Raid" that occurred in 1943. Based on a report, law enforcement agencies conducted a raid on the institutes without notifying the administration, carried out searches without any warrant, and seized certain notebooks and books from students under the pretext of "evidence."⁵²⁷ The person who made this denunciation claimed that Asiye Elçin, who was a master instructor at the institute, had books containing communist propaganda and distributed them to her students. After the examinations and investigations were made, 11 students who were at the graduation stage were tried and acquitted. However, these students were followed closely by the police in the following periods and their activities were examined. Asiye Elçin has been arrested.⁵²⁸

Later on, within the institutes, especially in the Hasanoğlan Higher VI, groupings began to form among the students, and they started to tend to different ideologies. Tonguç believes that the groupings in the institutes were mostly caused by external factors. According to him, for young people who knew the world affairs even superficially, followed the affairs of the country closely, and read everything freely, it was natural to turn to different beliefs and tendencies. The most important thing was not to allow them to become pawns at the disposal of the outgroups.⁵²⁹ But unfortunately, the students fell into this trap and despite Tonguç's warnings, they continued to group with one another and fights within the institute started to become ordinary.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁷ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 219.

⁵²⁸ Arman, "Piramidin Tabanı," 336.

⁵²⁹ Arman, "Piramidin Tabanı," 454.

⁵³⁰ Apaydın, *Köy Enstitüleri Yılları*, 189–90.

The opponents of the institute, who saw that the denunciations were effective on the society and among the students of the institute, increased their propaganda and denunciations against the institutes, taking advantage of the favorable political atmosphere in the country. For this reason, the security forces carried out many operations against the institutes, especially as of 1943.⁵³¹

In his article, Karaömerlioğlu stated that these accusations did not reflect the truth, that only two articles/essays related to socialism were included in the Journal of Village Institutes. These were liberal articles by today's standards, and that only four students were convicted from extreme political views in the VIs, where there were more than 20.000 students, and this rate was lower than that of the military.⁵³²

7.1 New World Order and Türkiye's Transition to Democracy by Necessity

At the end of the WWII, the world went into a bipolar order. The capitalist bloc formed by the West and the communist bloc formed by the USSR came face to face. The fact that the Soviet Union came to the territorial borders of Türkiye, did not sign the Non-Aggression Pact, which was expected to be extended in 1939, and claimed over the Straits in return for signing this pact, worried Türkiye, who was neutral in the WWII.⁵³³ On August 1946, the USSR gave Türkiye a memorandum, demanding the cities of Kars and Ardahan from Türkiye, and preparing to invade Türkiye,⁵³⁴ forced Türkiye to take sides with the West. The prerequisite for being a part of the other pole was the democratization of the country.⁵³⁵

Karaömerlioğlu posited that the shifting global circumstances and the rise of a new world order profoundly impacted Türkiye, leading to dramatic alterations in the nation's domestic and foreign policy. Under these novel conditions, it was exceptionally challenging for the VIs to sustain their operations.⁵³⁶

With the transition to the multi-party system in 1946, a branch of the opposition wing within the CHP, which included the people who had opposed the VIs and laws regarding VIs

⁵³¹ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 241.

⁵³² Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 67.

⁵³³ Aydemir, *İkinci Adam*, 280–2.

⁵³⁴ The Soviets demanded that the cities of Kars and Ardahan belong to the Armenians living in their union, and that these cities shall be returned to the USSR, as well as the right to have a say in the Straits. In fact, it emerged from the documents in the Soviet archive that these allegations were some made of excuses. According to these, the Soviets planned to gradually demand other lands in Türkiye and eventually invade the whole country. (Ahmad, *The making of modern Türkiye*, 82–115).

⁵³⁵ İlker Aytürk, "Nationalism and Islam in Cold War Türkiye," *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 5 (2014): 698–707.

⁵³⁶ Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 71.

before 1946, left the CHP and founded the DP. The atmosphere of democracy that emerged in the country and the DP's desire to increase its votes gave the necessary environment for the accusations against the Institutes, which the DP disliked and criticized from the very beginning.⁵³⁷ Seeking the backing of rural notables, who were opposed to changes in the countryside, the DP made pre-election promises.⁵³⁸ Adnan Menderes, himself a significant landowner, vowed to close the Institutes if the DP received the support of fellow landlords. The DP further sought to discredit the Institutes by levying various accusations against them.⁵³⁹ In addition, we see in the letter sent by Head Teacher Hüseyin Erdoğan to Tonguç that books written to defame the institutes were forcibly distributed and sold.⁵⁴⁰ Those who did not buy these books were accused of communism. Thus, these books were sold and disseminated throughout the country.

7.2 VIs-Related Discussions in the Assembly

There has been such a deep polarization in the parliament and in the society regarding the institutes that Eyüboğlu said the following while conveying this polarization: "Tell me what you think about the VIs, and I will tell you who you are."⁵⁴¹

Emin Soysal, who was a former institute member and worked as a director in these institutions until 1943, made the main attack on the institutes in the assembly, which had a devastating effect. Emin Soysal was an interesting figure, as he claimed that he founded the institutes in his book *The History of Village Institutes* and *Kızılçullu Village Institute*, published in 1943. Soysal, who caused problems many times before, was dismissed from his job after this book he published and was appointed to a different position. For this reason, Soysal, who harboured a grudge against these institutions, Tonguç and Yücel, vilified these institutions in order to take his revenge when he entered the assembly as an independent deputy. He has described the institutions he has served for years as nests of immorality, destructiveness and betrayal. The fact that someone from within the institutes made these accusations deeply affected the public opinion.⁵⁴²

As a result of the pressure on the institutes in the assembly, İnönü gave his first concession by dismissing Rauf İnan, who was the director of Hasanoğlan Higher VI, and

⁵³⁷ Başaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öğretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel*, 126.

⁵³⁸ Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 3.

⁵³⁹ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 279.

⁵⁴⁰ Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüleri Yılları 1936-1946*, 224.

⁵⁴¹ Eyüboğlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine*, 35.

⁵⁴² Arman, "Piramidin Tabanı," 312.

appointing him to the ministry as an inspector. This appointment, which actually looks like an award, is the first concession made to the Institutes, although it was made with good intentions by İnönü. Opponents of the institute, who saw that their pressure yielded results, increased their criticism and accusations against these institutions.⁵⁴³

In the 1946 elections with bats - the CHP both made the election early to prevent the DP from organizing, and overshadowed these elections by counting the votes as open ballot-secret classification. The DP entered the assembly as an opposition party and won 61 deputies, receiving approximately 30% of the votes, which worried the CHP.⁵⁴⁴ Fear of losing power in the next elections, and to keep the DP under control, İnönü allowed the conservative wing within the CHP to form the government. However, the problem was that the conservative wing of the party was opposed and critical of the VIs from the very beginning. The VIs were founded by the reformist wing of the party that was in power. With the conservative wing coming to power, the institutes lost government support.⁵⁴⁵ DP seeing this, intensified their criticism on the VIs. On the other side, the government, instead of defending these organizations, promised to "correct these institutions."⁵⁴⁶ Even the new right wing government included the following statement in their program: "We will make VIs more national."⁵⁴⁷ Moreover, the second concession was made by the fact that Yücel was not included in the newly formed government and reformists such as Yücel were purged from the party.⁵⁴⁸ As a result, the institutes were harmed by the struggle between reformist and conservatives.

One of the issues discussed in the literature is why İnönü did not protect these institutions. In Ekmekçi's view, İnönü thought that the graduates of the institute would be leftist or social democrat in the future. Ekmekçi states that for this reason, İnönü allowed the institutions to be undermined.⁵⁴⁹ Unlike this view, onguç asserted that the sustained involvement of İnönü in politics and his grip on power were paramount. As such, İnönü chose not to defend these institutions when they faced accusations in a bid to prevent the erosion of his own public standing.⁵⁵⁰ Karaömerlioğlu, on the other hand, states that it would be

⁵⁴³ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 108–9.

⁵⁴⁴ Sağıroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 114–21.

⁵⁴⁵ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 234.

⁵⁴⁶ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 279.

⁵⁴⁷ Aydemir, *İkinci Adam*, 381.

⁵⁴⁸ Canan Yücel Eronat, *Köy Enstitüleri Dünyasından Hasan Ali Yücel'e Mektuplar* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2020), 68.

⁵⁴⁹ Mustafa Ekmekçi, *Öksüz Yamalıği Köy Enstitüleri* (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1996), 46.

⁵⁵⁰ Engin Tonguç, *Umut yolu* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2021), 106.

unrealistic to anticipate governmental support for the VIs, alleged to be an institution inspired by the Soviets, especially during the Cold War when Türkiye was a recipient of the Marshall Aid.⁵⁵¹ On the other hand, Şengör claimed that İnönü was not a revolutionary, but a politician, and for this reason, he did not take care of these institutions that aimed to revolutionize rural areas, when there were attacks upon them.⁵⁵² According to Eşme, who put forward a more optimistic view, İnönü did not have the strength to protect the VIs at that time. For this reason, he could not prevent the undermining of these institutions.⁵⁵³ Finally, according to Eyüboğlu, it was more important to try to develop an environment in Türkiye that would keep people like Yücel than keeping Yücel in this position. For this reason, he gave his priority to protecting democracy and the democratic environment.⁵⁵⁴ Among these approaches, the views of Şengör, Eşme and Eyüboğlu seem more reasonable. In fact, İnönü's protection of the VIs until 1946, when he was powerful, and that he did not take care of these institutions after his power was shaken from 1946 onwards, does not necessarily show that he actually did not care about them. It shows that he had to take such a decision due to the political atmosphere of the period and the conditions of the country.

7.3 Collapse Begins

Reşat Şemsettin Sırer was appointed as the Minister of National Education in the newly formed government in 1946. Sırer is an important figure because he was against these institutions from the very beginning. He did not want the order of the rural areas to be changed and the rural people to be enlightened and conscious.⁵⁵⁵ One day, during his visit to the Institutes, he expressed his opinion about them to Tonguç as follows: "If you raise these people's children like this, how will we manage this nation, I don't want the horse I ride to be smarter than me."⁵⁵⁶ As soon as he took office, he started to attack and change all the values and principles that made the Institutes unique with the practices he called "improvement."⁵⁵⁷

The actions that Sırer took to undermine these institutions after he became a minister are given chronologically:

⁵⁵¹ Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 73–4.

⁵⁵² Celal Şengör, *Hasan Ali Yücel ve Türk Aydınlanması* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2020), 21.

⁵⁵³ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 285.

⁵⁵⁴ Eyüboğlu, *Köy Enstitüleri Üzerine*, 141–2.

⁵⁵⁵ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 237.

⁵⁵⁶ Tonguç, *Umut yolu*, 96.

⁵⁵⁷ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 111.

a. In August 1946, the publication of the Journal of Village Institutes ended and the distribution of the last two issues of the journal was blocked.

b. In September 1946, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç and later the directors of the institute were dismissed from their posts. The "work education principle" and its implementation, which was compatible with Tonguç, was prohibited in all institutes.

c. With the circular dated February 8, 1947, the authority of VIs principals to have a say in the appointment of village educators and teachers was revoked.

d. With the regulation enacted on April 29, 1947, students were prohibited from participating in the administration and taking any authority and responsibility. In the regulation, the functioning of the institutes was largely transformed into teacher schools.

e. The practice of giving agricultural tools and other equipment to teachers and health officials graduated from VIs were abolished with the law no. 5129 dated 10 September 1947. Thus, it imprisoned the teachers within the school walls and prevented them from taking an active role in the village.

f. The curriculum of the VIs were changed in September 1947, and the relevant preparation was made for the transition to the program of the classical teacher school: The intensity of teaching vocational knowledge courses and Turkish courses was increased, foreign language courses were made optional, the intensity of technical courses and studies and agriculture courses was reduced, and the practical application of these courses were prevented.

g. The Hasanoğlan Higher VI, which was the brain and heart of the Institutes, was closed on 27 November 1947.

h. In April 1948, instructor courses were closed.⁵⁵⁸

The undermining decisions and practices that the DP has taken against the institutes since 1950, when it was in power:

a. Co-education ended in 1950 and female students gathered at Kızılcıllu Village Institute.

b. With the regulation made in 1950, the article "townsmen can also enroll VIs" is added.

⁵⁵⁸ Hatice Akar, "Türkiye'deki Köy Enstitülerinin Toplumsal Değişmedeki Yeri" (Master diss., Dokuz Eylül University, 2011), 33; Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 557; Arman, "Piramidin Tabanı," 437; Tonguç, *Umut yolu*, 513.

c. In 1951, the requirement for the villagers to work for 20 days in the construction of schools was abolished.

d. In 1953, a joint curriculum was designed for VIs and the Teacher's School. This curriculum eliminated all technical and agricultural courses, leaving only cultural and theoretical courses intact. As a result, the VIs were fundamentally transformed into the Teacher's Schools.

e. With the law no. 6234 enacted on January 27, 1954, the Institutes were turned into a teacher's school and closed.⁵⁵⁹

When the regulations made for the Institutes since 1946 are examined, these regulations made under the name of 'reform' aimed the following. Firstly, the authorities and responsibilities of the teachers from VIs were narrowed down, imprisoning them within the school walls and neutralizing the educational mobilization in the village. The second was to pacify the active lifestyle in the institutes as in the teacher schools, and to put an end to the students' having a say in the administration within this framework, and to transform the original education program of the Institute into the programs of classical teacher schools. The third was to break the influence of the institutes by closing the high village institute, which was the brain and heart of the institutes.

