



**HAL**  
open science

# Preaching the Republic: Intellectuals and Popular Education in Post-Genocide Turkey (1930-1945)

Zeynep Ertugrul

► **To cite this version:**

Zeynep Ertugrul. Preaching the Republic: Intellectuals and Popular Education in Post-Genocide Turkey (1930-1945). History. École des hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales (EHESS); Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, 2024. English. NNT: . tel-04814650v1

**HAL Id: tel-04814650**

**<https://hal.science/tel-04814650v1>**

Submitted on 2 Dec 2024 (v1), last revised 19 Dec 2024 (v2)

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

École doctorale de l'EHESS  
Centre d'études turques, ottomans, balkaniques, et centrasiatiques  
(CETOBaC)

Thèse de Doctorat préparée dans le cadre d'une cotutelle entre l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales et Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

*Histoire et Civilisations*

**BENGİSU ZEYNEP ERTUĞRUL**

**Preaching the Republic  
Intellectuals and Popular Education in Post-Genocide  
Turkey (1930-1945)**

**Thèse dirigée par :** Marc Aymes et Hannes Grandits

**Date de soutenance:** le 8 octobre 2024

Jury

1. Hülya Adak, Sabancı University, Rapporteur
2. Ulrike Freitag, Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, Membre de jury
3. Hans-Lukas Kieser, University of Newcastle, Rapporteur
4. Élise Massicard, CNRS, Membre de jury
5. Gisèle Sapiro, CNRS, Membre de jury

**PREACHING THE REPUBLIC**  
**INTELLECTUALS AND POPULAR EDUCATION IN POST-GENOCIDE**  
**TURKEY (1930-1945)**

**Dissertation**

zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades

**Doctor philosophiae**  
**(Dr. phil.)**

Eingereicht

an der Philosophischen Fakultät  
der Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

von Bengisu Zeynep Ertuğrul  
geboren am 5. Juli 1993 in Istanbul, Türkei

Präsidentin der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
Prof. Dr. Julia von Blumenthal

Dekan der Philosophischen Fakultät  
Prof. Dr. Geert Keil

Gutacher

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Hannes Grandits, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Zweitgutachter: Prof. Dr. Marc Aymes, École des hautes études en sciences sociales

Jurymitglieder

Hülya Adak, Associate Professor, Sabancı University

Ulrike Freitag, Prof. Dr., Zentrum Moderner Orient

Hans-Lukas Kieser, Associate Professor, University of Newcastle

Élise Massicard, Directrice de recherche, Centre national de recherche scientifique – Directrice d'études, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales

Gisèle Sapiro, Directrice de recherche, Centre national de recherche scientifique





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*In the spirit of gratitude and acknowledgment, I extend my deepest thanks to those who have supported and guided me throughout the journey of completing this dissertation.*

*Firstly, my profound gratitude goes to my advisors, Marc Aymes and Hannes Grandits. Your expertise, understanding, and patience have profoundly enhanced my graduate experience. Your guidance and support throughout my research and writing process have been invaluable. I also extend my thanks to Hülya Adak, Hans-Lukas Kieser, Élise Massicard, and Gisèle Sapiro for agreeing to participate in my defense.*

*I acknowledge the financial support from the beginning of my graduate studies until the completion of this dissertation. The various research and teaching fellowships at the École normale supérieure, Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies, Gerda Henkel Stiftung, Institut français d'études anatoliennes, Collège doctoral franco-allemand, and Sciences Po. have made this research possible. I thank my Sciences Po. Reims Campus students for reminding me of the joys of an academic career. I am grateful for the resources and opportunities that enabled me to pursue and complete this dissertation.*

*Special thanks to Emmanuel Szurek, who encouraged me to delve into this topic in 2018 and generously shared his digitized Language Day corpus. Completing this dissertation would not have been possible without the seminars, discussions, and heated debates with Emmanuel over the years. The care, encouragement, and astute feedback from Nathalie Clayer and Ulrike Freitag have been indispensable. I am grateful to Benjamin Gourisse for thinking about my future before I did, and Esra Atuk, Magali Boumaza, and Ahmet Kuyaş for supporting my academic journey from its inception in Istanbul. I also thank Hamit Bozarslan, Adnan Çelik, Fabio Giomi, Margrit Pernau, Nikos Sigalas, Duygu Tasalp, and Alexandre Toumarkine for their encouragement, suggestions, and remarks at different stages of completing this dissertation. For valuable comments throughout the workshops of the DFG Network “Post-Ottoman Transformations,” I thank Elke Hartmann, Zeynep Kezer, Nazan Maksudyan, Ellinor Morack, Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, and Talin Suciyan. Your insights and constructive criticisms*

*have greatly improved the quality of this dissertation, and I am especially grateful for your willingness to share your time and expertise. I also thank Aydın, Işık and Demir Aytaç for sharing documents about their mother and grandmother with me.*

*For their helpful feedback on chapters and papers throughout doctoral workshops in Paris and Berlin, I thank Alexandar Arroyo, Lucija Bakšić, Elif Becan, Ruža Fotiadis, Christelle Gomis, Gabriel Doyle, Veronika Hager, Priska Komaromi, Ewa Kumelowski, Anna Chiara Mezzasalma, László Mika, Jovo Miladinović, Ece Nirun, Duygu Tasalp, Can Turgut, Sedat Ulugana, and Okcan Yıldırımürk. My deepest thanks to Gabriel Doyle and Naomi Cohen for proofreading my dissertation with further comments. Despite their best efforts to point out my errors, more remain. Naturally, these errors are mine alone.*

*I extend my gratitude to Fulden Aytaç, Ioanna Bartsidi, Bengü Bade Baz, Claire Bellahsen, Kenza Filippin, Ange La Furcia, Julie Gasco, Hevi Nimet Gatar, Clara Metzger, Chiara Mezzasalma, Marguerite Teulade, and Başak Türker for their ongoing support, feminist solidarity, and friendship. For their friendship and camaraderie in the corridors of BGSMS and CETOBaC or elsewhere, I thank Emre Akgöl, Santram Antil, Burak Başeğmez, Josemaria Becerril, Vincent Benedetto, Deborshi Chakraborty, Soufiane Chinig, Nessim Cohen, Andrea Gritti, Farid El-Ghawaby, Max Friedrich, Tom Fontenille, Enes Kaldırımçı, Naveen Kanalu, Antonis Nassis, Pierre Berthy-Paul, Maria Pereira, Udi Raz, Ali Sarı, Matthias Stockenhuber, Onur Arda Tan, Halil Yiğit, and Berk Yılmaz. Your moral support and camaraderie have been vital during the challenging times of this journey.*

*I am not grateful to the French Ministry of the Interior and the Préfecture de Saint-Seine Denis. Their failure to uphold French law regarding immigrants' rights restricted my research travel for twelve months. I dedicate my work to the mistreated migrant communities in France and Germany.*

*I am deeply grateful to my family for their unconditional love and support. To my mother for her unwavering support and archival work when travel was impossible due to the pandemic and passport inequalities. To my father for listening to my rants about my research, providing new ideas, and caring for me during the final, grueling months of writing. To my brother, for cheering for me and believing in me more than I believed in myself. And to Andreas, for love, warmth, and joy.*

## ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

This dissertation examines how the political message of the single-party regime in Turkey spread throughout the provinces between 1930 and 1945, in a post-imperial context shaped by the aftermath of the First World War and the eradication of non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations from Asia Minor. It contributes to the history of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*), which ruled from 1923 to 1950 without true power sharing, by focusing on its provincial organization, specifically the Organization of People's Preachers (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilâtı*), established in September 1931. It explores the political and social conditions of the interwar period, investigating why the party invested in the political education of adults during a time marked by economic challenges and the Great Depression.

Analyzing the pedagogical project from 1931 onwards highlights key concepts and social categories such as “*münevver*” (enlightened) and “*halk*” (people). It shows how the “enlightened” took the stage, addressed crowds, and educated the rest of the population on behalf of the party and the republic it established. By examining the social trajectories and political careers of the People's Preachers, this research contributes to the socio-history of political elites in the twentieth century within a post-imperial context.

This dissertation's double analytical movement explores the political communication apparatus established by the Republican People's Party to gain popular support and the education system focused on political education by the People's Preachers. It reveals the interconnection between knowledge transmission, incorporating a gendered social ideal, and maintaining order. The research traces the genealogy of the “provincial intellectual” (*taşra münevveri*) in Turkey, examining the political and social transformations that contributed to its formation. It demonstrates how Turkish provincial intellectuals differed from their European counterparts by their social origins and political functions, such as law enforcement and intimidating dissidents. The research also offers an alternative reading of the history of single-party Turkey, linking its post-imperial nature with its post-genocidal dimension through the social trajectories and activities of the People's Preachers in the context of demographic and social transformations in Anatolia.

Turkey – Pedagogy – Rhetoric – Intellectuals – Discourse – Genocide

## RÉSUMÉ ET MOTS-CLÉS

Cette thèse examine comment le message politique du régime de parti unique en Turquie s'est diffusé dans les provinces entre 1923 et 1945, dans un contexte post-impérial marqué par les conséquences de la Première Guerre mondiale et l'éradication des populations non musulmanes et non turques d'Asie Mineure. Elle apporte une contribution significative à l'histoire du Parti républicain du peuple (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*), qui a gouverné sans partage du pouvoir de 1923 à 1950, en se concentrant sur son organisation provinciale, notamment l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilâtı*), créée en septembre 1931.

La thèse explore les conditions politiques et sociales de l'entre-deux-guerres, cherchant à comprendre pourquoi le parti a investi dans l'éducation politique des adultes à une époque marquée par des défis économiques et la Grande Dépression. L'analyse du projet pédagogique initié en 1931 met en lumière des concepts clés et des catégories sociales telles que les « *münevver* » (éclairés) et le « *halk* » (peuple). Elle montre comment les « éclairés » prenaient la parole en public, s'adressant aux foules pour éduquer la population au nom du parti et de la république.

En examinant les trajectoires sociales et les carrières politiques des prêcheurs du peuple, cette recherche contribue à la socio-histoire des élites politiques du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans un contexte post-impérial. Le double mouvement analytique de la thèse explore l'appareil de communication politique mis en place par le Parti républicain du peuple pour gagner le soutien populaire, ainsi que le système éducatif axé sur l'éducation politique dispensée par les prédicateurs du peuple.

Cette étude révèle l'interconnexion entre la transmission des connaissances, l'intégration d'un idéal social genrée et le maintien de l'ordre. Elle retrace la généalogie de l'« intellectuel de province » (*taşra münevveri*) en Turquie, en examinant les transformations politiques et sociales ayant contribué à sa formation. Elle montre comment les intellectuels de province turcs se distinguent de leurs homologues européens par leurs origines sociales et leurs fonctions politiques, telles que l'application de la loi et l'intimidation des dissidents. Enfin, la thèse propose une lecture alternative de l'histoire de la Turquie à parti unique, liant sa nature post-impériale à sa dimension post-génocidaire à travers l'étude des trajectoires sociales et les activités des prédicateurs du peuple dans le contexte des bouleversements démographiques et sociaux en Anatolie.

## ZUSAMMENFASSUNG UND SCHLAGWÖRTER

Diese Dissertation untersucht die Verbreitung der politischen Botschaft des Einparteienregimes in der Türkei zwischen 1923 und 1945 in den Provinzen. Dieser postimperiale Kontext war durch die Folgen des Ersten Weltkriegs und die Auslöschung der nicht-muslimischen und nicht-türkischen Bevölkerung in Kleinasien geprägt. Die Dissertation leistet einen Beitrag zur Geschichte der Republikanischen Volkspartei (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*), die von 1923 bis 1950 in einem Einparteiensystem regierte. Diese Arbeit konzentriert sich auf ihre Provinzorganisationen konzentriert, insbesondere auf die im September 1931 gegründete Organisation der „VolkspredigerInnen“ (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilâtı*). Sie untersucht die politischen und sozialen Bedingungen der Zwischenkriegszeit und geht der Frage nach, warum die Partei in einem von wirtschaftlichen Herausforderungen und der Weltwirtschaftskrise geprägten Kontext in die politische Bildung von Erwachsenen investierte.

Die Analyse des pädagogischen Projekts ab 1931 beleuchtet Schlüsselbegriffe und soziale Kategorien wie „*münevver*“ (die Aufgeklärten) und „*halk*“ (das Volk). Die Arbeit zeigt, wie die „Aufgeklärten“ die Bühne betraten, sich an die Massen wandten und den Rest der Bevölkerung im Namen der Partei und der von ihr gegründeten Republik erzogen. Durch die Untersuchung des sozialen Werdegangs und der politischen Karriere der VolkspredigerInnen leistet die Arbeit einen Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte der politischen Eliten im 20. Jahrhundert im postimperialen Kontext.