Starting from 1946 and until the year of the military coup in 1960, VIs graduates experienced various difficulties, were not respected and even suffered some attacks because they were accused of being communists in the villages they went to. An exemplary case of the persecution and discrimination encountered by the VIs involves Behzat Ay, a VI graduate, who was assaulted by approximately a hundred people in Düziçi, Adana, under the accusation of being a communist. The attackers ceased their violence only because they erroneously believed that Ay was deceased, thus inadvertently enabling his survival. Following the incident, despite being a victim himself, Ay was subjected to trial, torture, temporary imprisonment, and eventually, exile.⁵⁶⁰

Başaran conveyed the experiences of VIs after graduation as follows: "Our lives have been made difficult. The accusation became so widespread that we could not even say that

⁵⁵⁹ Altunya, *Köy Enstitü Sistemine Toplu Bir Bakış*, 121; Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 399–405; Mustafa Gazalacı, *Köy Enstitülerinin Meclis Süreci* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınları, 2019), 253; Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 161–2; Hasan Ali Koçer, *Türkiye'de Öğretmen Yetiştirme Problemi* (Ankara: Yargıçoğlu Matbaası, 1967), 137–9; Giorgetti, "Training village children," 54.

⁵⁶⁰ İlker, *Köy Enstitüsünden Günümüze Bir Öğretmen*, 68.

we were from the institute. Oppression, exile, slaughter... It was as if we were excommunicated collectively."⁵⁶¹

In my interview with the graduates of the institute, I asked if the studies they did or wanted to do in the villages after graduation were precluded because they studied in the VIs. Their answers are as follows:

Mahmut Koç:

"Especially when the DP was in power, they tried to draw us and the villagers away from each other. During this period, we suffered a lot and were exiled. I would like to narrate an incident that happened to me in order to portray the extent of my troubles: One day, the DP district governor called me to his office and said, "Those who made you teachers should be blindfolded". I said: "Dear district governor, it is not a big deal for me to be a teacher where you are the district governor." The district governor got angry and got up from his seat and said, "Open an investigation and take his statement". We were brought up in such a way that we could not tolerate oppression and injustice. Later, while I was giving my written statement and defence, a primary education inspector who was there by chance came to me and asked what had happened. When I told him what had happened, he said, "No way, you will not give a statement or anything." He took me outside. I had come to the governor's office by horse. He put me on my horse and sent me back to the village. He said, "Don't come here again."⁵⁶²

Pakize Türkoğlu:

"Of course, I ran into a lot of problems. To mention a specific problem that I encountered: I was prevented from pursuing my PhD just because I graduated from VIs. While the applications of my friends who graduated from the teacher's school were accepted to the doctoral program, they did not allow me to apply because I had studied at VIs."⁵⁶³

Sabriye Yaşar:

"In truth, I, as a woman, did not encounter any problems. But for example, my husband, who was also a teacher, would be a matter of gossip among the villagers a lot. I guess, being a woman prevented me from being exposed to such things.

⁵⁶¹ Başaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öğretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel*, 12–13.

⁵⁶² Excerpt from the interview with Mahmut Koç on November 1, 2021.

⁵⁶³ Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

However, everything done for the purpose of modernization was criticized. Male teachers were also subjected to various criticisms as to why it was done that way."⁵⁶⁴

Many different views have been put forward as to why the institutes were closed. When these views are examined: Kirby said that foreign experts who came to the country to examine the education system and make suggestions were effective in closure of the institutes. For example, after the recommendations of the American educator Miss Wofford in the report she wrote after her visit to Türkiye, the process of undermining VIs began, and some changes were made in parallel with her suggestions.⁵⁶⁵ For Arayıcı, the VIs' biggest achievement — and the major cause of its closure — was that they brought up a new kind of intellectual by raising awareness among primary school teachers who came from rural backgrounds but did not aspire to be upwardly mobile.⁵⁶⁶ Similarly, Altınyelken, on the other hand, stated that it was effective to raise a group that though, was aware of its rights and would fight against injustices.⁵⁶⁷ Contrary to the aforementioned perspectives, Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu argued that the closure of the VIs were primarily influenced by political motives and the country's transition towards a multi-party system.⁵⁶⁸ Stone emphasized that apart from political views, pedagogical considerations were also effective.⁵⁶⁹

Graduates of the institute and many researchers defending these institutions, including Engin Tonguç, Fakir Baykurt, Başaran, Mahmut Makal, claimed that the institutes harmed the interests of the rural notables, who were powerful actors in rural areas, and institutes were therefore undermined by them.⁵⁷⁰ However, Karaömerlioğlu emphasized that this claim could not be proven. He revealed that until 1946, the landlords did not hinder this establishment, and some even supported it to a certain extent.⁵⁷¹ Furthermore, he also claimed that VIs were a victim caught between two fractions of the Kemalist movement. According to him, VIs were essentially a victim of the indetermination of the regime and its inability to stand behind the policies it implemented.⁵⁷² The fact that one fraction of this movement had an impact on its

⁵⁶⁴ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

⁵⁶⁵ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 232.

⁵⁶⁶ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 27.

⁵⁶⁷ Altınyelken, "Student-centred pedagogy in Türkiye," 155.

⁵⁶⁸ Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu, "The conditions that enabled," 392–3.

⁵⁶⁹ Frank Stone, "Rural Revitalization and the Village Institutes in Türkiye: Sponsors and Critics," *Comparative Education Review* 18, no. 3 (1974): 423.

⁵⁷⁰ Tonguç, *Umut yolu*, 136–52; Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 113–52.

⁵⁷¹ Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 62.

⁵⁷² Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 68–73.

establishment and the other faction had an impact on its collapse proves the accuracy of this argument.

After its establishment, the VI was an autonomous formation, an initiative that took decisions with a bottom-up mechanism. Yet, the establishment of the VIs came about with a top-down order. Therefore, a contradiction arose. I think this is one of the reasons why it was demolished.

In my interview with graduates of the institute, I asked the graduates why they thought the institutes were closed. Their responses are shared below:

Pakize Türkoğlu:

"It was mostly for political reasons. Still, several factors can be mentioned. For example, conservative educators were initially opposed to the idea. They perceived education only in the vicious circle of classical pedagogy, they approached it only as teaching literacy. However, Yücel and Tonguç aimed to influence and support social change and improvement of the situation of the villagers. Also, the fact that rural notables thought that if the villagers would have an education, they would lose their comfort, played an important role in undermining of these institutions."⁵⁷³

Sabriye Yaşar:

"After we started working in the villages, we helped raise the awareness of the villagers. The villagers began to seek our help in every matter. But this did not please the landlords. There was a movement to make the villagers landowners with the land law at that time, but they did not want the villagers to be conscious through institutes."⁵⁷⁴

Tahsin Yücel:

"The following actors and factors were effective in closure of the VIs. Large landowners: these people wanted the villagers they employed to be uneducated; merchants who bought agricultural products: they did not want the villagers to be educated in order to buy their products at a cheaper price; intellectuals who did not like the method of integration of work with education in VIs; religious leaders: they considered teachers as rivals in villages and they didn't want secular and male-female co-education; communism accusations; external factors: we learn from various

⁵⁷³ Excerpt from the interview with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

⁵⁷⁴ Excerpt from the interview with Sabriye Yaşar on September 26, 2021.

international publishing sources that some states were making propaganda to prevent our people from getting a good education."⁵⁷⁵

Ahmet Usta:

"Due to insufficient culture and incomprehensible value of it... The people were too ignorant, and this situation caused the people to be easily deceived."⁵⁷⁶

Hayri Doğan:

"The desire of the Americans to destroy Atatürk and his ideas and to make Türkiye a colony. I think that external influences and American experts were effective in its closure. They also undermined this attempt to protect their own interests, as it coincided with the landlords' own interests."⁵⁷⁷

As can be seen, the graduates of the institute mainly attribute the closure of the institutes to the powerful actors of rural areas, rural notables. They claim that the institutes undermined their interests and attempted to change the ongoing order in rural areas, therefore, rural notables undermined this attempt to protect their own interests.

7.4 Attempts made in rural areas after 1946

The biggest initiative in rural areas of Türkiye were the VIs. Since 1946, when they began to be undermined, no other comprehensive initiative has been undertaken to modernize or improve rural conditions. The main reason for this is that with the beginning of intensive migration from rural to urban areas in the middle of 1950s, the interest in rural areas was lost and since 1960, when institutes regained their reputation, the focus has been undergoing a change towards the adaptation of the villagers who migrated to the city and studies have been carried out on this subject.

After the 1960 coup, the emergent government highlighted the unjust persecution of VIs teachers by the preceding DP regime, noting the existence of approximately 55,000 files documenting such injustices.⁵⁷⁸ This acknowledgment initiated a restoration of the reputation of both the village institutes and their graduates. The inclusion of Hasan Ali Yücel, a notable figure, in the newly formed education commission sparked anticipation about a possible revival of the VIs. This optimism was further amplified given the broader political context where experts, not directly involved in the coup, were being appointed to specific

⁵⁷⁵ Excerpt from the interview with Tahsin Yücel on October 7, 2021.

⁵⁷⁶ Excerpt from the interview with Ahmet Usta on October 10, 2021.

⁵⁷⁷ Excerpt from the interview with Hayri Doğan on October 9, 2021.

⁵⁷⁸ Başaran, *Büyük Aydınlanmacı Öğretmenim Hasan Ali Yücel*, 42.

commissions, aiming for specialized and effective governance. The same fervor was reflected when a team was assigned to draft a new, progressive constitution, raising hopes for the re-establishment of the VIs. However, Yücel's subsequent experiences in commission meetings revealed a discernible inertia concerning the VIs' resurgence.⁵⁷⁹ The prevailing sentiment among the commission's experts suggested a shift in perceived educational needs and conditions, even though rural populations still constituted a significant majority, exceeding 75% of the country's total. The commission's evident reluctance and inactivity, specifically regarding the re-implementation of the VIs, impedes a clear understanding and necessitates a deeper inquiry into the underlying factors of this passivity.

Especially after 1960, a few projects were implemented in rural areas, but these projects were not comprehensive enough and did not aim to modernize or develop rural areas and villagers in any aspect.

Some of these projects and the reasons of their failure are given as follows:

Sister school and sister village project: In the sister school system, any school in the city, various organizations, associations, or the army would choose a school in village as its sister school and would make efforts to meet the needs of the students of that village school.⁵⁸⁰ As can be seen, only one school or village would be selected in this project and some of the financial needs of people would be met through this attempt. This project did not aim to modernize or develop the rural areas.

Work Camps project: This initiative basically aimed to meet the needed teachers in villages through their voluntary service programme and gathered students during their vocation period and sent them to villages to give lecture or even repair the school if there was a need.⁵⁸¹ This project failed because students were going to villages only for few months and therefore, they could not make any remarkable contribution to villages.

Peace Volunteers project: The Peace Volunteers project was organized by the USA to improve the village conditions of developing countries in its polar region. Considering 10.000 young American volunteers were operating in 48 countries, it can be said that around 200 people were sent to Turkish villages. This project started to operate in Türkiye in 1962. These volunteers were either university graduates or university students. Each volunteer served in the rural areas of Türkiye for two years.⁵⁸² This initiative also failed for the following reasons:

⁵⁷⁹ Şengör, *Hasan Ali Yücel ve Türk Aydınlanması*, 122–45.

⁵⁸⁰ Tütengil, *Köy Sorunu ve Gençlik*, 15.

⁵⁸¹ Tütengil, *Az gelişmiş ülkelerin toplumsal yapısı*, 121–52.

⁵⁸² Tütengil, *Köy Sorunu ve Gençlik*, 22–3.

firstly, they failed to replace volunteers with the new ones after the first comers completed their services. Secondly, the numbers of volunteers were very few considering the needed numbers in Turkish villages. Approximately 30 thousand volunteers were needed in Türkiye, however this project was only able to afford around 200-300 people. Lastly, even the Turkish city dwellers failed to understand the rural issue, rural people, their needs and how to modernize rural areas. Expecting young Americans to understand the rural people and their needs considering most of them did not know the culture, tradition and even spoke the language, would be delusional.

The reserve officer teaching system project: In this project, which was implemented after 1960, educated men who were required to do their compulsory military service were sent to villages to provide primary education in return for their compulsory military service. Thus, it was aimed to close the teacher shortage, which was about 25 thousand, in the villages.⁵⁸³ However, it should be noted that most of these people were not teachers. In addition, these people were not sent voluntarily to the villages. For this reason, although it contributed to increasing the literacy rate in some places, it can be said that this project could not contribute to the development of rural areas. Lastly, this system was successfully tried in Bulgaria in the 19th century and therefore it was applied in Türkiye in the 20th century. I believe this was also a mistake, copying outdated methods and expecting success from that.

⁵⁸³ Tütengil, *Köy Sorunu ve Gençlik*, 27–9.

Chapter 8

8. Discussion

The main arguments of this study as follows:

Firstly, I contend that the rural factor in Türkiye is of equal significance to other factors such as the Kemalist project's top-down policies, coups and interventions by the military, the rise of Islamist movements, and the struggle between traditionalists and modernists. Neglecting the rural factor has impeded Türkiye's modernization process since the majority of the population resided in rural areas, and resistance groups emerged from these regions opposing any form of modernization studies, wishing to preserve the status quo.

Secondly, I assert that two distinct mentalities exist in Türkiye that are socially segregated from each other, a phenomenon that originated during the Ottoman era and persisted during the republican period. This circumstance has hampered the country's modernizing process because reforms have often faced persistent resistance, impeding the diffusion and adoption of revolutionary changes throughout the country.

Thirdly, I argue that VIs, which emerged to spread revolutionary thoughts and republican values to rural areas in parallel to regime ideals and interests, have gained autonomy and become self-sufficient, creating democratic values and practices in a short period. I maintain that VIs' contribution to the professionalization and modernization of the country is evident when viewed from this perspective.

Fourthly, I contend that VIs have given rise to a new class of rural intellectuals, consisting entirely of rural people, that emerged in rural areas. These institutes have trained nearly 25,000 educators and teachers, who have received versatile and competent education and contributed to every aspect of rural life.

Finally, I argue that Türkiye's modernization process has undergone several ruptures, and the country's perception and priorities toward modernization have changed following each rupture. Based on the disconnection theory, I assert that Turkish modernity has ruptures in its continuity, beginning with the Ottoman era. VIs were established after the 1923 rupture when modernization was associated with transformation, and they aimed to modernize rural areas. However, since the 1946 rupture, modernization has been equated with democratization, and perceptions and priorities toward modernization have changed.⁵⁸⁴ As a

⁵⁸⁴ Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 317–8.

result, the closure of VIs might be explained by a shift in modernization perceptions in 1946, as comprehensive modernization and development efforts were not conducted in rural regions after that time.

8.1 The rural factor and its importance for the Turkish modernization

In this research, I posit that the rural element could be a determinant factor explaining the failure or the incomplete status of Turkish modernization. To substantiate this assertion, it is initially critical to inquire why the rural context is profoundly significant, and why it was subsequently overlooked by the prevailing regime.

The evaluation of this matter cannot proceed without comprehending why the newly established regime, having the aim of building a modern nation, disregarded or abandoned rural areas where the majority of the population dwelt. Some believe this decision was made out of necessity,⁵⁸⁵ while others believe it was made purposely.⁵⁸⁶ In this study, I argued that the regime made this decision until 1935 out of necessity, owing to the following factors and actors: the continuation of the old order in rural areas, the dispersed structure of rural areas, the new regime's economic difficulties, and the rural notables' negative attitude toward modernization efforts. I contend, however, that the regime made this decision on purpose to further its own interests. Between 1935 and 1946, the administration took a substantial effort toward modernizing rural areas for the first time, launching the VIs initiative. The fact that these institutions, which were established in rural areas in a very short period of time, had such a large impact demonstrates the importance of rural areas and rural factors in Turkish modernization.

When the causes for the regime's neglect of rural areas were researched, it was discovered that there were no comprehensive studies on the subject in the literature, and that most research concentrated on only one part of the issue. Following my research, I discovered that the four factors described above played a significant role in the regime's neglect of rural areas.

8.1.1 The continuation of the old order

Although the newly established republican regime claims to have cut ties with the past, it should be noted that people could not cut ties with the past and continued to live as in the old

⁵⁸⁵ Tonguç, *Canlandırılacak Köy*, 369.

⁵⁸⁶ Cem, *Türkiye'de geri kalmışlığın tarihi*, 147–92.

order, particularly in rural areas. Yet, there are promoters of the disconnection thesis, especially in official state historiography until the 1980s.

Drawing from the works of Aydın and Mehmet Sevinç et al., it appears that the approach of the newly established regime towards the peasantry echoed the centuries-old perspective of the Ottomans: rural regions were perceived solely as hubs for tax collection and the recruitment of military personnel.⁵⁸⁷ This case similar for cities as well. Despite the fact that the institutions have been modernized and Westernized, the people who work in them had a traditional mentality.

8.1.2 Dispersed Structure of Rural Areas

Another factor that contributed to rural areas' neglect was the existence of 40 thousand villages with varying demographics, structures, and demands.

Based on 1938 figures, the table below shows the population of villages and cities, as well as the number of children who did not attend school.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁷ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 17; Mehmet Sevinç, Müjgan Davran and Gönül Sevinç, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan Günümüze Kırsal Alanda Uygulanan Eğitim Politikaları," *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 15, no. 56 (2016): 257.

⁵⁸⁸ The majority of the materials in Tonguç's personal archive lack of dates. However, the foundation date of Çifteler Education Course is referred to as 'last year' from the document which I obtained this data. In 1937, the Çifteler Education Course was founded. As a result, we discovered that this document was prepared in 1938.

Table 6: Comparison of villages and cities with each other and within themselves

	Population Range	Number of	Total Population	Number of School-Age Children	Children Attending School	Children Not Attending School	Need of Teacher/Educator
Cities	Between 10.000-20.000	40	548.746	Approx. 450.000	Approx. 308.000	Around 130.000-140.000	2570
	Between 20.001-30.000	15	360.687				
	Between 30.001-40.000	7	238.539				
	More than 40.000	-	1.075.368				
Rural Areas	Between 1-150	16.062	6.836.839	Approx. 820.000	Approx. 113.000	Approx. 707.000	Approx. 27.000 ⁵⁸⁹
	Between 151-400	16.305					
	Between 401-800	5.505	3.175.759	Approx. 381.000	Approx. 132.000	Approx. 242.000	3700
	Between 801-1200	1.427	2.388.354	Approx. 286.000	Approx. 139.000	Approx. 128.000	5600
	More than 1200	514					

The author's compilation based on the following sources: Köy Öğretmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1938, C01-67-19A, legal regulations for the educators, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2-5.

In Türkiye, no institution in the fields of education, health, agriculture, or other sectors was built with rural reality in consideration.⁵⁹⁰ As previously stated, teacher training schools were established to prepare teachers for crowded places. However, there were 32.367 villages with less than 400 residents. These villages accounted for around 7 million of the total

⁵⁸⁹ This statistic was calculated for villages with less than 400 people. This document did not include any information concerning the villages' required educator or teacher numbers. The numbers presented above were calculated using a variety of data and documents. Initially, it was determined that 86.3 percent of school-age children in villages of less than 400 people did not attend school. Following that, environmental factors such as the distance between villages, the failure to provide a solid infrastructure for transportation, and villagers preferring to walk for hours instead of using the animals they own as a mode of transportation demonstrated that each village should build its own school and have its own educator or teacher. Based on this information, I estimated that villages with a population of less than 400 people would require approximately 27.000 educators.

⁵⁹⁰ Tonguç, *Mektuplarla Köy Enstitüsü Yılları*, 10.

population. If the population of children in these villages of compulsory school age was estimated to be 10% of the overall population, the number of children attending school would range from 5 to 40. Given that these children would be educated in separate classrooms according to their level, it would be impossible and expensive to build schools in these villages and send instructors to educate the given number of students.⁵⁹¹

There was a shortage of educators and schools at the time. Furthermore, the characteristics of teachers' schools at the time were insufficient for training teachers who would desire to stay and work in the village and be competent enough to build and develop that area's cultural and commercial life. Those people had previously lived in cities and were accustomed to city life. As a result, people assigned to the villagers as teachers struggled to adapt to the rural conditions and preferred to return to the cities in the first opportunity.⁵⁹²

8.1.3 Insufficient Infrastructure and Economic Difficulties

It is my contention that the dearth of infrastructure in rural regions, coupled with the fiscal hardships faced by the new regime, influenced the latter's decision to embark on this audacious path. Inheritances from the Ottoman Empire were solely comprised of debts for the emergent regime. The strenuous economic conditions under which the new regime was inaugurated made it virtually impossible to disseminate the reforms and republican values across the nation. Given the more favorable conditions in urban areas, the regime opted to concentrate its investments and development initiatives in these locales.

In rural areas, there used to be no institution supporting the existence of the government. There were no schools in 31 thousand villages. Most of the villages did not even have access to health, electricity, proper roads, clean water, in short, the most basic services and necessities.

The following information from Engin Tongu's memoirs reveals that there was no infrastructure in rural areas: "As there were no proper roads in rural areas, and even further, as swamps were likely to be encountered around rural routes, my father's vehicle got stuck on the road several times and was covered by mud."⁵⁹³

⁵⁹¹ Ky Eđitmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi, 1938, legal regulations for the educators, 3.

⁵⁹² Ky Eđitmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi by İ. Hakkı Tongu. ca. 1938, C01-67-19A, legal regulations for the educators, İsmail Hakkı Tongu Archives Foundation, Ankara, Trkiye, 3-4. (hereafter cited as Ky Eđitmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi, ca. 1938b, legal regulations for the educators)

⁵⁹³ Ky Eđitmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi, ca. 1938b, legal regulations for the educators, 69.

8.1.4. Rural Notables

An additional hurdle was the presence of rural notables, such as landlords and imams. These individuals leveraged the absence of authority in rural areas to fortify their influence, effectively dominating these regions. This situation originated from the leasing of land to tax farmers, a scenario outlined in the second chapter. These individuals, who addressed a multitude of villagers' issues, exploited the latter at their discretion.⁵⁹⁴ Rural notables, who viewed themselves as the sole authority in their regions, were vehemently opposed to any initiative that did not benefit them and prevented them from taking root in the countryside.

Karaömerlioğlu attributes rural "backwardness" on peasant incompetence in their struggle against the rural environment. According to him, this situation was not generated by social interactions such as peasant exploitation by rural notables.⁵⁹⁵ Similarly, in 1948, Tütengil stated that the peasants' "backwardness" was due to both their ignorance and the "primitiveness" of their production techniques.⁵⁹⁶ Of course, there are some veracities in their claims, however, they ignored the fact that rural notables had controlled these regions for centuries, as well as the challenges that VIs graduates faced as a result of communist propaganda originated from the rural notables.

8.2. The polarization of society

In my research, I observed a palpable polarization within society, manifesting as two distinct mentalities or groupings that are socially estranged from one another. Previous literature on this topic predominantly focuses on the internal conflict within a single party, often overshadowing the broader societal implications. Scholars such as Bernard Lewis, Oğuzhan Göksel, Oya Baydar, Engin Tonguç, and Fay Kirby have predominantly articulated how the friction between traditionalist and progressive factions within this party hindered Turkish modernization. Their emphasis, notably, was not on societal groupings, but on the contention within the party that hamstrung progressive endeavors, particularly in rural regions.

Motivated by these scholars' insights, I became intrigued by how such a schism within society might impinge on the course of Turkish modernization. Considering the implications of a split within a single party on the country's modernization process, it is clear that a polarization within the populace could precipitate significant adverse effects. When

⁵⁹⁴ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 17.

⁵⁹⁵ Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institutes Experience in Türkiye," 63.

⁵⁹⁶ Tütengil, *Az gelişmiş ülkelerin toplumsal yapısı*, 93–114.

comparing the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of rural and urban areas, and knowing that dual education has been applied in the country for a long time, it was reasonable to assume a similar grouping within the society. As previously said, the Ottoman Empire and later the republican regime has neglected the rural areas for the centuries. It should also be mentioned that powerful rural actors are participating in this polarization and seek to defend their own interests.⁵⁹⁷

This polarization was prominently demonstrated in 1930 during the inaugural rally of the FRP, as the regime attempted to transition to a multi-party system.⁵⁹⁸ This societal divide was further underscored by the Menemen Incident, where traditionalists took the lives of three soldiers.⁵⁹⁹ Moreover, in 1946, when the Institutes were facing challenges, the traditionalists resisted change in rural order and labelled modernists (VIs graduates) as communists, effectively declaring them *persona non grata*.⁶⁰⁰ This list of instances highlighting the societal polarization is far from exhaustive and can be readily expanded upon.

The polarization has occurred within society, as well as a single party. This circumstance had a significant impact on the country's modernization process, causing it to be disrupted on a regular basis.

8.3. VIs and its effect on the society

VIs were an institution specific in many ways to Turks. They were originally designed in accordance with the character and needs of the country. Also, the adoption of the philosophy of integration of work with education and its application in the VIs is not ideological like the famous pedagogues Dewey, Kerschesteiner and Pestalozzi⁶⁰¹; arose out of necessity. The economic situation of the country was very bad, and the regime could not even provide basic services to rural areas. With this method, VIs were opened in the cheapest way.

The role assigned to institutes in the literature: spreading Turkish revolution, reforms, and republican values to rural areas⁶⁰² (in parallel to regime ideals and pursuing regime's interests); however, in such a short time, VIs have become capable of producing democratic values and practices, gaining autonomy and becoming self-sufficient. I contend

⁵⁹⁷ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 171–5.

⁵⁹⁸ Oran, *Atatürk Milliyetçiliği: Resmi İdeoloji Dışı Bir İnceleme*, 179.

⁵⁹⁹ Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, 108–11.

⁶⁰⁰ Komünizme ve Komünistlere karşı Türk basını, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Koç Federasyonu İçyüzleri*, 64–7.

⁶⁰¹ Giorgetti, "Training village children," 41–6.

⁶⁰² Arayıcı, *Kemalist Türkiye'de Eğitim Politikaları Ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 112–37.

that looking at the institutes from this angle reveals their contributions to the country's professionalization and modernization.

VIs, with contemporary practices and values – participation of students in the administration, boarding co-education, the ability of everyone to speak up and defend their own rights in the assembly of institutes and to criticize each other freely – it later evolved into something that was not available and implemented at the time, not only in the cities of Türkiye, but also in most countries of Europe.

The literature displays a divergence of opinions concerning the democratic nature of these institutions. As previously referenced, Gedikoğlu contends that the manifestation of democratic education demands not merely the presence of political and legal democracy, but also the establishment of democratic conditions within the society. Consequently, he argues that the VIs were not and could not be democratic entities.⁶⁰³ His stance is staunchly reinforced by the lack of democratic climate and political democracy in the country during that period. Contrarily, according to Apaydın and Makal, who are alumni of the VIs, democratic education was indeed implemented in the VIs. This was achieved through collective involvement in administration, critique sessions, multifaceted debates, and supplemental readings beyond prescribed textbooks.⁶⁰⁴ Further, according to Gökçe Gökalp, Tonguç used democratic management practices in the institutes as a tool for modernizing rural areas, and therefore, the students actively involved in the decision-making processes.⁶⁰⁵

For Aytemur, VIs played an important role in establishing democracy over the entire country. To her, the democratic character of the VIs has contributed in the transition to multi-party system in 1946.⁶⁰⁶ Supporting this argument, Türkoğlu claims that graduates of the VIs influenced the villagers with their democratic behavior.⁶⁰⁷ The arrival of an educated person who constantly raised awareness of the villagers and defended the rights of the villagers, indirectly caused these people to be exposed to democratic values, and thus democratic values were able to enter the villages.