Die Dissertation untersucht einerseits den politischen Kommunikationsapparat, den die Republikanische Volkspartei aufgebaut hat, um die Unterstützung der Bevölkerung zu gewinnen. Andererseits befasst sie sich mit dem Bildungssystem, das auf die politische Bildung durch die Volksprediger ausgerichtet war. Dabei werden die Zusammenhänge zwischen der Wissensvermittlung, der Einbindung einer geschlechtsspezifischen sozialen Ordnung und der Aufrechterhaltung der Staatsgewalt deutlich. Die Untersuchung zeichnet anhand von politischen und sozialen Veränderungen die Genealogie des „Provinzintellektuellen“ (*taşra münevveri*) in der Türkei nach. Sie zeigt, wie sich die türkischen „Provinzintellektuellen“ von ihren europäischen Pendanten unterschieden, indem sie politische Funktionen wie die Gewaltanwendung und die Einschüchterung von Dissidenten übernahmen. Die Untersuchung bietet auch eine alternative Lesart der Geschichte der Einparteien-Türkei, indem sie deren post-imperialen Charakter mit ihrer post-genozidalen Dimension durch die Laufbahnen und Aktivitäten der VolkspredigerInnen im Kontext der demographischen und sozialen Umwälzungen in Anatolien verbindet.

## A NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND TRANSLITERATION

Early 20th-century Turkish punctuation was inconsistent, and sentences were often much longer than typical English norms. I have split these long sentences into smaller segments to ensure the text makes English sense. The word order in Turkish can be difficult to translate directly, so I have occasionally rearranged sentences to improve readability. The method of transcription used is orthographic, which means that any spelling errors or variations made by the original scribes have been replicated.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations and transliterations in this work are my own. I followed the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* guidelines for transliterating Ottoman Turkish. I retained their original transliterations if other historians have already transliterated a document.

I used the modern Turkish spelling for commonly used Ottoman words that are not direct quotes (e.g., *vilayet*, *idadiye*). Proper names are often inconsistently spelled in the sources due to the alphabet change and ongoing language standardization during the period under study. I used the standardized English or Modern Turkish spellings of patronyms whenever possible and the language of their current location for place names with less well-established English spellings.

Regarding the calendar, I converted dates from the Ottoman *Hicri* and *Rumi* calendars to the Gregorian calendar. I provided the original date in brackets if the sources predated the calendar reform.

### Pronunciation

- c – is pronounced as the “j” in “journey.”
- ç – is pronounced as the “ch” in “chocolate.”
- g – is pronounced as the “g” in “goal.”
- ğ – it is not pronounced but lengthens the preceding vowel
- ı – is pronounced as a short “i” as in “sip” and “tip.”
- İ – is pronounced as the “e” in “open.”
- ö – “ö” as in German “schön” or French “peur.”
- ş – “sh” as in “shoe.”
- ü – “ü” as in German “über” or French “lune.”

## Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Revolution from the “Middle” .....	19
Categorizing the Social World.....	25
Preaching in the Aftermath of Mass Violence .....	32
<b>I. A Pedagogic State?.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>1. The Question of “Münevver” .....</b>	<b>49</b>
1.1. Early Republican Public Controversies: “Münevver” .....	51
1.2. What was a <i>Münevver</i> in 1920s Turkey?.....	61
1.3. The Incredible “Halk” .....	71
1.4. Against the Specter of “Reaction” .....	78
<b>2. The Power of the Spoken Word.....</b>	<b>87</b>
2.1. Religious Opposition.....	90
2.2. The Limits of “Religious Opposition” as a Frame of Analysis .....	99
2.3. Partisan Opposition .....	108
<b>3. The Pedagogy of the State .....</b>	<b>115</b>
3.1. Mass Educators of the Republic.....	121
3.2. History of Pedagogy with Natif Atuf Kansu .....	127
3.3. From “Commoners” of the Empire to the Republican “People” .....	136
3.4. Mass Oratory as Mass Education.....	141
<b>4. Rhetoric and Political Education.....</b>	<b>147</b>
4.1. Political Education and “Ideology” .....	151
4.2. Concepts of Eloquence for the People’s Preachers Organization.....	156
4.3. Eloquence and “Propaganda” .....	169

<b>5. People’s Preachers: Teachers of the Common Folk</b> .....	183
5.1. Enlightened Enlighteners .....	186
5.2. Münevvers in Republican Sermons.....	199
<b>II. The Making of Provincial Kemalism</b> .....	<b>213</b>
<b>6. Setting the Stage</b> .....	215
6.1. The Stage: The People’s Houses.....	226
6.2. The Staging.....	234
6.3. The Performance .....	245
6.4. The Audience .....	255
<b>7. Social Distinction of the People’s Preachers</b> .....	263
7.1. Identifying People’s Preachers.....	264
7.2. Educated Provincial Elites as Party Spokespeople .....	281
7.3. Combining New and Old Notabilities .....	296
<b>8. Motivations and Rewards of Preaching</b> .....	301
8.1. Sermons as Sway: Preaching as a Political Opportunity.....	304
8.2. Preaching as a Thread amongst Partisan Ties.....	309
8.3. Beyond Currency: Professional and Symbolic Rewards .....	314
8.4. Preaching as a Vocation.....	328
<b>9. The Backstage</b> .....	339
9.1. Infrastructural Problems .....	340
9.1. Variations across Time and Space .....	342
9.2. Corruption, Neglect, and Abuse at the People’s Houses.....	362
<b>Part III. Time War(p): Teaching the Past, Explaining the Present</b> .....	<b>369</b>
<b>10. Preaching in Post-War and Post-Genocide Turkey</b> .....	371
10.1. Total War and Genocide as “Structuring Structure” .....	374
10.2. Temporal Proximity with War and Genocide .....	384
10.3. Violent War Memories .....	401



<b>11. Memory-Making in the Borderlands.....</b>	<b>411</b>
11.1. The Case Study of Kars Preachers.....	412
11.2. Breaking Bottles, Breaking Enemies.....	423
11.3. Law and Order and Internal Enemies.....	435
11.4. Perpetrator Memories.....	460
<b>12. Fighting the Never-Ending War in Dersim .....</b>	<b>465</b>
12.1. Preaching in Elazığ and Dersim.....	471
12.2. “Propaganda” and “Gossip” Before the Massacres.....	484
12.3. Preaching Amid Mass Murder.....	489
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>501</b>
<b><i>Primary Sources</i>.....</b>	<b>511</b>
Archives .....	511
Printed Sources .....	517
<b><i>Bibliography</i>.....</b>	<b>524</b>
Appendix 1. Press Articles .....	553
Appendix 2. Archive Documents.....	559
Appendix 3. Transcriptions.....	561
Appendix 4. Translations .....	570
<i>Index</i> .....	581
<b>Résumé en français .....</b>	<b>588</b>



## Table of Figures

---

<i>Figure 1. Table of Lectures (Konferans) Organized at People’s Houses vs. Number of People’s Houses (1932–1941), Source: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 1942.</i>	14
<i>Figure 2. Resistance from the Münevver, Cover of Akbaba, 29 February 1940.</i>	58
<i>Figure 3. Cover of Akbaba, 15 February 1936.</i>	60
<i>Figure 4. Cover of Yeni Adam, 19 December 1935.</i>	176
<i>Figure 5. “Faşizm ve Pedagoji.” Yeni Adam, 19 March 1936.</i>	178
<i>Figure 6. People’s Chairs in Zonguldak (Source: Wikimedia Commons)</i>	223
<i>Figure 7. Graph showing the number of lectures per year (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halk Evleri ve Halk Odaları, 1942)</i>	228
<i>Figure 8. Gaziantep People’s House was built on the Kendirli Church. building in the central district of Antep, which was “abandoned” following the Armenian Genocide.</i>	233
<i>Figure 9. The order of precedence for the celebration of the decennial of the Republic, 1933.</i>	236
<i>Figure 10. Poster about the Alphabet Reform prepared for the Republic Day, 1933.</i>	238
<i>Figure 11. Woman delivers a speech on a wooden platform decorated with the Turkish flags. 21 November 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1433-739-1.</i>	240
<i>Figure 12. Celebration of Language Day at Çorum People’s House, 26 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-98-2.</i>	259
<i>Figure 13. Schoolchildren watching the parade of the military and the statesmen, Elazığ, 19 May 1937, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1072-1106-2.</i>	259
<i>Figure 14. Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz’s note on his CHP membership, 6 April 1950.</i>	285
<i>Figure 15. Hamiyet Ülün’s application file.</i>	302
<i>Figure 16. Ridiculing the lattice in Istanbul, Akbaba, 1 March 1934, 13.</i>	331
<i>Figure 17. People’s House members posing with the captured rebels, Altani 22 June 1937. ...</i>	493

## Tables and Graphs

---

<i>Table 1. The evolution of the number of People's Preachers (1931-1938).....</i>	<i>266</i>
<i>Table 2. Preachers Identified Through Their Rank and Role within the CHP.....</i>	<i>269</i>
<i>Table 3. Number of preachers per occupation and identification methods.....</i>	<i>274</i>
<i>Table 4. Preachers per socio-professional group.....</i>	<i>278</i>
<i>Table 5. Number of Civil Servants within the People's Preachers Corps (1931-1938).....</i>	<i>283</i>
<i>Table 6. Lectures at the Hozat People's House (March-May 1939), BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1013-909-1. ....</i>	<i>361</i>

## Maps

---

<i>Map 1. Independence and Revolution Lectures, Ulus, 1936.....</i>	<i>256</i>
<i>Map 2. People's Preachers in 1931 .....</i>	<i>344</i>
<i>Map 3. People's Preachers in 1938.....</i>	<i>244</i>
<i>Map 4. Number of documents produced per province (1935-1945) ... ..</i>	<i>346</i>
<i>Map 5. Muftis and Islamic Preachers among People's Preachers (1931-1938).....</i>	<i>349</i>
<i>Map 6. Landowners, merchants, notables among People's Preachers (1931-1938).....</i>	<i>350</i>
<i>Map 7. Number of speakers during Language Day celebrations in 1936.....</i>	<i>355</i>
<i>Map 8. Birth Places of the People's Preachers selected in Kars .....</i>	<i>414</i>
<i>Map 9. Zihni Orhon during the First World War.....</i>	<i>461</i>
<i>Map 10. The Province of Mamuretülaziz (1900s).....</i>	<i>472</i>

## Glossary

---

It is challenging to translate a set of Ottoman-Turkish words, with their diverse origins and connotations, found in the People's Preachers and the People's Houses' paper trail. The polysemy and varied uses of these words in the sources make their translation into English a complex endeavor.

*Münevver* (1) Enlightened. (2) Illuminated. (3) A cultured (person) who has education, knowledge and manners, who deals with intellectual issues, intellectual.

*Halk* (1) The common people. (2) A crowd, a mob. A people, a nation. (3) The part of a nation excluding the intellectual stratum and state administrators, the people. As opposed to: *Münevver*

*Havas* (1) People of distinction. (2) Nobles. (3) Men of learning, men of piety. As opposed to *Avam*

*Avam* The common classes of mankind, the vulgar. As opposed to *Havas*.

*Hatip* (1) A public speaker, orator (2) A person who speaks eloquently and has oratory skills (3) An Islamic preacher.

*Tenvir* (1) To enlighten someone on something (2) To clarify.

*Telkin* (1) Inoculating someone with an idea, instilling it into their minds, teaching and inculcating them by repeating some principles.

*İrşad* Showing the right path.

- Tedris* Teaching and instruction within schools, universities.
- Konferans* A public lecture held in front of a large public, especially at the People's Houses.
- Tedip* Educating, teaching manners, disciplining, and punishing. Euphemism for state-led mass violence.
- Tenkil* Punishing in a way to set an example for everyone. Eliminating, destroying, exterminating, rooting out en masse. Euphemism for state-led mass violence.
- Imha* Annihilating.

## Introduction

---

When I took on the duty of delivering the second series of lectures for the party, I paused for a moment in the face of the significance of the subject. Tonight, I will reflect on the Turkish revolution and reforms, which are so significant that neither my ability to describe and explain them adequately nor the time I have allocated for this task is sufficient. In briefly examining our revolution, I felt compelled to divide it into parts.