On the other hand, Küçüktamer and Uzunboylu, along with Karaömerlioğlu and Stone, asserted that the VIs did not fulfil the regime's objectives and were closed because of

⁶⁰³ Gedikoglu, *Evreleri, Getirdikleri Ve Yankılarıyla Köy Enstitüleri*, 30–2.

⁶⁰⁴ Makal, *Bizim Köy*, 63; Baykurt, *Unutulmaz Köy Enstitüleri*, 123–37.

⁶⁰⁵ Gökalp, "Cifteler, the First Village Institute," 135.

⁶⁰⁶ Sağiroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 109.

⁶⁰⁷ Türkoğlu, *Tonguç ve Köy Enstitüleri*, 223.

their rebellious disposition and refusal to comply.⁶⁰⁸ This raises the question of how the democratic character of the Institutes became an issue for the regime during the nascent stages of democracy in the country. Admittedly, this presents a paradox, for which I propose the following explanation:

Firstly, it's essential to recognize that these Institutes engendered democratic values and practices prior to the formal establishment of democracy in the country. Their role in fostering educated, democratic, and insurgent students created a friction with the regime in the undemocratic political milieu of the era. This conundrum is not easily unraveled, which contributes to its intrigue. The alignment with the Western alliance system, particularly the pro-American foreign policy orientation, ushered in formally more democratic conditions. Nevertheless, Türkiye's effort to perceptibly disassociate itself from its former Soviet alliance triggered a potent anti-communist wave, even preceding American McCarthyism. This ostensibly democratic transition paradoxically yielded anti-democratic outcomes, such as the dissolution of the highly democratic VIs.

Secondly, the shift to a multi-party system in 1946 was not entirely voluntary. The political climate of the period compelled the regime towards this transition. This is also evident in the governmental change within the CHP in 1946.⁶⁰⁹ The reformist group within the party was liquidated and the conservative group seized power in the regime. It shows that this government change aimed to suppress the opposition parties.

In this respect, the extent to which VIs contributed to Turkish modernization is still open to debate, as it was undermined while it could have positively affected Turkish modernization and carried it further. Yet, it should be emphasized that it was a great achievement for VIs to move from being a carrier and distributor of contemporary values and practices to a producer role in a very short time.

8.4 Integration of work with education

In the integration of work with education concept of VIs, the priority was not the production. In Tonguç's understanding, the primary goal in the absence of favorable needed material and economic conditions, was to bring educational institutions to rural areas that would develop and modernize these regions with the least expense. To achieve this goal, he contended that

⁶⁰⁸ Kucuktamer and Uzunboylu, "The conditions," 394–8; Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 68–75; Stone, "Rural revitalization and the Village Institutes in Türkiye: Sponsors and critics," 419–29.

⁶⁰⁹ Eşme, *Köy Enstitüleri: Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı*, 241.

education "should mobilize its own facilities to produce its own civilized atmosphere on its own behalf." That is to say, production coexisted with education in the VIs and substantially decreased the expense of education.⁶¹⁰

In this respect, Tongu's understanding of work in the education was different in comparison with others such as Dewey, Kerschesteiner and Pestalozzi etc. Their understanding of the work was more ideological, on the other side; Tongu's inclusion of work in education arose out of necessity. He neither perceived the work within education only for production purposes like Baltacıođlu and Blonsky,⁶¹¹ nor practical education as Dewey,⁶¹² or linking production to the idea of a work school as in Kerschesteiner and Pestalozzi.⁶¹³ In the understanding of the pedagogues given above, while the students worked and produced for others in general, in VIs the students worked, produced and used what they produced for themselves. Thus, making production in institutes also increases the quality of education given in institutes. Because the expenses of the institutes were covered by the work of the students themselves, and the products that were not needed by the institutes were sold, and educational and artistic tools such as mandolins and motorcycles, which were considered as luxury at that time and needed by the students, were purchased. Trkođlu claimed that institutes were rich in course materials and technology since work tools were transformed into educational appliance.⁶¹⁴

With the implementation of the integration of work with education principle, these institutes were opened with the least cost and spread all over the country. After the institutes began to function, they created their own resources so as to achieve, and even go beyond, the stage of self-sufficiency.⁶¹⁵ The institutes soon became self-sufficient and did not require any financial assistance from the state. Thus, they achieved their partial autonomy.

8.5. Rural Intellectuals

I strongly claimed that VIs have created a new type of intellectual group which emerged in rural areas and of only rural people. These new types of intellectuals have made numerous contributions to Turkish society and have profoundly influenced it, since they have raised nearly 25,000 teachers and educators in a relatively short period of time.

⁶¹⁰ Karamerliođlu, "The village institutes experience in Trkiye," 64.

⁶¹¹ Kafadar, *Trk eđitim dřncesinde batılılaşma*, 61–8.

⁶¹² Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Trkiye," 273.

⁶¹³ Kerchensteiner, *İlk mektep erevesi İinde İř Mektebi Tecrbesi*, 81.

⁶¹⁴ Trkođlu, *Tongu ve Ky Enstitleri*, 121–6.

⁶¹⁵ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Trkiye," 276.

Various researchers, including Eren, Karaömerlioglu, Arayıcı, and Kapluhan, have emphasized the VIs' intention to cultivate a new type of individual. Karaömerlioglu contends that one unanticipated outcome of the VIs was the students' development of a collective consciousness through shared experiences of living, working, and learning.⁶¹⁶ He further posits that, despite the norms prevalent during the single-party regime, the education imparted at the VIs nurtured students who exhibited a pronounced sense of disobedience and self-confidence.⁶¹⁷ Furthermore, Eren added that VIs attempted to develop an individual who will be a civilized being and a upholder of society.⁶¹⁸ Moreover, Arayıcı contended that VIs trained a new type of intellectual by raising awareness among primary schoolteachers who were of peasant origin but did not desire to be upwardly mobile.⁶¹⁹ Finally, Kapluhan claims that Tonguç's success is due to his insight that a new type of intellectual who understands the villagers' need and expectation is required.⁶²⁰

Based on these statements and taking into account the education they received and the contributions they have made to the country and society in a variety of aspects — graduates of the institute have educated hundreds of thousands of children who could not attend school in rural areas. With the quality education they provided, they also helped thousands of village youngsters become doctors, professors, and teachers. According to Keseroğlu's data, although the number of authors who graduated from the VIs, which was open for 13 years between 1937 and 1950, was 49, the number of authors who graduated from the literature faculties of the country's two largest universities between 1933 and 2000 was 133.⁶²¹ — I contend that because of their large number and continued mobilization after graduation, they established a rural intellectual group.

Also, rural intellectuals organized and established the first teachers' union, TÖS, and in a very short time spread all over the country and united all teachers under one roof, both accelerating the professionalization of the teaching profession and improving the working conditions of teachers.⁶²²

⁶¹⁶ Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 51.

⁶¹⁷ Karaömerlioglu, "The village institutes experience in Türkiye," 69–71.

⁶¹⁸ Eren, "The village institutes of Türkiye," 281.

⁶¹⁹ Arayıcı, "Village institutes in Türkiye," 278.

⁶²⁰ Kapluhan, "Atatürk dönemi eğitim seferberliği ve köy enstitüleri," 182.

⁶²¹ Keseroğlu, "Köy enstitülerinde okuma ve kütüphane," 24–40.

⁶²² Oktay, *Siyaset bilimi incelemeleri*, 257–60.

8.6. Village Educators' experiment: Contributions, effects, deficiencies of the educators

First, I claim that the Village educators project is planned as a temporary project, although it is not clearly stated in any official documents. The reason for this is that in some documents in Tonguç's personal archive, I encountered some notes which meant that village educators were sent to villages that did not have a teacher and they will work there until village teachers would be trained and send these villages.⁶²³ In addition, each educator and village teacher were assigned to their own village, as it is known. If there was already an educator working in the village where the village teacher would be assigned, that educator was assigned to another village, and the village teacher was replacing the educator. We see this situation in Adnan Avcı's memoirs. His older brother was an educator, and when Adnan completed his education and was appointed to his village as a teacher, this time his older brother living in the same village was assigned to another village that did not have any teacher.⁶²⁴ This situation reveals to us that it was planned to use educators until enough village teachers would be trained.

Second, there is a debate in the literature about the extent to which village educators contributed to the villages. Although some people like Eren, Kanad, and Soysal underestimate the contribution of educators in villages,⁶²⁵ and some researchers like Sarı and Uz exaggerate the contribution of educators, it is clear that the educators who opened schools and gave 3-year primary education in villages that did not have a school and a teacher for centuries made contribution to the villages. However, it is also obvious that the educators could not make a radical change in the villages due to their short training of 8 months and their very limited job descriptions. Although Sarı and Uz claimed that the educators provided various contributions in the villages, enlightened the villagers, increased the literacy rate, contributed positively to the admission of girls to school, and reduced the inequality between the city and the village,⁶²⁶ these claims do not seem realistic when the qualification of the educators and the training they received are considered.

Eren claimed that educators project failed because they grew up in the old system and mentality and that even though if they learn some things during this course and before during their military service, when they back to their villages, they always tend to revert the old

⁶²³ Köy Öğretmen ve Eğitimci Yetiştirme İşi, Training Necessary Personnel for the Village, ca.1936b, 2–5.

⁶²⁴ Avcı, "Akçadağ Köy Enstitüsü Yılları," 96–9.

⁶²⁵ Kirby, *Türkiyede Köy Enstitüleri*, 196–7.

⁶²⁶ Sarı and Uz, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Köy Eğitimci Kursları," 29–33.

methods.⁶²⁷ To put it another way, training for a year or two did not produce lasting results if the person had already built his or her future on the old village foundations or traditions. This is because the person would quickly revert to the old techniques. It should be noted that Eren's argument is very reasonable however, it is a known fact that if educators failing to adapt the new conditions and methods, they quit their job. On the other side, some of the educators adapted the new condition and contributed the village life. As Aytemur claimed, educators "understood how to teach" the "practical" and "effective" ones while being "uninformed about the theoretical ways of teaching." They did not use "long definitions," but rather learned by doing.⁶²⁸ To her, that was the secret behind their accomplishments in the village life.

On the other hand, Çiğdem Erdem argued that it was wrong to claim that educators only received 8 months of training. Regarding this view, Tonguç and his team knew that an 8-month training would not be enough. For this purpose, they put into effect the IHTs project and it was expected that the IHTs would visit the educators in their villages at regular intervals, help them with all kinds of problems they faced and teach the children about the subjects that the educators would not be able to teach/explain.⁶²⁹ As a result, it was intended that the training of the educators would continue through IHTs. However, because IHTs were assigned to zones that each covered 8–10 villages and they had to travel often between these areas, it was impossible for them to find time for educators, which caused the IHTs project not being able to function as efficiently as was anticipated.

One of the biggest shortcomings of the educator project was the lack of visibility of women. In other words, the fact that only corporal and sergeant men who had completed their military service were recruited as educators prevented the employment of female educators. This situation has had various effects. First, only men were recruited, and gender discrimination was made and women's chance to take an active role in the development of villages was taken from their hands. Also, it negatively affected the chances of girls living in the village being sent to school. Families were not in favor of educating their daughters due to the patriarchal structure of the rural communities. I think that the absence of female educators also affected the proportion of female students in rural areas. Due to the fact that the school would only have male teachers, some families might have felt hesitant to enroll their daughters in such institutions. As for the gender distribution of the students receiving

⁶²⁷ Eren, "The village institutes of Türkiye," 282.

⁶²⁸ Sağiroğlu, *The Populism of the Village Institutes*, 119.

⁶²⁹ Erdem, "Cumhuriyet Yönetiminin," 193–6.

education, the number of female students was nearly half of the male students. According to Aydın, these educators have taught 213,284 students, of whom 135,064 were male and 78,220 were female.⁶³⁰ This information supports my argument. Although it was stated that it would be only benefited by corporals and sergeants who had done their military service, when the documents and the law regarding village educators were examined, a document we obtained from Tonguç's archive revealed that although their number was very small, female educators were also present in some courses. According to this document dated 1938, it was stated that 20 female educators were taken to the educator courses,⁶³¹ while Erdem gave the total number of female educators as 29 in his published study.⁶³² However, it is obvious that this number is very low when compared to the total number of educators. In addition, no documents or studies were found on where the female educators worked or even whether they completed the educator courses.

Besides, there were positive aspects of including only men who have completed their military service as corporals or sergeants in this project. These individuals had a wide circle of influence and were respected people in their communities. Tonguç's intention was to use the power and influence of these people in these villages. The difficulties faced by village teachers who were admitted to the institute at a young age, studied there for a long time, but ultimately had no impact or gained any respect in the villages are vivid. Conservatives accused VIs and their graduates to be communist and this communist propaganda, the majority of village teachers have been deemed *persona non grata* in their communities, and as a result, have been the target of several attacks.⁶³³ Despite this, the educators in the village maintained a certain amount of status and power, and because of their military training, they were exempt from communist accusations.

Educators in rural areas were unable to implement any significant improvements. But the literacy rate in villages increased with the contributions that educators have made. Başgöz and Wilson attribute the failure of the educators' initiative not to their lack of sufficient qualifications, but to the state's failure to prepare the basis to bring about the relevant social and economic change. According to them, the state abandoned the educators they sent to

⁶³⁰ Aydın, *Köy Enstitüleri ve Toplum Kalkınması*, 70.

⁶³¹ Köy üretiminin kalkınması, eğitimlerle artırılması, The activities of the courses, ca.1938a, 4–7.

⁶³² Erdem, "Cumhuriyet Yönetiminin," 197–8.

⁶³³ Aysal, "Anadolu da Aydınlanma," 291–9.

villages and could not even pay their salaries on time. For this reason, this initiative could not accomplish the expected goals.⁶³⁴

Furthermore, educators were appointed to disseminate the regime's ideals and values. However, it would be a misapprehension to infer that the educator project successfully induced the expected transformations within the communities. Consequently, the initiative to cultivate rural teachers was proposed, with the intention of creating a more refined version of these educators. For Kapluhan, rural teachers were raised because it was seen that educators did not have sufficient qualifications to provide a comprehensive education.⁶³⁵ In addition, a new issue emerged as a result of educators offering three-year primary education. After receiving the primary education from the educators, if their families would agree, students were expected to continue the fourth and fifth grades in nearby regional schools, which were boarding schools. Families, though, did not send their kids because of the distance and patriarchal structure (boys were expected to help them on the farms, whereas girls expected to help them with housework). The majority of rural students who were taught by educators could not continue their education. Through the educator initiative, schools were established, and teachers were placed in villages, but despite these efforts, the presence of schools and educators in these villages could not make any remarkable contribution to the modernization of the villages.

In the 10-year period, from the date the educators' courses were opened in 1937 to 1946, when they were closed, 8553 village educators were trained.⁶³⁶ Through these educators, schools were opened and primary education started in nearly 7000 Turkish villages until the mid-1940s. Although this figure is much less than the targeted number, it is very good when compared to the number of teachers trained in the Ottoman Empire and the newly established Republic of Türkiye. A quarter million school-age children who could not go to school were brought to school by educators in a short period of 10 years. From this point of view, the success of the educator project is obvious.

In the interview, Pakize Türkoğlu stated that educators were the best option for those villages when we consider the conditions of the day.⁶³⁷

⁶³⁴ Başgöz and Wilson, *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde Eğitim ve Atatürk*, 176.

⁶³⁵ Kapluhan, "Atatürk dönemi eğitim seferberliği ve köy enstitüleri," 184.

⁶³⁶ Köy Öğretmeni Yetiştirmek Maksudile Açılacak Enstitüler Hakkında Not, Village Institutes legal regulations, 3–4.

⁶³⁷ Excerpt from the interview made with Pakize Türkoğlu on 9 November 2011.

Finally, P. Valles, in his article published on the educator experiment in the *Journal des Instituteurs et des Institutrices* on June 2, 1938, by underlining that the young Republic of Türkiye not only tried to renovate the regions that had been neglected for long centuries, but also created a collapsed social structure, that it has also been tried to establish a new society on the wreckage,⁶³⁸ he emphasized that the village educators project was very valuable. The fact that foreign researchers followed this project closely proved the originality of it.

8.7. Ruptures in Turkish Modernization

Turkish modernization is a dynamic, multifaceted process that incorporates both continuity and disconnection. Keyman proposed that, despite significant historical ruptures, modernization as a process of transformation continues.⁶³⁹ My assertion is based on Keyman's claim and by applying this logic, I offered an alternative explanation for the closure of VIs. In conducting a detailed investigation of the subject, my assertion is that Turkish modernity embodies discontinuities that trace back to the Ottoman period. The establishment of the VIs are intrinsically linked to the historical break in 1923, thereby associating modernization with transformation.⁶⁴⁰ As a result, VIs attempted to modernize rural areas; however, with the rupture occurred in 1946, modernization has been equated with democratization, and perceptions and goals toward modernization have evolved. Following 1946, the regime refused to safeguard and protect VIs (they preserved and protected these institutions until 1946). As a result, I argue that the closure of the VIs could be explained by a shift in perception of modernization. This is revealed by the fact that no major and comprehensive modernization or development efforts were undertaken in rural areas after 1946.

⁶³⁸ Eğitimci Yetiştirme Meselesi, by R. Ant. 2 June 1938, C02-72-23, Articles, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 14–15. (hereafter cited as Eğitimci Yetiştirme Meselesi, P. Valles, çeviri R. Ant, Kocaeli İlköğretim Müfettişi, Articles)

⁶³⁹ Keyman, "Modernization, globalization," 317–8.

⁶⁴⁰ Dumont, "The origins of Kemalist ideology," 25–44.

Conclusion

This study aimed to reveal the negative effects of the rural factor on Turkish modernization. In addition, it also aimed to introduce VIs, which were designed according to the characteristics of rural areas and have achieved great success in a very short time, therefore I suggest that VIs can be a symbol and a model for the rural transformation of developing countries. The results indicate that the rural factor has negatively affected Turkish modernization. Further findings show that VIs have created a new type of intellectual group, which I call "rural intellectuals," and they have made various contributions to rural areas since, in a very short time, they raised nearly 25 thousand teachers and educators who could work in a versatile way. These teachers made a great contribution to the modernization process of the country. At the end of this study, I have reached the following findings:

Firstly, in this study, an alternative explanation divergent from established perspectives in the existing literature concerning the failure or incomplete nature of the Turkish modernization process has been introduced. The study underscores that the rural factor has served as a pivotal element in the trajectory of Turkish modernization, and its influence was predominantly detrimental until the 1960s.

Given the reality that the revolutionary reforms initiated by the Turkish government were not substantially propagated in the rural territories, where an estimated 80 percent of the country's population resided, these reforms were mostly confined to urban areas for an extended period. Consequently, the rural inhabitants failed to assimilate to the newly instituted republican regime and its reforms, thereby leading to the emergence and spread of views in rural areas that were contrary to the regime's directives.

The significance of the rural factor becomes particularly evident in the context of the VIs – a rural initiative of unparalleled ambition and scale. Despite their brief existence, the VIs played a crucial role in facilitating Türkiye's modernization and democratic transition. The VIs, through a cadre of nearly 25,000 teachers and educators, significantly contributed to the socio-economic and cultural development and modernization of the country's rural areas.

In essence, VIs can be defined as an attempt to change the rural factor that is negatively affecting Türkiye's modernization process in a positive way that is consistent with the regime's interests. Although the establishment could not fully realize its goals and mission, it left permanent traces in Turkish society and rural areas of Türkiye with what it did and achieved in a short time.

Secondly, I have reached the following finding that the regime has abandoned the rural areas and many factors and actors are effective behind the regime's decision: the continuation of the old system and retain the traditional mentality in the new institutions; the dispersed structure of rural areas; economic difficulties and a lack of infrastructure; and rural notables who oppose any attempt to change the order in rural areas to protect and pursue their interests.

Every single factor or actor mentioned above has had an impact on the regime's pursuit of such a radical rural policy. Although the regime's attitude toward rural areas was mandatory at first (1923-1935), it later willingly maintained it to follow its own interests (1946-1960). The aforementioned factors and actors disrupted and negatively impacted Türkiye's modernization process.

Thirdly, this study unveiled that the process of modernization in Türkiye was marked by distinct ruptures that reoriented the nation's understanding and prioritization of modernization. Consequently, this perspective provides an alternative explanation for the dissolution of the VIs. Following the second significant rupture in 1946, the country's concept of modernization pivoted from transformation to democratization. The VIs, rooted in the prior conceptualization of modernization, were no longer congruent with this revised understanding of modernization, which could explain why they remained preserved until 1946. The fact that the VIs, an institution whose preservation was previously a priority, were not protected post-1946 suggests that the Institutes were closed due to a fundamental shift in the country's perception of modernization. This change in perception is further underscored by the absence of substantial efforts to modernize and develop Türkiye's rural areas since 1946.

Fourthly, this research has elucidated that the dual education system, extant for over a century in both the Ottoman Empire and the nascent republican regime (where it maintained its influence in rural regions post-1924), had a detrimental impact on the process of Turkish modernization. Contrary to prevailing literature, this study demonstrates that the dual education system catalyzed the formation of not just two discrete factions within a single political party, but also analogous groupings within society at large. These factions became estranged from one another. The groundwork for this division was laid during the Ottoman period and persisted into the republican era, thereby impairing Türkiye's modernization efforts. The existence of such diametrically opposed groups often manifested in sustained resistance to reform initiatives, hindering the Turkish revolution and reforms from permeating and establishing roots throughout the nation.

Fifthly, VIs have introduced a new form of intellectual group, which I refer as "rural intellectuals," and this rural intellectual group has contributed favorably to the country's

modernization. This intellectual group has educated and developed qualified personnel for hundreds of thousands of students in rural areas. This group, which also founded the country's first union, not only improved teachers' working conditions, but also had a say in and contributed to the country's political, social, and cultural challenges.

Sixthly, this research has affirmed that the VIs represented a distinctive entity within the Turkish context. While they were inspired by the pedagogical philosophies of prominent educators such as Pestalozzi, Kerschensteiner, and Dewey, as illustrated in existing literature and substantiated in this dissertation, the institutes were meticulously crafted in response to Türkiye's unique rural dynamics. Moreover, the democratic ideals and practices fostered within the VIs were not being contemporaneously instituted elsewhere in the country or Europe. Even distinguished pedagogues may not have anticipated the innovative democratic behaviors and practices incubated within the VIs. Initially conceived to extend Turkish reforms and republican principles into rural regions, the institutes remarkably evolved to foster and promulgate democratic values and practices within a remarkably condensed timeframe.

Finally, Eötvös József Collegium and Hasanoğlan Higher VI arose as remedies to similar challenges in different countries at different times, and it has been discovered that these two organizations, which used distinct techniques, had many features in common. These two institutions trained intellectual teachers who left an indelible mark on history, surpassing the pedagogues and other institutions who impacted them during their formation. These two organizations helped to professionalize the teaching profession and modernize their countries. Despite certain differences, these two organizations make significant social, cultural, and economic contributions to their countries.

With this study and the publications that will follow, I hope to contribute to the literature by proving that the rural factor is an important in Turkish modernization. This contribution is significant because the majority of previous research on the topic neglected the rural areas, and a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the subject could not be done, primarily because crucial factor for Turkish modernization was not taken into account. This study, which highlights the importance of the rural element and why it has been ignored for many years, is expected to pave the way for future substantial studies on the subject.

Furthermore, Keyman's argument underscores the existence of certain discontinuities within Turkish modernity. Although Keyman asserts that Turkish modernization commenced in 1923, detailing four ensuing ruptures, it is crucial to acknowledge that there might have been earlier instances of discontinuity within the Ottoman-Turkish modernization process, as

postulated in this dissertation, specifically prior to 1946. Given that this investigation is primarily focused on the rural aspect of Turkish modernization, the ruptures that occurred in Ottoman modernization movements were not scrutinized across other sectors. Nevertheless, predicated on the findings of this study, prospective researchers may have the foundation to embark on more comprehensive explorations of this topic.

Finally, for the first time, this study demonstrated that there are rural intellectuals in Türkiye who were trained in VIs. This is a significant finding because previously only intellectuals trained in the Ottoman Empire's modern military and civilian schools were mentioned, and these individuals held high ranking positions in the state and influenced the country's policies. The republican regime raised its own intellectuals for the first time with the VIs, which were founded in 1940, and these people were composed of peasants.

My goal with this study was to take a comprehensive picture of the VIs, which is a modern and democratic institution that has been provided as a solution to various educational difficulties in Türkiye, and to reveal what these institutions accomplished during their existence. Obviously, one of the purposes of this research is to inspire academics, bureaucrats, and policymakers, which would lead to some practical applications in education or the establishment of some educational institutions.

This study has aroused mainly as a result of a lack of fulfilling studies on the Turkish modernization and why it is at an impasse or failed. After months of inquiry and analysis, it was revealed that the researchers neglected the rural factor despite the fact that Türkiye was a peasant society and a large part of the population lived in rural areas until the 1970s.

Undoubtedly, the quantitative data compiled underscores the vital role of the rural demographic within the context of Türkiye's modernization. In 1940, the majority of the population — more than 75 percent — were residents of rural areas that were significantly underserved in essential sectors such as education and healthcare. This demographic was largely unaware of the progressive reforms taking place in urban centers as a part of the republican revolution, a fact exacerbated by the regime's inadequate attention to the rural sector.

However, the findings I obtained made me wonder whether the Turkish revolution would have been successful if an attempt had been made to extend reforms applied in cities to rural areas of Türkiye. To answer this question, I researched and assessed all projects aimed at developing and modernizing the country's rural areas from the Ottoman period to the present. I discovered that the foundations of such an initiative were laid in 1935 and established in 1940, that it could only survive for 6 years in accordance with its aims and

mission due to the period's conditions, that it was undermined from 1946 to 1954 after political interventions, and that it was transformed into classical teacher schools in 1954. Because of its short duration, I initially doubted that it would have the desired impact in rural areas. Nonetheless, my investigation uncovered that, despite the brevity of this initiative, it successfully produced approximately 25,000 graduates, who represented some of the most enlightened minds of the era. Undoubtedly, this revelation instigated a surge of enthusiasm within me, compelling me to rapidly peruse and assess the existing body of research concerning the VIs. Although there is a vast quantity of written material on the subject — amounting to tens of thousands of documents — I discerned a prevalent superficiality in the discourse surrounding the Institutes in the extant literature, a situation that unfortunately persists to this day. While the first group, which is mainly composed of institute graduates, glorifies these institutions and claims that they can solve the country's current problems and modernize it, the second group, which has fewer publications than the first, denounces these institutions and claims that they aim to corrupt Turkish values and that these were communist nests. There were very few reviews and scholarly articles written by researchers on the issue.