Turkey before the revolution (*ihtilâl*)

Turkish revolution (*inkılâp*)

Sequential analysis of the revolution.<sup>1</sup>

With these words, Hasene Ilgaz began her lecture entitled “Independence and Revolution” (*İstiklal ve İnkılâp*) in 1936. She stood before a crowd gathered at a community center (People’s House, *Halkevi*) in Şehremini, a neighborhood in her hometown of Istanbul. At the time, Hasene was a thirty-three-year-old teacher, but the “duty” of delivering this lecture had been entrusted to her by a circular letter from the General Secretary of the Republican People’s Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*, CHP).<sup>2</sup>

The CHP had been in power since the Republic of Turkey was proclaimed in 1923, and the party had instigated a vast and significant “revolution” (*inkılâp*). Party leaders organized the national struggle after the Ottoman defeat in the First World War, liberated the country from foreign occupation, abolished the sultanate and the caliphate, and prepared the ground for a new style of government. The early years of the new regime were marked by radical reforms targeting the alphabet, the language, the calendar, the civil code, and education, to name a few.

In the 1930s, the CHP intensified the promotion of these reforms throughout the country. As Hasene humbly noted, one hour would hardly suffice to capture the essence of the revolution led by Mustafa Kemal. She was to navigate through the adoption of the Latin alphabet instead of the Arabic-Persian script used in the Ottoman Empire, the abolition of the “fez” in favor of the Panama hat, infrastructural projects, secularization of education, and women’s empowerment in society. She was to provide a historical perspective, emphasize

---

<sup>1</sup> “Fırkanın ikinci seri konferansını söylemek vazifesini aldığım zaman mevzuun büyüklüğü karşısında bir an düşündüm. Bu gece muhasebesini yapacağım bütün cihanın örnek ve gayret aldığı Türk ihtilal ve inkılabı o kadar büyüktür ki bunu hakkile tarif ve tavsife ne söyleme kudretim ve ne de tahsis ettiğim zaman müsaittir. Ben kısaca inkılabımızı tedkik etmek isterken bunu kısımlara ayırmak mecburiyetini duydum.” Speech delivered by Hasene Ilgaz, Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı, Hasene Ilgaz Özel Arşivi, 10002-003-182.

<sup>2</sup> Recep Peker, *İstiklal ve İnkılâp Konferansları Hakkında Genelgeler*, 1935, BCA CHP 490-01/3-11-17, Ankara.

national identity and the idea of progress, and issue warnings against those who might obstruct the revolution's sustainability. Nevertheless, Hasene Ilgaz achieved all this in 2,800 words, corresponding to a 20-minute lecture.

Ilgaz was born in 1902 in the Ottoman capital. Her father hailed from Safranbolu, a town in the Black Sea region of northern Turkey. Her mother, Hatçe, was from Kemaliye. Pinpointing the exact location of Hatçe's place of birth is difficult. Toponym changes were common since the Second Constitutional Monarchy and were exacerbated in the early republican era.<sup>3</sup> Many devoted party members, like Hasene Ilgaz, quickly adopted new toponyms that erased the multilinguistic character of Ottoman Anatolia. Numerous towns had been rebaptized Kemaliye after Mustafa Kemal, the republic's founder, in 1928.<sup>4</sup> Hatçe could have been born in Armenian Egin in Eastern Anatolia or Greek Menderexora in Western Anatolia.

Ilgaz was part of the educated elite in early republican Turkey. She attended the Teachers' Training College for Girls in Istanbul, thanks to her father's unwavering commitment to her education. She flourished as a teacher and later became a school headmistress in the same city.<sup>5</sup> She was also a member of the larger party. The CHP held power without proper power sharing from 1923 to 1950. The number of party members was high during the single-party era, and it remains one of Turkey's most influential political organizations. Ilgaz had been an active member since the party's foundation in September 1923. While working as a teacher, she diligently served on its district, sub-district, and county administrative committees in Istanbul.

The local organizations that hosted her 1936 lecture were created by the CHP. The People's Houses (*Halkevleri*) were established in February 1932, and they were closely connected with the party's local and provincial branches. These community centers were bustling with

---

<sup>3</sup> Kerem Öktem, "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008).

<sup>4</sup> According to the toponymic dictionary of Sevan Nişanyan, thirteen cities and towns were called Kemaliye after 1928. Sevan Nişanyan, in *Türkiye Yer Adları Sözlüğü - Index Anatolicus*. <https://www.nisanyanradlari.com/>.

<sup>5</sup> TRT Arşiv, " 'Bir kadın milletvekili olarak pek çok sosyal işlerle beraber hayatımı renklendirmeye muvaffak oldum.' Erken dönem kadın milletvekillerimiz arasında yer alan Hasene Ilgaz'ın, o döneme ait anlatımına kulak veriyoruz. (1986)," *Facebook*, 8 March, 2024." Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VII. Dönem Milletvekili, 1943-1946, HT\_1230\_1\_7, Yasama Organı Üyelerinin Tercüme-i Halleri ve Seçim Mazbataları, TBMM Kütüphane, Ankara; Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VIII. Dönem Milletvekili, 1946-1950, HT\_1230\_1\_8, Yasama Organı Üyelerinin Tercüme-i Halleri ve Seçim Mazbataları, TBMM Kütüphane, Ankara."



activities such as evening classes, social assistance, concerts, theater plays, and weekly lectures for adult citizens to expand their knowledge on various topics. The People's Houses were created as an alternative space of socialization to coffeehouses and played a crucial role in advancing print and broadcasting technologies as well as the overall communication culture in Turkey.<sup>6</sup> Ilgaz was an active member of the People's House before becoming a People's Preacher (1938). In 1935, she became the head of one of Turkey's most influential People's Houses in Şehremini, Istanbul.

There have been remarkable developments regarding women's political and social rights in interwar Turkey. In 1930, women obtained the right to participate in municipal elections. Women's partial electoral franchise also increased the number of women who wanted to become CHP members. Hasene Ilgaz was already a party member. After the party opened its doors to women, she joined the local administrative committee in Istanbul. In 1931, the Party General Secretary ordered its local administrative committees to create an organization gathering the "People's Preachers" (*Halk Hatipleri*). This organization was to mobilize, train, and put locally selected party spokespeople on stage who would address the crowds with speeches on the party's values and the "revolution" (*inkılâp*) it brought about. The local sections of the party prepared lists of People's Preachers in 1931 and 1938.

Ilgaz was not included in the first lists prepared to inform the Party General Secretary about the identity of the party preachers. In 1934, women gained the full electoral franchise. Four years later, Ilgaz appeared on the list of People's Preachers. After nine years of preaching for the party, Ilgaz was elected to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TBMM). At forty-one, she became one of the first women elected to parliament in the twenty-year-old Republic of Turkey.

The excerpt in which she outlined her speech and expressed her worries about her qualifications and time management stems from one of the occasions on which she "preached" for the party. When she was required to fill out a form to begin her term at the Parliament, she

---

<sup>6</sup> Sefa Şimşek, *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi: Halkevleri, 1932-1951* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002); Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey: The 'People's Houses', the State and the Citizen* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015); Kemal H. Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951," *Die Welt des Islams* 15, no. 1/4 (1974): 70.

was requested to list her “works” (*eserleri*). This section was intended to be filled with the publications of a deputy. However, Ilgaz chose to list her “unpublished lectures and articles,” considering her lectures, like the one above, among her significant contributions.<sup>7</sup>

Hasene Ilgaz was one of 143 “People’s Preachers” selected in Istanbul in 1938. Fourteen of them, both men and women, were selected in her district (Fatih). She was one of the few women who could act as the local spokesperson of the CHP in 1938. In 1938, only eighty-five women became People’s Preachers out of 2,062 people selected in each province and district of early republican Turkey.<sup>8</sup>

Among the 3,500 names that appeared on the lists of the People’s Preachers sent to the CHP General Secretary, “Hasene Ilgaz” stood out. Not only was she one of the rare women on these lists, but she was also one of the rare “preachers” (man or woman) that I could trace across diverse archives of early republican Turkey. I found “Hasene Ilgaz” in other archives because she was one of the first women politicians in the Republic of Turkey. Aware and proud of her distinctiveness, she donated her private archives to the Women’s Library and Information Center (*Kadın Eserleri ve Bilgi Merkezi*) before she died in 2000.<sup>9</sup> She also published two memoirs, testaments to the crucial moments in Turkey’s history that she witnessed and played a part in.<sup>10</sup> Despite her exceptional archival trace, Ilgaz’s speech was one among hundreds, perhaps thousands, delivered by People’s Preachers to teach the “program of the party, values, fundamentals, and principles of the republic” between 1931 and 1945.<sup>11</sup>

This dissertation delves into the history of People’s Preachers like Ilgaz and the speeches they delivered to explore how the CHP disseminated its message to the “people” (*halk*) through these preachers. It focuses on “Kemalist Pedagogy,” understood as the partisan project for the political education of adult citizens, regulated by what the party leadership termed “People’s Education” (*Halk Terbiyesi*) during the CHP’s single-party rule.

---

<sup>7</sup> “Basılmamış konferans ve makaleler.” Hasene Ilgaz, *Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi* TBMM VIII. Dönem Milletvekili.

<sup>8</sup> Lists of People’s Preachers sent from the provincial sections to the CHP General Secretary, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>9</sup> “The Women’s Library and Information Centre Foundation,” *Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı*, accessed 1 June 2024, <https://kadineserleri.org/aabout-us/>.

<sup>10</sup> Hasene Ilgaz, *Unutulmayan Yıllar* (Istanbul: Babıâli Aziz Uçtay Matbaası, 1970); Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım* (1991).

<sup>11</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 6.

## Kemalist Pedagogy and Local Elites

Hasene Ilgaz's life was intertwined with two major organizations of Kemalist Pedagogy: The People's Preachers Organization and People's Houses, which were created within six months. Her fervent activism found its voice in her speeches as a People's Preacher at gatherings she organized at People's Houses. These institutions mobilized provincial elites, who considered it their duty to explain the party's values to the "people" (*halk*). "People" was a key concern for the CHP leadership. The party claimed to be the "party of the people," the party's provincial sections were called "People's Houses," and the party spokespeople were the "People's Preachers."

Ilgaz was "local" in the most basic sense of the term. She was born in Istanbul and resided in Samatya, on Ulufeci Sokak, a little walk away from the Şehremini People's House, where her political journey unfolded, leading to her eventual rise as CHP deputy in 1943.<sup>12</sup> She was part of the cultural elites, distinguished by her relatively high level of education. The People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses sought individuals of higher social standing. The People's Preaches needed to be selected among "well-liked personalities in their localities."<sup>13</sup> The party set these individuals apart from the rest of society, whom they labeled as "peasants and simple-minded citizens" (*köylüler ve basit görüşlü vatandaşlar*) and "random individuals" (*herhangi zevat*).<sup>14</sup>

The People's Preachers Organization and People's Houses were designed to mobilize the "enlightened" (*münevver*) segment of society. "*Münevver*" was both an adjective and a noun used to highlight the intellectual superiority of the better-educated segments of the population. Charging the "enlightened" with the responsibility of educating the "people" (*halk*) was a key component of Kemalist Pedagogy. The (common) people's perceived lack of education burdened the early republican leadership. The 1942 report on People's Houses highlighted "lectures" (*konferans*) with 'enlightened' lecturers addressing their audience from behind a pulpit (See Figure 1).<sup>15</sup> They spoke on a stage equipped with a ring microphone showcasing

---

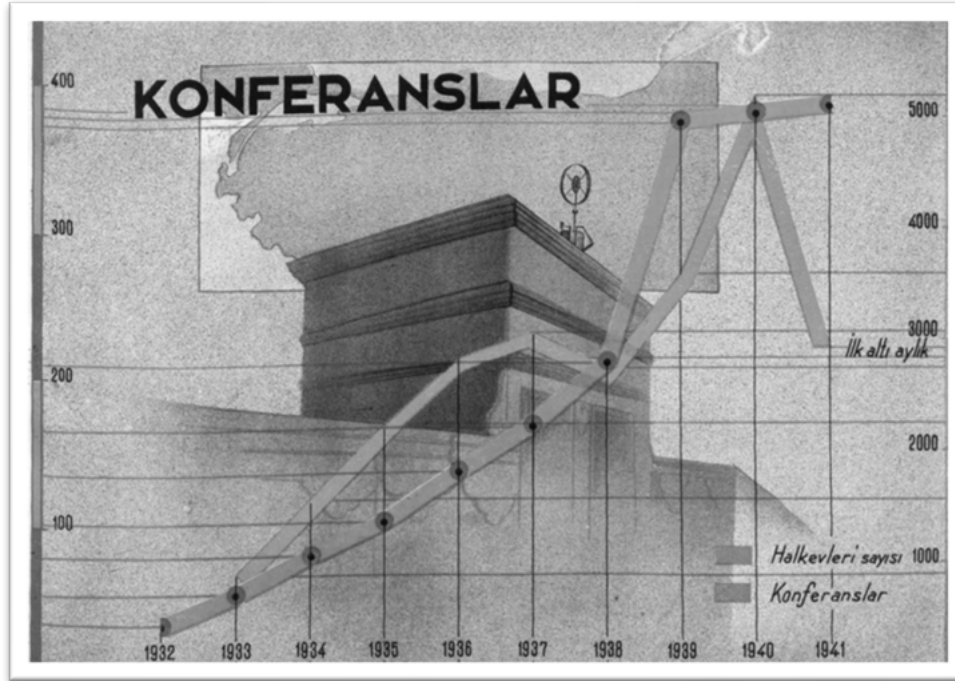
<sup>12</sup> Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VIII. Dönem Milletvekili.