When I began this study, I believed that the rural factor had the utmost importance for Turkish modernization until the 1960s, and that it had been ignored for all of these years, crippling Turkish modernization. The research findings I obtained confirmed the validity of my argument. Of course, the following findings astonished me at the conclusion of this study: The institutes raised rural intellectuals; there are some ruptures in the Turkish modernization process, and the closing of the VIs can be explained by the rupture that took place in 1946; and Hasanoglan Higher VI and the Eötvös József Collegium built in Hungary have a lot in common. Using content analysis and comparative-historical analysis approaches helped me reach these conclusions.

Because this study examines the effect and importance of the rural factor in Turkish modernization, it is limited to the period until 1960, as rural areas lost their interest under that regime with the start of intensive migration from rural to urban in 1960, and no serious and comprehensive initiatives were made towards rural areas. Furthermore, because it solely focuses on the rural factor, no extensive study or analysis of other important actors and factors affecting Turkish modernization has been conducted. Contrarily, given the scarcity of resources and data pertaining to rural areas in the Ottoman Empire, especially prior to the 18th century, the topic was explored utilizing the available data, predominantly from the 18th century onwards.

In conclusion, until the 1960s, the rural factor was the most essential one in Turkish modernization. The fact that the rural areas has been neglected is directly tied to the current stalemate in Turkish modernization. One of the most notable signs of this is the VIs initiative, which lasted from 1935 to 1946 and took the rural factor into account. Despite its limited lifespan, VIs trained over 25,000 educators and teachers and contributed significantly to Türkiye's modernization, as well as the professionalization and institutionalization of the teaching profession. With their accomplishments in a short period of time, the VIs demonstrated the critical role of the rural factor in Turkish modernization, and the importance of rural education in catching-up countries in general.

Research gap

Through this investigation, I have put forth an alternative explanation for the perceived failure or incomplete nature of Turkish modernization, with an emphasis on the influence of rural factors. Specifically, I address how the neglect of rural sectors significantly impacted both Turkish society and the process of modernization. Given that the rural dimension is often overlooked within the discourse on Turkish modernization, this research could potentially contribute valuable insights to the existing literature, thereby filling an evident lacuna. Additionally, this work proposes alternate interpretations concerning the establishment and subsequent closure of the VIs that diverge from conventional perspectives present in the current literature.

In conclusion, this dissertation employs documents extracted from the personal archive of Ismail Hakkı Tonguç, which, until recently undisclosed, had not been integrated into any comprehensive scholarly work prior to this investigation. Moreover, to ensure the integrity of the study and to scrutinise key matters relevant to the subject matter, a series of interviews were conducted with alumni of the Institutes. This methodology holds substantial importance, as the resources harnessed in this research have unveiled pivotal insights relating to an array of previously unexplored topics. The veracity of these newly unearthed discoveries was subsequently corroborated through the aforementioned interviews.

Unexpected findings and its potential causes

In this investigation, I discovered three findings that I did not anticipate to uncover at the start:

Within this study, I discerned several intriguing findings. Primarily, I observed that the process of Turkish modernization underwent distinct ruptures, prompting shifts in the country's understanding and prioritization of modernization. Initially, I subscribed to the

theory of continuity in Turkish modernization and did not anticipate such a finding, particularly the notion that the VIs may have been dissolved due to shifting conceptualizations of modernization post-rupture. This epiphany subsequently led me to recognize that Turkish modernity is characterized by a fusion of continuities and disconnections, and that ruptures are embedded within its own continuum.

Also, an unexpected conclusion of this research was that the VIs contributed to the cultivation of intellectuals, particularly within the rural intellectual group. Initially, I surmised that the instructors trained at the institutes were merely more competent than those educated at the conventional teaching schools. However, upon reflecting on the comprehensive and diverse education they received, their collective organization post-graduation, and their dedicated efforts to modernize rural areas and professionalize the teaching profession, it became evident that the VIs played a pivotal role in fostering rural intellectuals.

Finally, the most critical question that has plagued me since the start of the research has been why the newly established republican regime has disregarded rural areas. I could not understand why they sought to construct a modern state while ignoring the rural areas where 80 percent of the population resided. However, my research indicated that this decision was made out of necessity (until 1935). This decision was influenced by some factors and actors stated above.

Limitation of the study

This study focused on the rural dimension, which has presented significant challenges to Türkiye's modernization endeavor. With the onset of migration from rural to urban areas commencing in 1960, substantial endeavors in rural areas ceased. Consequently, this research was confined to the processes and developments that transpired in rural locales prior to 1960.

Also, I noted that because this study is limited to the rural factor in Turkish modernization, the ruptures that happened in Ottoman modernization movements and after 1960s were not thoroughly investigated in this study. However, based on the study's findings, future researchers may be able to do more in-depth research on the subject.

Finally, while the factors and actors stated to effect Turkish modernization in the literature have been included in this study, as well as their weaknesses and strengths, additional aspects have not been thoroughly studied in this study.

Suggestions for future research

This work (also) highlights how important this issue is for accelerated modernization, and by interpreting the history of the Turkish VIs, it highlights that particularly progressive solutions are possible. At the same time, it shows how even such undoubtedly effective institutions face a wide range of challenges and how difficult, if at all, it is for them to survive in a complex foreign and domestic political environment.

This study represents a significant contribution to the history of rural intellectuals by presenting new perspectives. Similarly, the research underscores the VIs' pivotal role in promoting professionalization, institutionalization, and modernization. Therefore, this study can serve as a beneficial reference or initiation point for future research on professionalization within the context of Türkiye.

Finally, this analysis identified noteworthy similarities between Eötvös József Collegium, which opened in Hungary in 1895, and Hasanođlan Higher VI, which opened in Türkiye in 1941. By evaluating and comparing these institutions, I hope that this study would spark interest in elite education institutions founded in other countries that contribute to modernization and professionalization.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Interview Questions

Questions to be asked to Village Institute Graduates

I plan to ask questions under three categories.

1. Personal and alumni introductory questions
2. Alumni's opinion on Village Institutes
3. Questions about the "Village Teacher" profession

A. Personal and introductory questions about Village Institute graduates

1. Your name, surname, place and year of birth.
2. The school you graduated from and your graduation year?
3. How many years and where did you work after graduation?

B. Opinion on Village Institutes

1. What kind of an initiative was the Village Institutes in your opinion? Looking back, we'd love to hear the memories, if any, that you can't forget about this venture.
2. How do you evaluate the education curriculum of Village Institutes -50% of the education devoted to culture courses, 25% to agriculture courses and the remaining 25% to technical courses-?
 - 2.1. When the curriculum of the Village Institutes is examined, we see that it is planned to specialize the students in more than one field at the same time. What are your views on this subject? Was the program implemented in Village Institutes intense for you? Did you have a hard time keeping up with this program?
3. What are your thoughts on the principle of integration of work with education, which is the main principle of Village Institutes?
 - 3.1 In some of the discourses made against Village Institutes, it was criticized that children between the ages of 12-15 are employed in heavy works such as construction of schools. How do you evaluate the employment of children in every field of work of the Institutes – construction, agriculture, animal husbandry, etc.?
 - 3.2 At that time, while people living in the city were able to access basic services such as education and health without any special requirements, villagers had to make

various efforts and pay a price in order to gain access to these services. Which, in some cases, had to be lucky, even if they were willing to pay the price (either an Institute had to be established near their village or someone trained at the Institute had to be sent to their village). Long story short, there was an injustice. What do you think about that?

4. Considering the conditions of the period, do you consider the Village Institutes initiative as a successful one?
 - 4.1 In your opinion, what was the reason for the termination of this initiative?
5. In your opinion, what was the purpose of the Village Institutes?
 - 5.1 What do you think about the views that these establishments are planned to destroy the old order (service estate) in rural areas?
 - 5.2 What do you think about the claims that these organizations create a duality of urban and rural (that is, they try to create two different classes under the name of urban and peasant)?
6. I would like to talk about the democratic culture that was being developed within the Village Institutes. In the 1940s, before the transition to a multi-party system in political life, democratic participation and democratic culture were successfully implemented in these organizations. How did this achievement you gained at the institutes affect your life and work after graduation? Have you tried to instill these achievements in your students in the villages where you were assigned after graduation?

C. Questions about the 'village teacher' profession

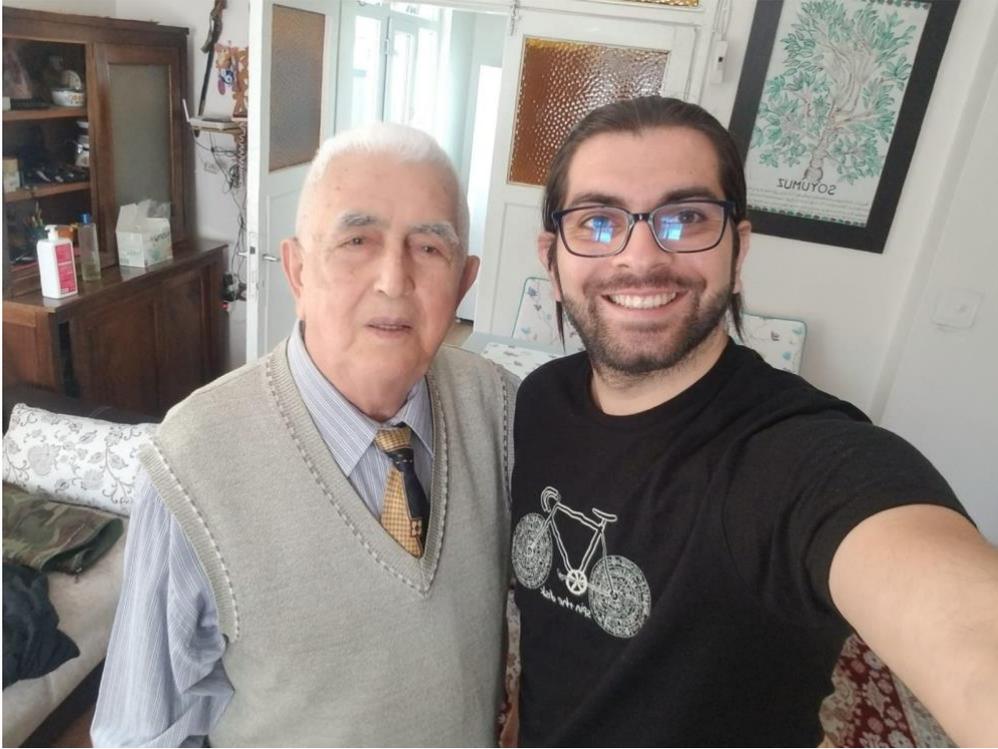
1. Was there any difference between the original education you received in Village Institutes and the education given in teacher schools in cities?
 - 1.1 Did you see yourself as teachers trained in classical teacher schools in the city or as a village teacher?
 - 1.2 Do you think these two occupational groups are different from each other when evaluated in terms of education, upbringing and responsibilities? Do you think it is correct for these two occupational groups to exist and be evaluated under the same roof?
 - 1.3 Do you think the teachers who were trained in the teacher schools in the city and sent to the villages were successful? If they were not successful, what do you think was the reason?

- 1.4 After your graduation, especially after 1946, when black propaganda was made against the Institutes, did you work in the same environment with teachers who graduated from teacher schools in the city? Did you have any problems with these teachers? Have you been treated differently by these teachers because you graduated from the Institute?
2. Can you tell us about your work in the villages after graduation?
 - 2.1 What kind of work did you do for the development and modernization of the villages you were assigned after graduation?
 - 2.2 Have you engaged in any cooperative activities in order to organize the villagers? Did you take any courses or participate in any activities on cooperatives while studying at the Institute?
 - 2.3 Did you take part in the establishment of the Turkish Teachers' Union (TÖS), the first teachers' union established in Türkiye? Did you play any role in the spread of TÖS throughout the country in a very short time? Considering that the first president of TÖS was Fakir Baykurt, a graduate of the Institute, what do you think about the role of teachers from the Institute in the formation of teacher unions and their spread to the country?
 - 2.4 After working in the villages for a certain period of time, have there been any changes in the social, economic and cultural conditions of the villages you worked?
3. After graduation, have you been prevented from doing or wanting to carry out studies in villages because you are from the Institute?
4. Finally, I would like to briefly talk about the differences between the Educator and the Village Teacher. Were there any educators who received training simultaneously with you at the Village Institute where you were trained?
 - 4.1 If yes, how did the training you received differ from the training received by the educators?
 - 4.2 Did you work with the educators in the villages you went to after graduation? If you have worked, how were their roles and responsibilities different from yours?
 - 4.3 As you know, Educators were trained to provide education in villages with a population of less than 400. In your opinion, did the Educators have the necessary and sufficient qualifications and skills to ensure the social, economic and cultural development of the villages with a population of less than 400?

4.4 I want to ask one last question. If you had the chance to observe, I would like to examine the development in the villages where the trainers went. Was there any difference between villages with educators and villages without educators?

Appendix B. Pictures with interviewee 1

Picture 1: With interviewee Hayri Dođan



Source: The photograph was taken by me on October 9, 2021 in Tokat, Türkiye.

Appendix B. Pictures with interviewee 2

Picture 2: With interviewee Ahmet Usta



Source: The photograph was taken by me on October 10, 2021 in Ankara, Türkiye.