<sup>13</sup> "Buldukları mahalde şahısları itibarile sevilen zatlar olmalı." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931).

<sup>14</sup> "Herhangi zevat" (...) "Basit görüşlü vatandaşlar" ibid.

<sup>15</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*, (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 1942), 36.

expansive means of the early republican party-state. Standing against the backdrop of the new map of Turkey signified their alignment with the political vision of the party and the new regime.



**Figure 1. Table of Lectures (Konferans) Organized at People's Houses vs. Number of People's Houses (1932–1941), Source: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 1942.**

Kemalist Pedagogy emerged in response to the multitude of challenges that the CHP encountered from the very inception of the republic. The party faced a formidable uprising in the Kurdish regions of Southeast Turkey in 1925. The Sheikh Said Revolt ignited in February 1925 and manifested nationalist fervor and resistance to centralizing and secularizing reforms.<sup>16</sup> The insurrection quickly engulfed the region, and its suppression was as intense as brutal. The government deployed approximately 50,000 soldiers to quell the rebellion,

---

<sup>16</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State : The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London ; Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Zed Books, 1992); Hamit Bozarslan, *L'histoire de la Turquie: de l'empire à nos jours* (Paris: Tallandier, 2013), 348-49.

resorting to aerial bombardments against the insurgents.<sup>17</sup> In the context of this revolt, the Law of Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*) was enacted, paving the way for summary executions and violent reprisals not only against Kurdish nationalists but also against all forms of opposition critical of the policies of the party.<sup>18</sup>

In November 1924, an ideological rift within the Grand National Assembly gave rise to the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), an opposition entity destined to last merely six months. Amid the tumult of the Sheikh Said Revolt, its leaders faced accusations of inciting “reactionary” sentiments, leading to the party’s closure and prohibition.<sup>19</sup> Following this upheaval, the Ararat Revolt (1930) in the farthest reaches of Eastern Anatolia presented the CHP leadership with further formidable, seemingly insurmountable challenges to their authority. The revolt was crushed with a large-scale massacre by the Turkish aerial forces.<sup>20</sup> From March 1925 onwards, most Kurdish regions were governed under a state of exception, a testament to the enduring volatility of power and the relentless struggle for control.<sup>21</sup>

In October 1930, a newly founded opposition party achieved unexpected success in municipal elections. The Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, SCF) profoundly shook the self-confidence of the CHP leadership with its electoral success. In December 1930, a Nakshibendi Sufi sheikh declared in Menemen, a town in the Aegean region and a stronghold of the party, that Mustafa Kemal was a “deceitful messiah” (*deccal*), opposing him on religious grounds.<sup>22</sup> His disciples then murdered a teacher and reserve officer named Kubilay in Menemen.

---

<sup>17</sup> Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism,” *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no. 1 (2000); Ümit Uğur Üngör, “Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950” (Ph.D. University of Amsterdam, 2009), 233.

<sup>18</sup> Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi’nin Kurulması (1923-1931)* (Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1981, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, “The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 33 (2021-09-28 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Mesut Yeğen, “State Violence in ‘Kurdistan’,” in *Collective and State Violence in Turkey*, ed. Stephan Astourian and Raymond Kévorkian (New York, Oxford: Bergahn, 2020), 308.

<sup>21</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, *L’histoire de la Turquie : de l’empire à nos jours*, 350-51.

<sup>22</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, no. 91-94 (2000).

During the first seven years of the republic, the establishment and reinforcement of the new regime took precedence over the urgency of propagating the CHP's "ideology."<sup>23</sup> The party leadership perceived the Menemen Revolt and the rise of the Liberal Republican Party as manifestations of various forms of "reaction," ranging from armed resistance to more subtle political opposition like circulating rumors. These events highlighted the specter of "reaction" (*irtica*) for the party leadership.<sup>24</sup>

During the Third Party Congress held in May 1931, numerous members voiced their concerns about "reaction" (*irtica*) and oppositional actors and organizations manipulating the "people" (*halk*).<sup>25</sup> They were apprehensive about the people's reluctance to pay taxes, provide labor, and comply with the new rules introduced by the reforms. The proposed solution was to invest in education and political communication. The "enlightened" members of society were tasked with "enlightening" (*tenvir*) Republican citizenry, "guiding them onto the right path" (*irşad*), and teaching party members its "ideology."<sup>26</sup>

Four months after the Third Congress, the Party General Secretary created the People's Preachers Organization, followed by the establishment of People's Houses five months later. These two interrelated organizations emerged in a context of state vulnerability, prompting the CHP leadership to adopt coercive measures and initiatives to generate consent for their rule.<sup>27</sup> People's Preachers played a crucial role in developing and disseminating the prevailing ideology by transmitting politically relevant knowledge to remote areas of post-war Turkey. Their mission was to convince the broader population of the ideas, principles, and ideals of the party and its revolution.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, "Institution Building in the Kemalist Republic: The Role of the People's Party," in *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, ed. Touraj Atabaki and Erik Jan Zürcher (London: Tauris, 2004), 105.

<sup>24</sup> "Bundan sonra zuhûra gelen Menemen hâdisesi, irticanın ? Kurunu Vustadaki kadar vahşi ve müntakim olduğunu gösterdiği gibi ahvalden ne kadar cür'et almış olduğunu da göstermek itibarile intibaha şayandır." Inaugural speech by İsmet İnönü. *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 5.

<sup>25</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

<sup>26</sup> *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 236.

<sup>27</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *L'énergie de l'État : pour une sociologie historique et comparée du politique* (Paris : La Découverte, 2022), 567.

<sup>28</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

The primary purpose of the People’s Preachers was to mobilize the citizenry, as the newborn Turkish Republic was open to the broader transformation of politics and the evolving relationship between parties and masses worldwide. In his book, *Turkey: A Modern History*, Erik-Jan Zürcher compared the CHP leadership during the Republic’s formative years (1923–1945) to the Fascist Party in Italy, noting that the CHP did not focus on large-scale population mobilization or conduct mass rallies as part of their political strategy.<sup>29</sup> However, the paper trail left by the People’s Preachers tells a different story regarding the role of population mobilization and mass oratory during the Republic’s first decades. From 1931 to 1938, the party gathered approximately three thousand people, including a few women, to form citizens through public lectures and rallies. The local sections of the party diligently selected preachers in each province, district, and sub-district to deliver public speeches aligned with the party’s political agenda.

By 1931, each CHP provincial and district branch had selected 1,360 individuals, including teachers, doctors, governors, district governors, mayors, village chiefs, judges, pharmacists, merchants, farmers, prosecutors, engineers, and military personnel. This number grew to 2,033 by 1938. Concurrently, the number of People’s Houses surged from under 100 in 1932 to approximately 500 by 1942. The primary activity linking People’s Preachers to People’s Houses was the organization of “lectures” (*konferanslar*) at these venues, with the number of such lectures reaching into the thousands by 1941.<sup>30</sup>

The creation of the People’s Preacher’s Organization was an ambitious but improvised effort to institutionalize party communication which found its origins in earlier attempts. Before the foundation of the People’s Houses in 1932, People’s Preachers addressed their audience following the orders of the Party General Secretary in public squares, party locals, and the “Turkish Hearths” (*Türk Ocakları*), community centers progressively aligned with the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, CUP) under the Second Constitutional Ottoman Monarchy (1908–1920).<sup>31</sup> People’s Preachers were gathered as

---

<sup>29</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 186.

<sup>30</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*, 34.

<sup>31</sup> Füsun Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1997).

integral component of the party's communicational and educational apparatus when mass media accessibility was limited.<sup>32</sup>

These limitations were linked to the economic devastation in Anatolia following a long decade of war. The extensive war efforts, including the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), the First World War (1914–1918), and the War of Independence, preceded the proclamation of the Republic. These wars caused significant population loss in Anatolia, estimated by Şevket Pamuk to be around two million.<sup>33</sup> Deportations, mass murders, and population exchanges involving Assyrians, Syrians, Chaldeans, and especially Armenians exacerbated this demographic decline.<sup>34</sup> Overall, the population of Turkey fell by twenty-five percent between 1914 and 1924.<sup>35</sup>

These state-sponsored annihilative measures were carried out with the participation of government, military and paramilitary forces, local militia, and the civilian population.<sup>36</sup> People's Preachers addressed their audiences in Anatolian towns ravaged by war and genocide. Some People's Houses were buildings converted from churches that had belonged to decimated populations.

We cannot locate Hasene Ilgaz's mother's hometown between Easternmost and Westernmost Anatolia due to the legacy of the destruction of populations in Anatolia and the early republican state's efforts to erase signs of these decimated populations from maps.<sup>37</sup> Given the scale of these events and their role in the homogenization of Anatolia, which facilitated the founding and development of the nation-state, by the 1930s, Anatolia's genocidal past and post-genocidal present were integral to the production of consent for the new political and social order.

---

<sup>32</sup> On the accessibility of radio in the early republican era, see Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

<sup>33</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998), 11; Şevket Pamuk, "Economic Change in Twentieth-Century Turkey: Is the Glass More Than Half Full?," (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 267.

<sup>34</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*, 11; Hamit Bozarslan, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Introduction," in *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens* (Paris: Tallandier, 2022), §2.

<sup>35</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Chapitre 4. Les acteurs du génocide."

<sup>37</sup> Kerem Öktem, "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponyms in Republican Turkey."



The dissertation has two main objectives. The first is to address nation-state building from the perspective of the intermediaries between the party leadership, its provincial branches, and Turkish citizenry. In so doing, it proposes a “history from the middle” to discuss how the political project to make the “top” and the “bottom” converge, took shape without erasing this distinction, arguably even reinforcing it. This “history from the middle” also implies studying the establishment of social categories embedded in the shift from the empire to a nation-state. In this sense, the People’s Preachers and their speeches are a steppingstone to discuss how categories like the “enlightened” (*münevver*) or the “people” (*halk*), which have become cornerstones of Republican political semantics in Turkey, were crafted at the local level.

The second objective is to insert the history of state violence into the history of these intermediaries and vice versa. The meeting place of the party-state and its audience-citizenry was also a space where violence was described, vindicated, and legitimized, and where its meaning was reinterpreted to address imminent threats and the presence of enemies within and outside the state. By examining both the single-party regime and People’s Preachers, we can gain new insights into the interaction between coercion and co-optation within a revolutionary context.

### Revolution from the “Middle”

---

“Nationalism” was one of the six ideological pillars of the CHP. The People’s Preachers and the People’s Houses were institutions created by “nationalist entrepreneurs” to spread nationalist ideologies among the adult citizenry in the provinces. Opposition or indifference towards political change in these regions caused significant anxiety among party leaders.<sup>38</sup> One of the primary objectives of establishing these organizations was to educate a population perceived as ignorant and indifferent to the developments of the new regime, particularly regarding national culture, literature, and history.

Both the founding documents of the organization and the speeches People’s Preachers delivered emphasized “nation” and “nationalism.” Nevertheless, I did not approach this research through the lens of nationalism studies, which would have required engaging with the

---

<sup>38</sup> Tara Zahra, “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis,” *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010).

theoretical and conceptual debates among its proponents. For this study, nation-state building was the prominent backdrop, supported by a rich body of literature that informed my research on nationalism in Turkey and abroad.<sup>39</sup> However, since my focus on the oral transmission of political messages could neither address nor contradict the findings of studies on nationalism or nation-building, I chose to set this question aside and focus on what my sources call “revolution” (*inkılâp*).

For the leaders of the CHP, “revolution” meant the linguistic and religious homogenization of the population, fighting against imperial institutions linked to the caliphate and the sultanate, infrastructural developments, centralization, and fighting against Western powers’ colonial ambitions. As such, it was broader than creating an “imagined community.”<sup>40</sup> The CHP mobilized the People’s Preachers to spread a nationalist and revolutionary mass culture.