Appendix B. Pictures with interviewee 3

Picture 3: With interviewee Sabriye Yaşar



Source: The photograph was taken on September 26, 2021 in Ankara Türkiye. Due to the COVID situation, we could not conduct the interview face to face however, Alp Acar, a former student of mine, helped me to conduct this interview via phone call.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 1

Picture 4: The signature of Tongu

TÜRKİYE CUMURİYETİ
KÜLTÜR BAKANLIĞI
İlk Öğretim Genel Direktörlüğü

Ankara: / / 193

Sayı : _____

Özet: _____

Eskişehirde arteler ırtılığında Köy öğretmenleri kursunda ders gösterecek ispekte ve öğretmenler kadrosudur

İşİ	Sayı	her birinin aylık ücreti	kaç aylık oldu
İlk Öğ. ispekte- teri	2	25	4 ay
İlk okul Öğ.	13	15	4 "

I. Tongu

Source:

Köy Öğitmenleri Kanununun Esbabı Mucibesi by İ. Hakkı Tongu. ca. 1938, C01-67-19A, legal regulations for the educators, İsmail Hakkı Tongu Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 3.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 2

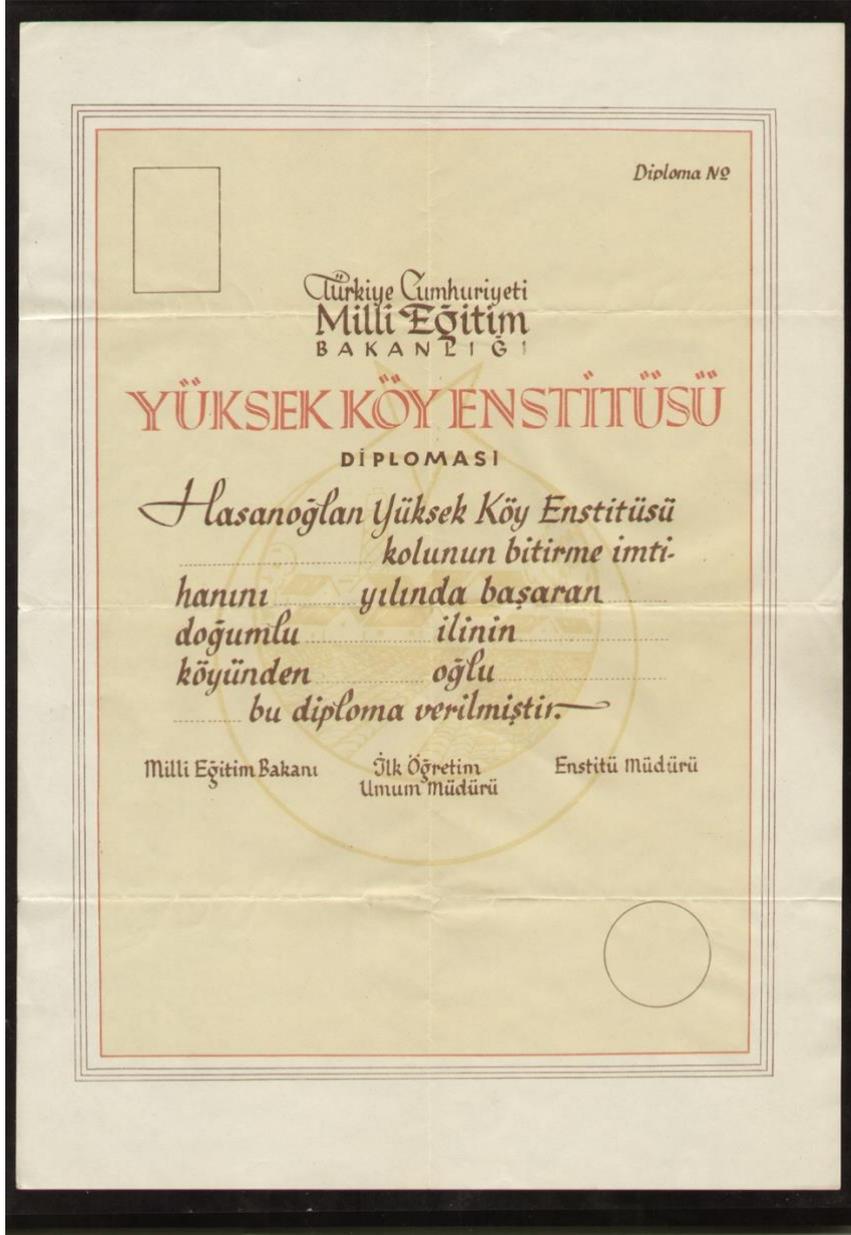
Picture 5: The envelope of the letter sent to Tongu



Source: An envelope came to Tongu. This photograph was taken by me from the archive of İsmail Hakkı Tongu in Ankara in 2020.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 3

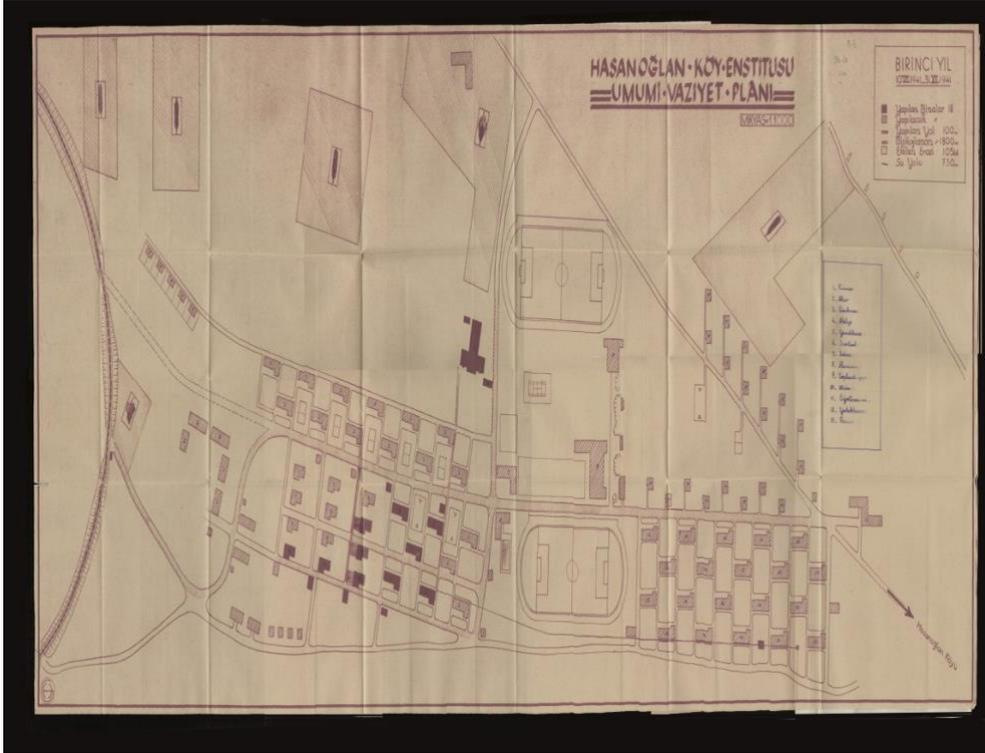
Picture 6: Hasanođlan High Village Institute Diploma



Source: Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü Talimatnamesi by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç. July 24, 1943, E01-56-4, legal regulations, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 8.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 4

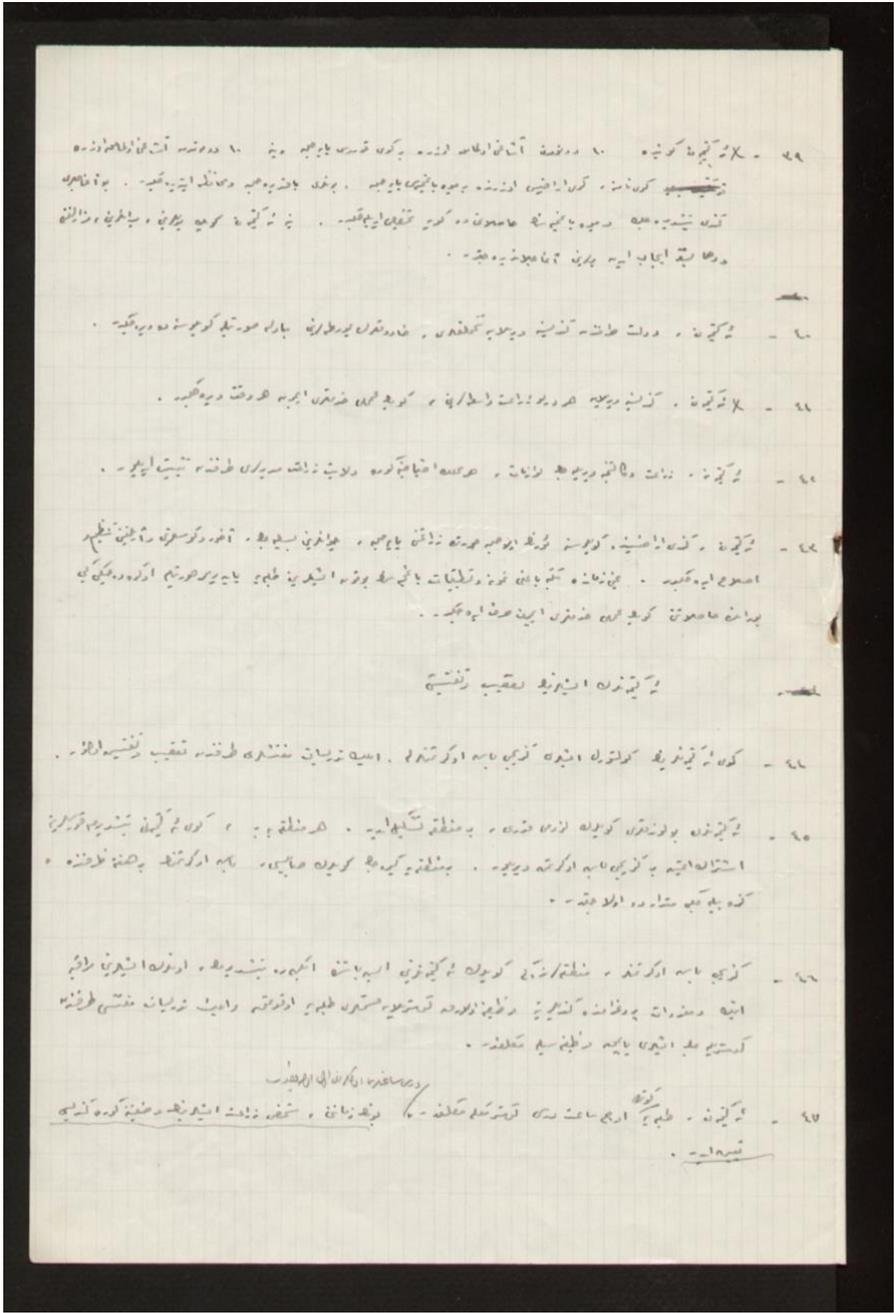
Picture 7: Hasanođlan Higher VI layout plan



Source: Hasanođlan Köy Enstitüsüne 1944 yılı inřaat mevsiminde diđer Enstitülerden gelen imece ekipleri by Mustafa Güneri. December 26, 1944, D04-62-1, building works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguđ Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye,3.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 5

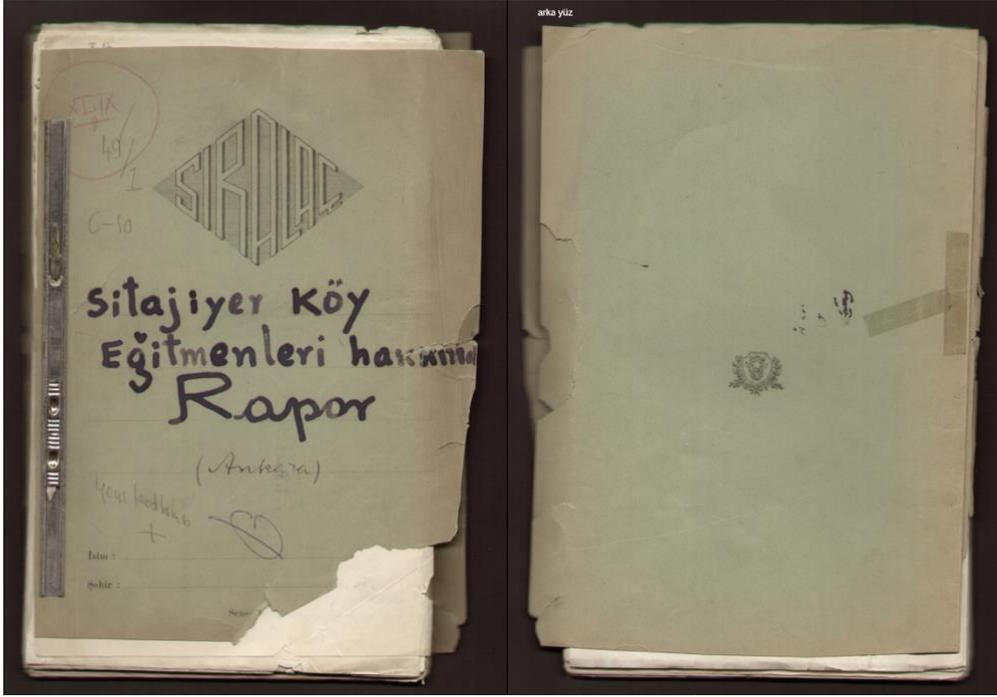
Picture 8: Note in Ottoman Turkish language