The history of the People’s Preachers as a partisan organization is a neglected topic. Many works on the CHP single-party era mention the organization or add the directives into their appendix without further commentary.<sup>41</sup> The most important empirical work directly focusing on the People’s Preachers Organization is *Konuşunuz, Konuşturunuz* (Speak and Make People

---

<sup>39</sup> Erol Ülker, “Empires and Nation-Building: Russification and Turkification Compared” (Master’s Central European University, 2004); Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010); Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*; Meltem Türköz, *Naming and Nation-Building in Turkey: The 1934 Surname Law* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*; Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); İlker Aytürk, “Turkish Linguists against the West: The Origins of Linguistic Nationalism in Atatürk’s Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004); Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting*; Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey*; Gavin D. Brockett, *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*, 1st ed., Modern Middle East series, (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2011); Ümit Uğur Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Benjamin C. Fortna, “The Ottoman Empire and After: From a State of “Nations” to “Nation-states”,” in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna et al. (London: Routledge, 2012); Ümit Kurt, *Türk’ün Büyük, Biçare ırkı” : Türk Yurdu’nda Milliyetçiliğin Esasları, (1911-1916)*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2012); Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish: Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013); Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi’nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*, (Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999), 484-489.

Speak) by Işıl Çakan. Çakan’s detailed analysis includes different propaganda efforts, including People’s Preachers, People’s Houses lectures, cinema projections, and exhibitions.<sup>42</sup> This work underlines the centrality of the “spoken word” (*söz*) for the early republican leadership. It explains the importance of mobilizing individual actors nationwide for “propaganda” without accessible mass media such as the radio. Çakan’s research situated the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization within broader communication efforts of governing elites since the 1920s. While informative and rich in description, *Konuşunuz, Konuşturunuz* limited speech transcriptions published in the press to an illustrative use and excluded a systematic analysis based on specific criteria. Hence, it did not delve into the prevailing disciplinary concepts or historiographical paradigms.

The second research focusing on People’s Preachers is an article by Hakan Uzun. The text analyzes the organization’s founding document through the prism of “propaganda.” It provides background information – already present in Çakan’s work – on propaganda efforts initiated since the beginning of the national struggle, ranging from the local press and smaller initiatives for public lectures to mass rallies.<sup>43</sup> It informs the reader on the training of People’s Preaches in Istanbul, Ankara, Trabzon, Ardahan, and their potential remuneration.<sup>44</sup>

Although the number and scope of studies conducted specifically on People’s Preachers are limited, studies on People’s Houses and popular pedagogy also shed light on this topic. Public pedagogy is often studied through the prism of national education by concentrating on textbooks and curricula produced under the control of the Ministry of Education. Füsün Üstel explored state pedagogy by analyzing curricula and other normative educational materials from the Second Constitutional Monarchy (1908–1920) until today.<sup>45</sup> Üstel showed how the single-

---

<sup>42</sup> Işıl Hacıbrahimoğlu Çakan, *Konuşunuz Konuşturunuz: Tek Parti Döneminde Propagandanın Etkin Silahı: Söz* (Istanbul: Otopsi, 2004), 33.

<sup>43</sup> Hakan Uzun, “Bir Propaganda Aracı Olarak Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı,” *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, 11 (2010): 91.

<sup>44</sup> The claims about the preachers’ remuneration couldn’t be verified as the documents cited were untraceable in the archives. I noticed that Uzun’s comments on preacher compensation were speculative, so I attempted to locate the relevant documents in the state archives. Unfortunately, the cited documents were not found, and the archivists suspect there may be a mistake with the citation. “Bu gruplandırmanın hangi ölçüye göre yapıldığının belirtilmemiş olmasına karşın, bunun şehir, ilçe ve köylerde görev yapacak hatiplere göre yapıldığı ve buna göre, illerde görev yapan hatiplere 100, ilçelerde görev yapan hatiplere 30, köylerde görev yapan hatiplere de 20 lira ödenmesinin düşünülüp ileri sürülebilir.” *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>45</sup> Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*.

party regime was invested in educating new generations under the republic. In his *Pedagogical State*, Sam Kaplan showed the persistent emphasis on educational policies following radical political transformation often brought by military coups in Turkey.<sup>46</sup> Since education controlled by the ministry mainly concerned pupils in schools, citizenship education for adults remained a marginal topic in the historiography of early republican Turkey. Alexandros Lamprou treated the issue of “People’s Education” (*halk terbiyesi*) that was often used when referring to the activities of People’s Houses.<sup>47</sup> Lamprou approached the question of popular pedagogy as a colonial “civilizing mission” of the “Westernized elites” on the “non-western indigenous populations.”<sup>48</sup>

It is crucial to acknowledge that the single-party regime framed its pedagogic mission within a civilizational discourse. However, simply making this observation risks drawing an unproductive analogy with colonial civilizing missions.<sup>49</sup> This does not imply that the post-colonial approach is irrelevant to Turkey. On the contrary, it can be applied, albeit not uniformly across all provinces. Limiting our analysis to the presence of civilizational discourse risks overusing the concept and creating a hollow analogy with limited analytical value. Therefore, a deeper investigation is necessary, taking the sociopolitical concepts and social categories of early republican political projects more seriously.

The paper trail left by the People’s Preachers is rich in sources about sociopolitical concepts and social categories. These archives, created by the state and the ruling party of the period, are top-down in nature. They are housed in the Republican Collections of the Turkish Presidency State Archives, which are devoted to the CHP during the single-party era, roughly from 1923 to 1950. However, to trace the voices of the single-party regime within these archives requires navigating the communication between CHP’s provincial branches and its General Secretary, giving them a localized character.

---

<sup>46</sup> Sam Kaplan, *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in post-1980 Turkey* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006).

<sup>47</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 32.

<sup>48</sup> “Halk Terbiyesi appears a civilizing and disciplining operation, almost a colonial mission to civilize the indigenous Other of the country’s periphery.” *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>49</sup> Marc Aymes, “Many a Standard at a Time: The Ottomans’ Leverage with Imperial Studies,” *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 8, no. 1 (01 Jun. 2013).

People's Preachers were connected to the central government through their association with the CHP General Secretary in an era marked by the porosity between party and state institutions. Another connection to the central and centralized state apparatus was through their professions, as most People's Preachers were civil servants. These characteristics make the People's Preachers a valuable entry point for examining the history of the single-party era "from the middle," despite the top-down nature of the archives.

From their inception, the complex of the People's Preachers and People's Houses was envisioned as mediator between the rulers (the party leadership) and the ruled (the rest of the population). It relied on the party's provincial and district branches, receiving directives from the central organization in Ankara, the CHP General Secretary. Preachers and Houses members worked as local representatives of the party and the government. They were authorized by the party's provincial administrative boards to speak in the name of the party. Their role was "mediating" by producing arguments and common representations, gathering and understanding different viewpoints, and finding a common language to circulate the party's message effectively.<sup>50</sup> The Preachers-Houses complex offers a way to reconsider the history of the CHP during the single-party era from a perspective that does not oppose "state" and "society." Still, it examines the entanglements between state and bureaucratic and partisan sectors.<sup>51</sup>

The opposition between the "center" (*merkez*) in Ankara and the "periphery" or "provinces" (*taşra*) was crucial for the Preachers-Houses complex. This dichotomy is reminiscent of the longtime dominant center-periphery framework in Ottoman and Turkish studies.<sup>52</sup> Recent scholarship has rightly criticized the dichotomies of state-society, center-periphery, and elite-mass in favor of a "state-in-society" approach.<sup>53</sup> According to Joel Migdal's approach, the state is defined as follows,

---

<sup>50</sup> Patrick Hassenteufel, "Chapitre 8 - Les acteurs intermédiaires des politiques publiques," in *Sociologie politique : l'action publique* (Paris : Armand Colin, 2011), §3.

<sup>51</sup> Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard, *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 5.

<sup>52</sup> Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key To Turkish Politics?," *Daedalus* 102, 1, no. Winter (1973).

<sup>53</sup> Yiğit Akın, "Reconsidering State, Party, and Society in Early Republican Turkey: Politics of Petitioning," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 3 (2007); Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise

“a field of power marked by the use and threat of violence and shaped by the image of a coherent, controlling, organization in a territory, which is a representation of people bounded by that territory, and the actual practices of its multiple parts.”<sup>54</sup>

This definition also appealed to see the “contradictory practices and alliances of the state with its disparate parts.”<sup>55</sup> The state-in-society approach led to valuable contributions to the historiography of contemporary Turkey.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, it sometimes led to overemphasizing local agency to the point of equating the “local” with an allegedly autonomous “civil society” with relative autonomy from state authority, filled with “vast arrays of formal and informal networks” which are seldom clearly demonstrated.<sup>57</sup> This perspective framed “locals,” “local populations,” and “provincials” as a homogenous group with the same worldviews and interests. They are presented as “sympathetic and essentialized” groups, allowing scholars to challenge the dichotomy of state and society.<sup>58</sup>

In this framework, each interaction between central state authority and “locals” is depicted as a source of “negotiation.” However, this focus on resistance and negotiation was sometimes used to downplay the dependence of local actors on the central government.<sup>59</sup> The early republican state was not all-powerful or monolithic. Nevertheless, Migdal’s emphasis on the co-penetration between state and non-state actors and his call to examine confrontations, negotiations, partnerships, and improvisations with other powerful actors at local or national levels was not intended to homogenize local actors to relativize state power. Instead, it aimed to provide a better understanding of how states functioned.

---

Massicard, *L’art de l’État en Turquie: arrangements de l’action publique de la fin de l’Empire ottoman à nos jours*, Meydan, (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2013).

<sup>54</sup> Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society : Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 15.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>56</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*: Élise Massicard, “The Incomplete Civil Servant? The Figure of the Neighbourhood Headman (Muhtar).” In *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century*, ed. Élise Massicard, Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse and Élise Massicard, (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 256-90.

<sup>57</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, “Local Negotiation of Change: Historiography of Modern Turkey and the Study of Provincial Anatolian Towns,” *SİYASAL: Journal of Political Sciences*, no. 32 (2023): 256; Burak Basaranlar, “Pragmatic Coexistence: Local Responses to the State Intrusion in Dersim during the Early Republican Period of Turkey (1938–1950),” *Middle Eastern Studies* 58, no. 6 (2022).

<sup>58</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *L’énergie de l’État : pour une sociologie historique et comparée du politique*, 568.

<sup>59</sup> Murat Metinsoy, “Fragile Hegemony, Flexible Authoritarianism, and Governing From Below: Politicians’ Reports in Early Republican Turkey,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011).

I do not use “center” and “periphery” in this dissertation as analytical tools. Nevertheless, I take them seriously since the party used them to describe the institutional framework through which the People’s Preachers and the People’s Houses operated. The opposition of center and periphery implies confrontation, interconnections, and interdependence between the “central” and the “provincial.” Still, the latter was defined by its relationship to the former.

People’s Preachers were closely connected to the party’s central organization, specifically through provincial branches to the General Secretary. To reflect on the degree of their autonomy or heteronomy instead of presuming “the locals” had inherent agency, this dissertation questions economic, political, cultural, and symbolic resources of the party’s local actors. By focusing on differences in terms of social background and trajectories of People’s Preachers, I aim to clarify their relationship with the state apparatus and their economic, social, and symbolic resources before and after they became People’s Preachers.

To better understand and recategorize the local organizations of the CHP, this dissertation examines the selection process of People’s Preachers. It scrutinizes the commonalities and differences among regions, provinces, and districts in terms of professional and social distribution, questioning how these criteria varied across the party’s different provincial branches. The study also explores the motivations and rewards for People’s Preachers to evaluate the autonomy or heteronomy of the party’s local agents. By using the state-made category of “People’s Preachers,” this research reflects on the evolution of social strata, classes, and groups throughout early republican reforms and mass education projects.

### Categorizing the Social World

---

The dichotomy of “elite” and “mass,” much like that of “center” and “periphery,” was central to the party’s conception of its pedagogic mission. Party correspondence frequently contrasted two social groups. The first group, “*münevver*” (enlightened), encompassed party members at large, including People’s Preachers and People’s House members. This group opposed the “*halk*” (people), which referred to the general populace, including peasants and workers. My dissertation examines these oppositions and locates their place within the early republican popular pedagogy.

The party’s provincial branches selected People’s Preachers from a socially distinguished group, with their social status being locally rooted. Directives emphasized that they should be

liked, respected, and listened to by their communities.<sup>60</sup> Their role as local spokespeople for the party brought them closer to the state apparatus, yet they remained detached from decision-making centers due to their geographical and vocational distance. Their role involved mediating between norm-making and decision-making bodies, with limited participation. As subordinates to the party's decision-making bodies, they were mobilized as products and conveyors of "Kemalism," tasked with spreading the regime's ideas to the "provinces."