Source: İlköğretim ve Eğitim Meselesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 24 December 1935, P03-75-1F, Reports and Notes, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 18.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 6

Picture 9: Report on trainee village teachers



Source: Tonguç, İsmail Hakkı. Ankara stajyer eğitimcileri hakkında rapor. 1943, Eğitimli okullar hakkında raporlar, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 7

Picture 10: The document named "The situation in the villages" dated September 15, 1944

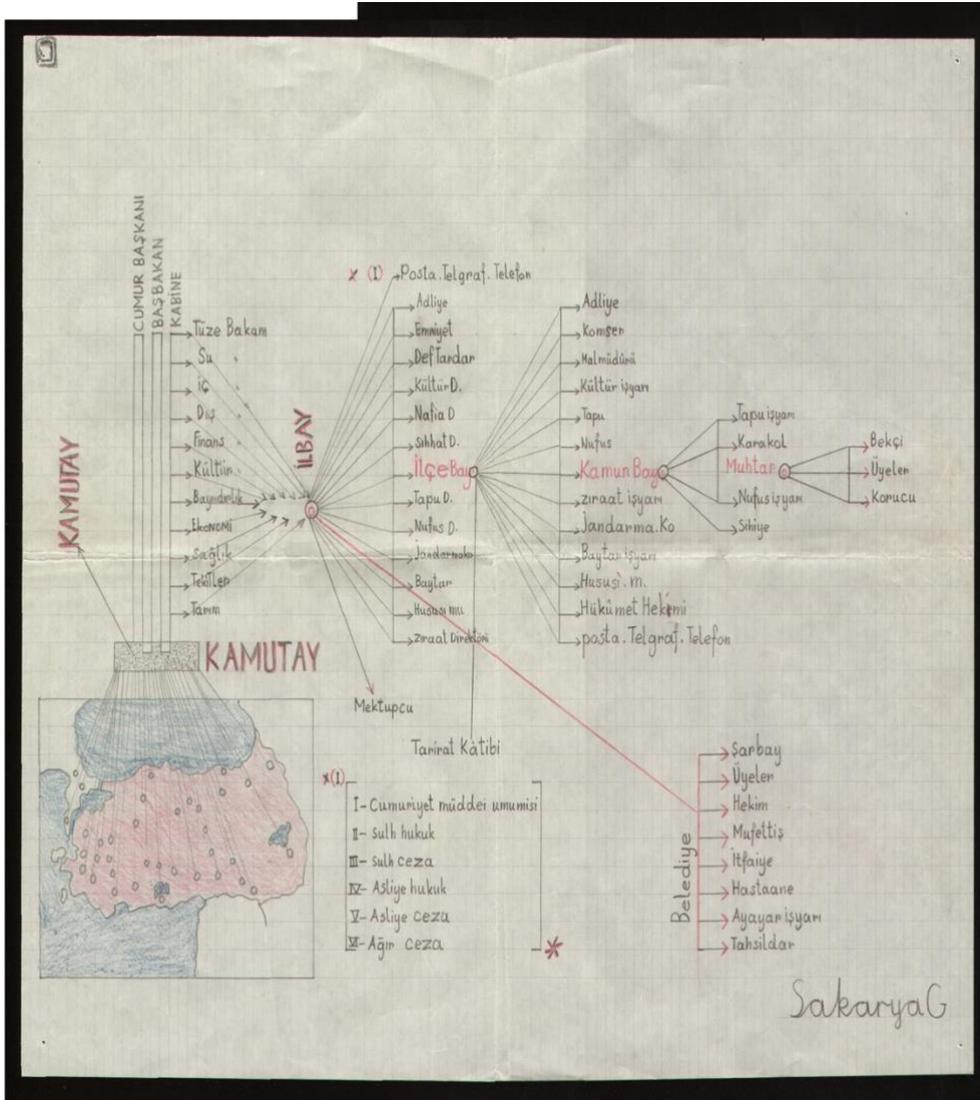
15 Eylül 1944 tarihine köyleredeki durum

Valiliğin adı	Köyün sayısı	Verilme yerleri köylerinin sayısı	Arazi durumu		OKUL DURUMU		Gözetmen evi		D U Ş Ü N Ç E L E R
			Ayrılan arazi miktarı (DK.)	tabii tahsis edilmiş veya yapılmış köy sayısı	temir veya tamir gören mevcut okullar	Yeniden yapılan	Yeni yapılan	Tamir edilmiş	
Afyon	6	30	5580	temam		60	2	62	
Ağrı	5	5	?						?
Amasya	13	8	411		5	6	2	12	1
Ankara	47	41	8555			42	5	47	19.X.1944 e kadar bitecek
Ankara	81	38	1191		16	15	9	2	30.X.1944
Aydın	63	56	1530	346	29	7	20	55	?
Balıkesir	46	44			25	19	18	?	"
Bilecik	16	15	766		10	5	5	10	"
Bingöl	7	6	482			6	7		30.XI.1944
Bitlis	-	-	-						
Bolu	38	37	762	7	10	4	23	29	?
Burdur	3	31	1433		?	?	?	27	5
Bursa	96	49		temam	3	?	10	30	15
Çanakkale	27	27		temam	3	9	19	12	?
Çankırı	38	32		temam	10	6	16	12	?
Çoruh	1	20	1040	19 1 "	16	4	7	?	30. "
Çorum	15	14	396	1. 1 "	9		5	9	?
Denizli	46	42	?						?
Diyarbakır	17	10		5 1 "	10		7	7	?
Edirne	31	9	2649	7 1 "	28		1	?	Gözet.evleri 3 yıldı bitecek
Elaş	22	1	1404		15		4	?	8
Erzincan	9	26		6 1 "		8	18	26	15.X.1944 e kadar bitecek
Erzurum	26	26	?						?
Eskişehir	66	64	10000		52		13	54	8
Gaziantep	6	6		4 1 "	4		2	6	15. "
Giresun	7	6	30		3		5	4	?
Gümüşhane	9	6		6 1 "	6			6	10.X.1944 e kadar bitecek
Hakkâri	-	-	-						
Hatay	22	22	?						?
İçel	20	19	190	1. 1 "	11		4	4	?
İsparta	42	8	?				6	24	?
İstanbul	6	6	?						Gözet.evlerinin diğerleri
İzmit	73	37	1320		55		2	?	Ayrıca sayınlık, inoirlük ve 1
Kars	89	85	?		57		28	81	30.XII.1944 e kadar bitecek
Kastamonu	68	60	2040	temam	10		50	68	"
Kayseri	34	30	?						?
Kırklareli	73	38	?	temam					?
Kırşehir	1	1	2100		1		20	21	?
Kocaeli	51	46		temam			46	51	30.X.1944
Konya	69	60	?						?
Kütahya	78	78	6327		36		42	59	19
Malatya	64	52		temam			55	43	12
Manisa	49	46		temam	41		5	12	34
Marsa	9	8	337	31. Ek.	6	2		3	6
Mardin	16	12	?						?
Muğla	30	72		47 21 "	52		20	53	?
Muş	6	5	?				5	5	?
Niğde	27	13		13 11 "	13			27	?
Ordu	9	8	?			6	3	8	?
Rize	7	6		temam	2		4	2	?
Samsun	8	7	284		1		6	8	?
Sevhan	25	23	?		13		10	23	?
Siirt	-	-	-						
Sinop	24	24	677		11		13	12	8
Sivas	83	83		temam			83	83	
Tekirdağ	43	40	2580				43	43	Okul, işlik, evler hazırda.
Tokat	10	9	738			9		7	3
Trabzon	12	12		4 11 "			12	12	?
Tunceli	18	15		temam	4		11	?	?
Urfa	18	18		temam			18	18	?
Van	-	-	-						
Yozgat	37	25	3915					37	37
Zonguldak	20	18		1. 1 "				18	18
	1293	1760			679	150	732	783	735

Source: Maarif Vekaleti Sağlık Teşkilatı Kanunu gerekçesi by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1942, B01-118-14, Legislative studies, drafts, laws, plans, official correspondence, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 6.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 8

Picture 11: Student assignment 1



Source: Adayların ödev yazıları, 5. ve 7. Aylar İzmit köyleri hakkında adayların yazıları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1937, C09-39-1, course works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 1.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 9

Picture 12: Student assignment 2



Source: Adayların ödev yazıları, 5. ve 7. Aylar İzmit köyleri hakkında adayların yazıları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1937, C09-39-1, course works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 4.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 10

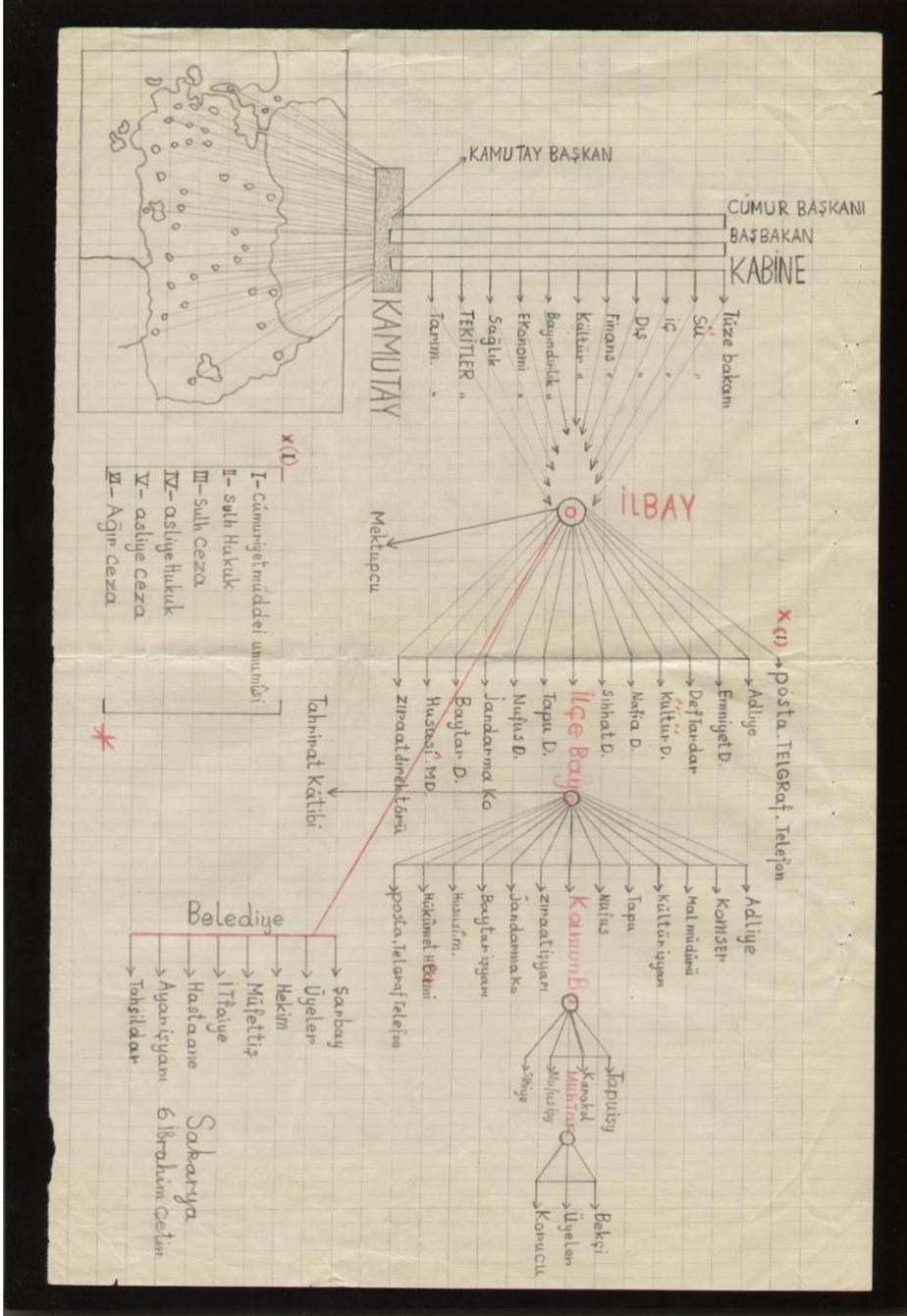
Picture 13: Student assignment 3



Source: Adayların ödev yazıları, 5. ve 7. Aylar İzmit köyleri hakkında adayların yazıları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1937, C09-39-1, course works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 5.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 11

Picture 14: Student assignment 4



Source: Adayların ödev yazıları, 5. ve 7. Aylar İzmit köyleri hakkında adayların yazıları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1937, C09-39-1, course works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 2.

Appendix C. Various documents I obtained from the archive 12

Picture 15: Student assignment 5

DUMLU PINARG.
No. 32 H-sezen

21-5. 937
Cuma

AYLAR	Pazar tesi	Salı	Çarşamba	Perşembe	Cuma	Cumartesi	Pazar	AYLAR	Pazar tesisi	Salı	Çarşamba	Perşembe	Cuma	Cumartesi	Pazar
MAYIS	31					1	2	AGUSTOS	30	31					1
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
HAZİRAN		1	2	3	4	5	6	EYLÜL			1	2	3	4	5
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	29	30						27	28	29	30			
TEMMUZ			1	2	3	4		14-GI TEŞRİN				1	2	3	
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		11	12	13	14	15	16	
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	26	27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

İsmail Hakkı Tonguç

Source: Adayların ödev yazıları, 5. ve 7. Aylar İzmit köyleri hakkında adayların yazıları by İ. Hakkı Tonguç. 1937, C09-39-1, course works, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç Archives Foundation, Ankara, Türkiye, 12.