Through social distinction and their association with the single-party government, they participated in the "field of power" or the "dominant classes," albeit from a subordinate fraction. They were the spokespeople and orators, embodying what might be described as the "dominated fraction of the dominant class."<sup>61</sup> A typical example of this group is the "intellectuals," the most common translation of "*münevver*."<sup>62</sup> This dissertation also aims to problematize this translation and reflect on the commonalities and differences between the Turkish "*münevver*" and "intellectuals."

The main role of People's Preachers was to "enlighten" (*tenvir*) people, and they were often subsumed into the category of "*münevver*" in party correspondence. Both terms came from the same root, "light." The Turkish Language Reform replaced both words with allegedly "pure-Turkish" substitutes (*aydınlalma* and *aydın*) in the early 1930s. In present-day Turkish, "*münevver*" is used interchangeably with "intellectual" and reflects a social status linked to knowledge and education.<sup>63</sup> Initially, it was a qualifying adjective meaning "lighted up" or "illuminated."<sup>64</sup> It gradually evolved to refer to a specific social group, indicating "social characteristics, cultural preferences, and psychological traits."<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> *Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>61</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "Champ du pouvoir et division du travail de domination. Texte manuscrit inédit ayant servi de support de cours au Collège de France, 1985-1986," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 190, no. 5 (2011); François Denord, "Classe(s) dominante(s)," in *Dictionnaire international Bourdieu*, ed. Gisèle Sapiro et al. (Paris : CNRS éditions, 2020).

<sup>62</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "Champ du pouvoir et division du travail de domination," 129. The most recent dictionary of the Turkish Language Institute translates *münevver* as "*aydın, aydınlatılmış, and aydın kimse*." "*Aydın*" on the other hand, means "*kültürlü, okumuş, görgünlü, ileri düşünceli kimse, münevver, ziyalı, entelektüel*." "*aydın*," in *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*, ed. Mustafa Argunşah et al. (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2011).

<sup>63</sup> "Türk Dil Kurumu Güncel Sözlük," Türk Dil Kurumu, 2023, <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>.

<sup>64</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon: Shewing in English the Significations of the Turkish Terms* (Constantinople: A. H. Boyajian, 1890).

<sup>65</sup> Jean-Baptiste Comby and Julie Pagis, "Introduction. Politiques de catégorisation du monde social," *Politiques de communication* 10, no. 1 (2018).



The term “*münevver*” reflected foreign debates and models about “intellectuals.” “Intellectuals” emerged as a modern social category in France in the 1890s. A group of French academics, writers, and journalists reacted to the injustice of the court case against Alfred Dreyfus by publishing the Manifesto of the Intellectuals.<sup>66</sup> They intervened in the political sphere by organizing petitions in the name of their self-ascribed social status as “intellectuals.” The genesis of this social category was embedded in the structural transformations of the “intellectual field” at the intersection of the editorial and the academic fields of late-nineteenth-century France. The signatories of the Manifesto could express their disapproval of Dreyfus’s condemnation thanks to the relative autonomy of the “intellectual field.”<sup>67</sup>

Regarding the historiography of the late Ottoman Empire and early republican Turkey, studies focused on “intellectual history” by analyzing intellectual figures such as famous writers and artists, a group of lettered elites considered *a priori* “intellectuals” or literary and philosophical publishing venues.<sup>68</sup> In other words, emphasis on the “great men,” and sometimes women, dominated the history of intellectuals.<sup>69</sup> While the contribution to their claimed research fields is not negligible, the emphasis on “great men” (of letters) led to the dissimulation of intermediary intellectual figures such as People’s Preachers.

Among works that paid particular attention to the emergence of “intellectuals” in the late Ottoman Empire, we can observe a widespread emphasis on most influential writers, journalists, artists, and opinion-makers.<sup>70</sup> Leyla Dakhli showed that it was not through the

---

<sup>66</sup> Christophe Charle, *Birth of the Intellectuals : 1880-1900*, trans. David Fernbach and G. M. Goshgarian (Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity, 2015), 2-3.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>68</sup> Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 15-19; Erdal Kaynar, *L'héroïsme de la vie moderne: Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930) en son temps*, (Paris: Peeters, 2021); Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l'Empire ottoman: Ebuşşiya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps* (Peeters Publishers, 2023); James D. Ryan, “The Republic of Others: Opponents of Kemalism in Turkey’s Single Party Era, 1919-1950” (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2017) (10683539); Daniel Kolland, “Making and Universalizing New Time: A History of the Late Ottoman-Turkish Magazine *Servet-i Fünûn* (1891-1914)” (Ph.D., Freie Universität Berlin, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Nazan Maksudyan, ““This Is a Man’s World?”: On Fathers and Architects,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 21, no. 4 (2019).

<sup>70</sup> Dyalah Hamzah, “Introduction: The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood,” in *The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood*, ed. Dyalah Hamzah (London: Routledge, 2013), 1; Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914*, The California World History Library, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 44; See also Anne-Laure Dupont, “What is a Kātib ‘āmm? The

movement of the Young Ottomans of the 1860s but through the 1908 Revolution that the social figure of the “intellectual” emerged.<sup>71</sup> While the word “intellectual” did not have an equivalent in the Arabic language of the period, the three registers key to the emergence of the concept in France, namely social, cultural, and political, existed among men of letters in Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria) starting from the Second Constitutional Monarchy.<sup>72</sup>

In his dissertation, Özgür Türesay studied an important Turkish-speaking Muslim intellectual of the late Ottoman era, Ebüziyya Tevfik (1849–1913), and discussed the pertinence of using the term “intellectual.” Türesay noticed that Ebüziyya Tevfik did not correspond to the “intellectual” as it was understood in sociological and historical studies on European contexts. As a result, he opted for talking about “intellectual elites” and qualifying people according to their “competing intellectual activities” such as “men of letters” (*edip*), “men of pen” (*erbâb-ı kalem* and/or *eshâb-ı kalem*), “writer” (*muharrir*), “journalist” (*gazeteci*, *gazete muharriri*), publicist (*nâşir*), printer or printing house owner (*matbaacı*), “poet” (*şâir*), or “prose writer” (*münşî*).<sup>73</sup> Ultimately, Türesay qualified Ebüziyya Tevfik as a “man of Enlightenment” (*homme des Lumières*).<sup>74</sup> While the Enlightenment and its echoes in the Ottoman intellectual field were key to Türesay’s study, he did not discuss the relationship between the emic term “*münevver*” and the Enlightenment. He did not link the latter to the emergence of “*münevver*” as a social category of the early Republican political discourse. Lastly, Erdal Kaynar noticed that in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, there existed an intrinsic relationship between publishing and being an “intellectual.”<sup>75</sup> Publishing opinion

---

Status of Men of Letters and the Conception of Language According to Jurjī Zaydān,” *Middle Eastern Literatures* 13, no. 2 (2010): 181; Omnia El Shakry, “Rethinking Arab Intellectual History: Epistemology, Historicism, Secularism,” *Modern Intellectual History* 18, no. 2 (2021): 551; Erdal Kaynar, “The Almighty Power of the Written Word: Political Conceptions of the Press at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” in *Penser, agir et vivre dans l’Empire ottoman et en Turquie: Études réunies pour François Georgeon*, ed. Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar, Turcica (Paris, Louvain, Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 160.

<sup>71</sup> Leyla Dakhli, *Une génération d’intellectuels arabes. Syrie et Liban (1908-1940)* (Paris: Karthala, 2009), 7.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Özgür Türesay, “Etre intellectuel à la fin de l’Empire ottoman : Ebüziyya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps” (Ph.D. INALCO, 2008), 15-16.

<sup>74</sup> Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l’Empire ottoman: Ebuzziyya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps*, (Leiden : Brill, 2023), 458.

<sup>75</sup> Erdal Kaynar, “The Almighty Power of the Written Word: Political Conceptions of the Press at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” 160.

articles was seen by lettered milieus as a political action following the expansion of the printing press.<sup>76</sup> In a similar manner, Kaynar focused on the emergence of the figure of the “intellectual” rather than the emergence of a specific social category to talk about this figure. He also noted that the division between the “enlightened elite” and “ignorant mass” was key to the educational vision of late Ottoman intellectuals.<sup>77</sup>

Against this background, it is interesting to examine how intermediary figures like the People’s Preachers fit into this equation in which the elites educate the masses. Erik-Jan Zürcher translated “*münevver*” as “enlightened elites.” According to him:

The Kemalist regime defined itself as a revolutionary one, albeit one that brought about revolutionary modernization in an orderly and top-down fashion – “*inkılap*” (the word used for the orderly revolution of the planets) rather than “*ihtilâl*” (riot, or rebellion, the Ottoman word used for the French revolution). In its efforts to legitimize its actions and mobilize support for these, it created an antithesis between its own progressive and enlightened character and this concept of the religiously inspired reactionary, who aimed to take Turkey back to a dark past. In this conceptualization, the people were assumed to be almost a tabula rasa, an innocent “*masum halk*” that, due to its lack of education, could be either guided towards modernity by an enlightened elite (the *münevver*, later *aydın*) or led astray by reactionaries.<sup>78</sup>

Alekos Lamprou, in his work on People’s Houses, showed how the dichotomy between the “majority of the population” and the “elites” or “intellectuals” was critical to the “People’s Education.”<sup>79</sup> Doğan Gürpınar, in his *A Short History of Intellectuals in Turkey*, adopted a universalist definition of “intellectuals” to cover a long period (1860–2000) without paying attention to the evolution of emic categories used for the cultural producers participating in politics. Gürpınar identified the Young Ottomans as the beginning of the history of “intellectuals” in the Ottoman Empire and emphasized the role of press debates.<sup>80</sup> Gürpınar’s

---

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Erdal Kaynar, *L'héroïsme de la vie moderne: Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930) en son temps* (Paris: Peeters, 2021), 371.

<sup>78</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, “The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?,” 1-2.

<sup>79</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 45.

<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, he excluded a systematic analysis of this editorial milieus and reproduced early republican clichés about the “apolitical” character of one of the most famous intellectual magazines of the period. Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye’de Aydın’ın Kısa Tarihi* (Istanbul: Nesil, 2013), 45-47. Daniel Kolland argues that *Riches of Sciences* was not an apolitical magazine. “In a period when political discussion could not be held in public, such linguistic, literary, and artistic issues were proxies for larger, ideological and identity confrontations and ruptures within the late Ottoman society.” Daniel Kolland, “Making and Universalizing New Time,” 150.

research was ambitious, but the sources regarding the early republican era were limited to published ones.<sup>81</sup> Despite these setbacks, Gürpınar’s work points to one crucial observation, which will be further developed throughout this dissertation. The critique of one “ideal type of intellectual” or a “figure of intellectual” played a crucial role in various kinds of political movements throughout the history of contemporary Turkey.<sup>82</sup>

Ali Dikici’s research emphasized the centrality of the *münevver-halk* dichotomy in shaping and legitimizing early republican reforms but focused primarily on elite perceptions of the ‘people’ (*halk*). Dikici considered the other end of the dichotomy, *münevver* or *aydın*—terms he translated as ‘elites’ or ‘intellectuals’—self-evident.<sup>83</sup> Alexandros Lamprou referred to the ‘people’ (*halk*) as the ‘CHP’s collective other,’ but left ‘*münevver*’-a term that signifies a certain group within the society-without commentary.<sup>84</sup> Esin Ertürk Acar, stressed the primacy of the ‘Enlightenment’ in the discourse about teachers as ‘enlightened enlighteners.’<sup>85</sup>

Regarding the scholarship on “*münevver*,” translation scholar Azra Erhat’s 1982 essay was inspirational. Erhat commented on a speech delivered by Mustafa Kemal in 1925 on “*münevver*” but refused to “translate” the speech from Ottoman Turkish to Modern Turkish. Instead, she provided a transliteration and a commentary.<sup>86</sup> Since the main topic of Mustafa Kemal’s speech was the role of “*münevver*,” Erhat provided a detailed analysis of this specific concept and its evolution between the Ottoman Empire and republican Turkey. According to Erhat, “*münevver*” was not exactly a translation of “intellectuals” but a generic term used to talk about the “Ottoman men of consequence, the ruling class” (*Osmanlı devlet ricalı, yönetici sınıf*).<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> Gürpınar limited his research on the Ottoman era to secondary or already transliterated sources. His analysis of the republican era predominantly leaned on edited books, excluding press articles and unpublished archives. The most mobilized sources published in the 1970s were Berna Moran and Şerif Mardin. Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye’de Aydın’ın Kısa Tarihi*, 60-61.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-59.

<sup>83</sup> Ali Dikici, “Early Republican Reforms from the Perspective of Elite vs. the People with Particular Reference to Alphabet and Language Reforms” (MA Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1996), viii.

<sup>84</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 12.

<sup>85</sup> Esin Ertürk Acar, “Poor Enlighteners: Pedagogy, Politics and Elementary School Teachers in the Early Republican Era” (Ph.D. Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2022), 154.

<sup>86</sup> Azra Erhat, *Osmanlı Münevverinden Türk Aydınına* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2023 [2002]), 3.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

Instead of “adopting a sociological definition of intellectuals and their milieu, which runs the risk of reproducing obsolete social categories,” my research wants to understand the crystallization of the category of “*münevver*” in Turkey during the single-party era.<sup>88</sup> By immersing itself in the archives of the party’s provincial organization and the early republican press, this dissertation also questions the extent to which the single party’s efforts to shape the citizens of the nascent republic contributed to the crystallization of the category of “*münevver*.”

Building on previous studies adopting a “state-in-society” approach to the People’s Houses, I move the focus from People’s Houses as “spaces of socialization” to spaces of education and social differentiation. The People’s Preachers and People’s Houses were part of the early republican regime’s popular pedagogy targeting adults. Delving into the history of the People’s Preacher’s allows us to investigate the popular pedagogy of the single-party regime aiming to politically train and educate adult citizens to complement the education of “future generations” at schools. The People’s Preachers and their public lectures provide insight into the relationship between education and persuasion during this era by enhancing our comprehension of provincial elites in a time characterized by significant transformation within a post-imperial and revolutionary setting. While exploring the popular pedagogy of the single-party regime, this dissertation aims to contribute to the history of social categorizations.

---

<sup>88</sup> “Si l’historien veut adopter une définition sociologique des milieux intellectuels, il risque de reproduire des classements sociaux obsolètes (ce que les contemporains reconnaissent comme élite culturelle, soit, pour une large part, une élite académique), ou, en sens inverse, de renouer avec une vision purement individuelle de l’innovation culturelle et de privilégier excessivement les avant-gardes, comme l’on fait traditionnellement l’histoire littéraire ou l’histoire de l’art.” Christophe Charle, “Intellectuels, Bildungsbürgertum et professions au XIXème siècle,” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 106, no. 1 (1995): 86.

The historiography of the single-party period in Turkey has long been concentrated on “modernization” and “Westernization” projects that underlined the “importation of European institutions and norms” into contemporary Turkey by modernizing elites.<sup>89</sup> The history of the early Republic of Turkey was long narrated as the story of Westernized or “super-Westernized” political elites transforming a “traditional” society. The modernist perspective offered a supportive narrative for the project.<sup>90</sup> The postmodernist point of view approached it critically.<sup>91</sup> In the wake of critical analyses of the modernization project, there have been contributions on resistances, rejections, and negotiations with the will of the central state.<sup>92</sup> In both cases, the legacies and aftereffects of the decade of war and the genocide that preceded the republic’s formation were neglected.

The official historiography itself marked the onset of “modern Turkey” at the beginning of the Turkish “War of Independence,” in May 1919. The period before May 1919 was neglected in the famous *Speech (Nutuk)* by Mustafa Kemal delivered before the Turkish Grand National Assembly in October 1927. Until the publication of Erik Jan Zürcher’s *The Unionist Factor*, there was a scholarly consensus on the rupture between the late Ottoman and early republican liberal and constitutional movements and a “narrative monopoly” concerning the history of the republic’s formative years.<sup>93</sup> Zürcher showed the continuity of between the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, CUP) and the CHP in terms of cadres and political values from 1905 to 1945. Nevertheless, he also highlighted the struggle between

---

<sup>89</sup> Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard, *L’art de l’État en Turquie : arrangements de l’action publique de la fin de l’Empire ottoman à nos jours*, 16.

<sup>90</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961); Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1964).

<sup>91</sup> Taha Parla, *Türk Siyasi Kültürünün Resmî Kaynakları: Kemalist Tek-Parti İdeolojisi ve CHP’nin Altı Ok’u*, (Istanbul: İletişim); Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi’nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*.

<sup>92</sup> Gavin D. Brockett, *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk : Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*; Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); İlbey Özdemirci, *Fört Şapkalı Şih: Cumhuriyet Sekülerleşmesi ve Taşra* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2022).

<sup>93</sup> Hülya Adak, ““Ötekileştiremediğimiz Kendimizin Keşfi” 20. Yüzyıl Otobiyografik Anlatıları ve Ermeni Tehciri,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* Spring, no. 5 (2007): 242.

different political views and factions within the same political movement and situated Mustafa Kemal, known as the republic's founder, within these struggles.<sup>94</sup>

By studying the history of the early republican era as a “history of the aftermath,” I follow Erik Jan Zürcher's approach in showing the continuity between the CUP and the CHP. The continuity between Unionism and Kemalism allows to highlight common traits between the two political formations, namely irredentism, resentment against the Christian minorities, and a resulting discourse of revenge, and the discovery of Anatolia as the true Turkish homeland.<sup>95</sup> This connection between ‘Unionists’ and ‘Kemalists’ made the management of non-Turkish and non-Muslim populations of Anatolia and handling the repercussions of the genocide central to both the “national struggle” movement and the early republican reformism.

A recently written historiographic review article by İlker Aytürk criticized historians who emphasized the continuity of collective state violence – among other things – from the Second Constitutional Monarchy to the early republican era.<sup>96</sup> Other articles and works published in the wake of Aytürk's intervention have focused on two main areas: on the one hand, the issue of secularization implemented by the single-party regime, and on the other, mass violence primarily committed against non-Muslim populations in Anatolia. In a recent issue celebrating the republic's centenary, Alp Yenen published another review article titled “The Curse of Unionism” (*İttihatçılığın Laneti*) commenting on the continuity between Unionism and Kemalism and condemning scholars who emphasized the continuity of state-sponsored mass violence between 1908 and 1945 as “radical post-Kemalism.”<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 2023).

<sup>95</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, “Renewal and Silence: Post-war Unionist and Kemalist Rhetoric on the Armenian Genocide,” in *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 196.

<sup>96</sup> Aytürk's main emphasis was on historiography on state secularization referring to works such as Şerif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) and Nilüfer Göle's Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). However, he did not exclude works addressing state violence, such as those by Mete Tunçay and Erik Jan Zürcher. It is worth noting that Aytürk does not reference anything about the Kurds, Armenians, or other “subaltern” populations but does include subaltern studies within the realm of “post-Kemalist” scholarship. İlker Aytürk, “Post-post Kemalizm: Yeni Bir Paradigmayı Beklerken,” *Birikim* 319 (2015), 38.

<sup>97</sup> Yenen argued that the mass violence against “minorities” was a natural by-product of any “anti-imperialist” struggles and invited scholars to explore other dimensions. Alp Yenen, “İttihatçılığın Laneti: İmparatorluk'tan



These efforts to relativize the role of state-sponsored mass violence in the making of modern Turkey were part of a backlash against the decline of scholarly genocide denial in the last twenty years.<sup>98</sup> State-sponsored mass violence, including the Armenian Genocide, was the “elephant in the room of Ottoman studies” for a long while.<sup>99</sup> The first wave of revisionist scholarship (within Ottoman studies) was on the preparation and implementation of genocidal measures to counter the denialist narratives.<sup>100</sup> Starting in the 2000s, there have been more and more studies on the denial and the memory of the genocide.<sup>101</sup>

Memory studies participated in this turn. Fethiye Çetin and Ayşegül Altınay wrote about kidnapped and Turkified grandmothers during the Armenian Genocide.<sup>102</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek worked on a large corpus of memoirs to show different episodes of “denial of violence” in the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey in the *longue durée*, within which the Armenian Genocide played a pivotal and structuring role.<sup>103</sup> Duygu Tasalp worked on the memoirs of

---

Cumhuriyet’e Geçiş Döneminin Tarihyazımında Bazı Meseleler,” *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 164 (2023): 89. The arguments of Yenen share similarities with those of Hakan Yavuz on the classification of genocide. Edited volume on the history of the First World War, edited by Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad, showed these similarities. In that same volume, which was published on the centenary of the Armenian Genocide, Yavuz critiques the use of the term genocide for the massacre of Armenians during the First World War. Instead, he uses the euphemism “relocation” to translate “deportation” (*tehcir*). See Alp Yenen, “The “Young Turk Zeitgeist” in the Middle Eastern Uprisings in the Aftermath of World War I,” in *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, ed. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmed (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015). See also Hakan Yavuz, “A Topography of Positions in the Turkish-Armenian Debate,” in *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, ed. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmed (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015); Hakan Yavuz, “Self-hating Turks and the Genocide Debate,” *Daily Sabah*, 7 February 2019, <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2019/02/07/self-hating-turks-and-the-genocide-debate>.

<sup>98</sup> For an interesting review of Ottoman studies regarding the Armenian Genocide, see Ariel Salzmann, “The Education of an Ottomanist: Donald Quataert and the Narrative Arc of Ottoman Historiography, 1985-2011,” in *History From Below: A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert*, ed. Selim Karahasanoglu and Deniz Cenk Demir (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016).

<sup>99</sup> Donald Quataert, “The Massacres of Ottoman Armenians and the Writing of Ottoman History,” review of *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, Donald Bloxham, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, no. 2 (2006): 249.

<sup>100</sup> Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).

<sup>101</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>102</sup> Fethiye Çetin, *Le livre de ma grand-mère. Suivi de Les fontaines de Havav*, trans. Marguerite Demird (Paris: Paranthèses, 2006); Ayşe Gül Altınay and Fethiye Çetin, *Torunlar*, (Istanbul: Metis, 2009); See also Ayşe Gül Altınay, Arlene Avakian, and Fethiye Çetin, “‘The Space Between Us’ Feminist Conversations on Genocide, Survival and Gender’,” in *Critical Approaches to Genocide: History, Politics, and Aesthetics of 1915*, ed. Hülya Adak, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Ronald Grigor Suny (London, New York: Routledge, 2024).

<sup>103</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009*.



prominent Unionists, some published in the single-party era, and showed how the Armenian Genocide, more precisely its justification, was an “issue” that also structured the conflicts between different political camps in the early republican era. She also showed the “major invariants” of the treatment of the question of genocide before and after the death of Mustafa Kemal, which consisted of justifying the crime and refusing responsibility.<sup>104</sup>

This turn also impacted the scholarship on the First World War and its aftermath. A flourishing literature increasingly gives space to the particularities of the Anatolian experience, which included a genocide that Bernard Lewis had called “the terrible Holocaust of 1915.”<sup>105</sup> The volume edited by Kerem Öktem, Hans-Lukas Kieser, and Maurus Reinkowski, for instance, assigned a central role to annihilative policies against non-Muslims and the economic implementation of the genocidal process in the history of the First World War.<sup>106</sup> Yiğit Akın’s *When the War Came Home* considered the impact of the “returning Armenians” in the mobilization for the “War of Independence.”<sup>107</sup> Lastly, Raymond Kévorkian showed the deadly consequences of the national struggle (1918–1922) for the surviving Armenians in all Anatolian provinces.<sup>108</sup> These contributions allow us to see the legacy of the genocide in the formation of republican Turkey.

Concerning the legacy and continuation of mass violence against non-Muslims in the formative years of the republic, Lerna Ekmekçioğlu and Talin Suciyan researched the lives of the surviving Armenian communities in early republican Turkey. While Ekmekçioğlu focused on the gendered dimensions of survival in early republican Turkey and Suciyan showed how genocide structured the daily life of both Armenians and descendants of the perpetrator

---

<sup>104</sup> Duygu Tasalp, *Cent ans de négation : les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l’Unionisme à l’Islamisme* (Paris : Karthala, 2024), 242.

<sup>105</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 356; Cited by Ariel Salzmann, “The Education of an Ottomanist: Donald Quataert and the Narrative Arc of Ottoman Historiography, 1985-2011,” 87.

<sup>106</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds., *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

<sup>107</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018), 12.

<sup>108</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide : Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 2023).

communities.<sup>109</sup> The works of scholars like Ümit Kurt, Mehmet Polatel, and Ellinor Morack shed light on the pivotal role that “abandoned property” transactions played in the formative years of the republic.<sup>110</sup> Their research revealed that these transactions were not mere economic exchanges but crucial acts that forged alliances between the central state and provincial elites. These alliances were instrumental in shaping the new republican state, intertwining provincial powerholders’ fates with the national government’s vision and authority.

My dissertation builds on these recent works but aims to demonstrate that the legacy of mass violence extended beyond property transactions and the daily lives of surviving communities. Mass violence also influenced the lifeworlds of early republican provincial elites and their discourse about the ongoing “revolution.” I also draw on the contributions of the historiography of early Republican Turkey as a history of secular modernization and its discontents.<sup>111</sup> However, I propose to include mass violence in the shaping of republican citizens. If the first twenty years of the Republic of Turkey constitute a story of modernization, the state-led mass violence was a part and parcel of it. If People’s Preachers and People’s Houses were key components of the “social engineering” aspect of “modernization” process, their history intersected with the aftermath of genocide.

This dissertation aims to understand the relationship between the production of consent, persuasion, and education by the state and state violence through the case study of People’s Preachers. While People’s Preachers were given roles akin to those of educated elites, referred to as “*münevver*,” like guiding people on the right path and educating them, they also “disciplined” (*tedip*) them by normalizing and legitimizing state violence. It is worth recalling

---

<sup>109</sup> Lerna Ekmekcioglu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016); Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016).

<sup>110</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction : the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London, New York: Continuum, 2011); Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017); Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province* (London, New York: Harvard University Press, 2021).

<sup>111</sup> Camilla T. Nereid, “Kemalism on the Catwalk: The Turkish Hat Law of 1925,” *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 3 (2011); İlbey Özdemirci, *Fört Şapkalı Şiḥ: Cumhuriyet Sekülerleşmesi ve Taşra*.

Charles Tilly's classic article, which likens the state to organized crime and reflects on how the state's soft and hard hands intertwine to create the monopoly of violence.<sup>112</sup>

Governments' provision of protection, by this standard, often qualifies as racketeering. To the extent that the threats against which a given government protects its citizens are imaginary or are consequences of its own activities, the government has organized a protection racket. Since governments themselves commonly simulate, stimulate, or even fabricate threats of external war and since the repressive and extractive activities of governments often constitute the largest current threats to the livelihoods of their own citizens, many governments operate in essentially the same way as racketeers. There is, of course, a difference. Racketeers, by the conventional definition, operate without the sanctity of governments.<sup>113</sup>

Tilly's analogy between state and organized crime is fruitful in grasping the nation-state-building process in early republican Turkey and the role of People's Preachers in this process. Tilly distinguishes the main activities of state agents into four categories: "war-making" against external enemies, "state-making" against internal enemies, "protection" of the citizens understood as "clients" from their enemies, and "extraction."<sup>114</sup> In a similar vein, Siniša Malešević reflected upon the creation of institutions and organizations in charge of the production of consent among the crucial steps of the "cumulative bureaucratization of coercion."<sup>115</sup>

Reflecting on the persistence of war and genocide within the framework of this dissertation means paying further attention to the platform on which People's Preachers addressed their audience by considering the built environment in which the lectures were delivered, such as People's Houses. It also entails heeding attention to their biographies before the proclamation of the republic to investigate to what extent the experience of war and genocide impacted their lives. Finally, it means closely reading their speeches to see the traces of what happened or what is happening while they speak.

The genocide made the birth town of the mother of Hasene Ilgaz (the preacher we met on the first pages) indiscernible. To trace its memory, I took inspiration from works in the

---

<sup>112</sup> Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmayer and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 171.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>115</sup> Siniša Malešević, "Organised Violence and Modernity," in *The Sociology of War and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 143.

anthropology of violence such as Yael Navaro’s “negative methodology” helping us detect a denied event of mass violence in its aftermath.<sup>116</sup> For anthropologists, this means paying attention to how the genocide “haunts” current society and endows people with peculiar activities around its memory, such as hunting for Armenian treasures in pauperized Kurdish provinces in the 2000s Turkey or attributing peculiar meanings to usurped stone houses which belonged to decimated populations.<sup>117</sup>

Since my dissertation focuses mainly on how People’s Preachers explain and legitimize the new regime, my method of tracing mass violence was less sophisticated. In the absence of a clear terminology for what we call today a “genocide” (i.e., Armenian Genocide), I looked for references to the long war experience and depictions of its violence, references to the imperial social order, the figure of the internal enemy, and prescriptions for the necessary treatment of an internal enemy in their speeches.

In so doing, I drew heavily on Talin Suciyan’s research on *Armenians in Modern Turkey*. Suciyan utilized the concept of “post-genocidal habitus” to describe how the systematic destruction of Armenians in the final years of the Ottoman Empire created a structure that allowed the continued persecution of Armenians into the early republican era. This persecution evolved in the republican period: Armenian women were still kidnapped, the remaining Armenians were pushed out of Asia Minor and Northern Mesopotamia, their guaranteed rights, such as opening schools in the provinces, were restricted, property confiscations persisted, and Armenians faced daily harassment and physical attacks throughout the 1930s and 1950s.<sup>118</sup>

The Armenian Genocide, as a social and mental structure, played a significant role in shaping public policies during the single-party period, particularly regarding the country’s official language (Turkish) and its use by citizens whose primary and native language was not Turkish, through the campaigns of “Citizen, Speak Turkish!” (*Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş*). The

---

<sup>116</sup> Yael Navaro, “The Aftermath of Mass Violence: A Negative Methodology,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>117</sup> Zerrin Ozlem Biner, “Acts of Defacement, Memories of Loss: Ghostly Effects of the Armenian Crisis in Mardin, Southeastern Turkey,” *History and Memory* 22, no. 2 (2010); Alice von Bieberstein, “Treasure/Fetish/Gift: Hunting for ‘Armenian Gold’ in Post-genocide Turkish Kurdistan,” *Subjectivity* 10, no. 2 (2017). See also: Yael Navaro-Yashin et al., eds., *Reverberations: Violence Across Time and Space* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021).

<sup>118</sup> Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*, 200.

public burning of *Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, a book published by Austrian Jewish novelist Franz Werfel, in the Armenian quarter of Istanbul in December 1935 as an intimidation tactic against the surviving Armenian communities of the city, can also be interpreted as a continuation of the genocidal process during the republican era. Emmanuel Szurek showed how this campaign targeted Armenians as well as Jews in Istanbul a few months after the organized pogroms against the Jews of Thrace.<sup>119</sup> Even the implementation of the Surname Law to non-Muslim and non-Turkish citizens of Turkey was marked by tensions of a post-genocidal context in which the homogenization of the population contradicted the will to demarcate those who were considered non-assimilable.<sup>120</sup> The history of the CHP can be further understood by linking the continuous persecution of non-Muslim and non-Turkish citizens during the single-party era. Viewing People’s Preachers in light of these events can help create a more comprehensive narrative by considering state-sponsored mass violence and the processes by which these actions were legitimized through the media.

### Sources and Methodology

The empirical focus of this dissertation is on People’s Preachers and the lectures organized at People’s Houses. Party archives lack documents on these lectures post-1945, likely due to Prime Minister İsmet İnönü’s announcement to return to a multiparty regime, which impacted CHP’s use of resources and workforce. Emphasis is placed on the period between 1931 and 1945, but the research sometimes extends back to the 1920s to highlight continuities between the CUP and CHP, and between late-Ottoman Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) and People’s Houses. This includes efforts in political education during the “War of Independence.”

Starting the analysis in 1918 allows for an examination of the developments that led to the institutionalization of popular pedagogy and political communication. This temporal frame enables us to understand the key events that prompted the party leadership to create the People’s Preachers Organization. While the years between 1918 and 1931 focused on political

---

<sup>119</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, “Autodafé à Istanbul. La première crise négationniste de la Turquie nationaliste (1935),” *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, no. 105 (2022).

<sup>120</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, ““Yan, Of, Ef, Viç, İç, İs, Dis, Pulos ...”: the Surname Reform, the “Non-Muslims,” and the Politics of Uncertainty in Post-genocidal Turkey,” in *Arabic and its Alternatives. Religious minorities and their Languages in the Emerging Nation States of the Middle East (1920-1950)*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Karène Sanchez Summerer, and Tijmen Baarda (Brill, 2020).

communication through public speeches and mass rallies, this dissertation emphasizes the lifetime of the People’s Preachers Organization, which was founded in September 1931 and disappeared from the archives around 1945. In this sense, the life of the “organization” roughly corresponds to what Zürcher called “the heyday of Kemalism” (1926–1945).<sup>121</sup>

A significant portion of the biographical documents about People’s Preachers were application files sent to the CHP General Secretary to run for legislative elections on the party’s lists. Consequently, many documents dated 1950 were utilized because they shed light on the biographies of the People’s Preachers prior to 1950, during the single-party era.

### **a. Overview of the Primary Sources**

Given that this dissertation focuses on a partisan organization, most sources are drawn from the CHP archives preserved in the Political Parties Collections of the Turkish State Archives’ Republican Archive. I prioritized documents directly related to the People’s Preachers, including lectures held in People’s Houses and reports on the organization of national holidays and other politically significant meetings. These reports contain examples of speeches occasionally delivered by People’s Preachers and People’s House members.

Besides, monthly and weekly magazines published by People’s Houses, local and national newspapers, and guidebooks printed by the party to lead and assist the activities of People’s Houses and People’s Preachers were extensively used for the dissertation. Some People’s Preachers published their memoirs in the 1930s or later years. These memoirs were also used as primary sources. The books were published by the CHP in the series *Speeches (Konuşmalar)* were also included into the analysis.<sup>122</sup>

Most preachers and members of People’s Houses were part of local educated elites but remained invisible figures. They rarely published their memoirs or donated their private archives. Only one People’s Preacher, none other than Hasene Ilgaz, later became a member of parliament and deposited the documents she collected during her parliamentary years in the

---

<sup>121</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 4. Cited by: Emmanuel Szurek, “Gouverner par les mots: une histoire linguistique de la Turquie nationaliste” (Ph.D. EHESS, 2013), 2.

<sup>122</sup> *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, October 1940); *Konuşmalar: Broşür 2*, (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, July 1941); *Konuşmalar: Broşür 3*, (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, October 1942).

Women's Works Library. Among these private archives, there are some sources, albeit limited, from her time as a People's Preacher. İffet Halim Oruz (1904–1993), assigned as a People's Preacher in Istanbul, published her speeches between 1927 and 1936 under the title *My Friends!*.<sup>123</sup> Cemile Aytaç (1909–2007), a member of the Elazığ People's House, published her speeches given in various places (some undated) sixty years later.<sup>124</sup> All these books were used to varying degrees for this dissertation. Since most speeches by Cemile Aytaç and Hasene Ilgaz are undated, only those with dates or those whose dates could be inferred from the context of the speech relevant to the dissertation were examined.

## **b. Analyzing People's Preachers Organization as a Group**

Given the scarcity of identity documents, private archives, publications, and memoirs, the only source that allows us to understand the "Organization" of People's Preachers as a cohesive group are lists of People's Preachers sent to the CHP General Secretary in 1931 and 1938. These lists provide the total number of preachers each year and reveal their professional and social distribution. According to these lists, around 1,400 preachers were selected in 1931 and around 2,000 in 1938. The first list was produced before the Surname Reform of 1934. Hence, the preachers in those lists do not have a surname. The second list contains surnames. The absence of patronyms before the Surname Law makes it difficult to see if the same people were selected as preachers in both years. Many men and women had the same names, and the preachers most often had similar professions. Since most People's Preachers were civil servants working for different ministries, they were appointed to different provinces throughout their careers. For this reason, it is also difficult to say that Ahmet Bey in Sivas in 1931 and another Ahmet in Sivas in 1938 are the same person.

I compiled a database containing the names of preachers documented in 1931 and 1938. This database served as a starting point for researching life stories and speeches of preachers using party archives and press materials. I was able to obtain short autobiographies of about thirty-five preachers, including their names, surnames, birthplaces, dates of birth, occupations, education levels, last diplomas, diploma dates, foreign languages spoken, published works,

---

<sup>123</sup> İffet Halim Oruz, *Arkadaşlar!* (İstanbul : Selâmet Basımevi, 1936).

<sup>124</sup> Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl* (İstanbul: Kap, 1996).

addresses, and brief autobiographies detailing their roles in state administration and the party. I created the sample by cross-referencing the preachers database with application files submitted to the CHP secretary from all provinces between 1939 and 1950. Due to patronymic changes, I might have missed preachers who also applied to run for legislative elections. The sample includes eight application files from Kars, five each from Istanbul and Gaziantep, and three from Ankara. The remaining provinces - Aydın, Bolu, Çanakkale, Edirne, Kastamonu, Malatya, Seyhan, Tokat, and Yozgat - have each one application file by a former preacher.

This dissertation aims to use a prosopographic approach to People’s Preachers selected between 1931 and 1938 based on available information and the small sample of preachers. Thus, this prosopography is not based on serial data except for “identity” (*hüviyet*), which was most often understood as professional identity. These adjustments were made because People’s Preachers and most People’s Houses members were relatively invisible in CHP archives. Despite their active involvement for over a decade (1931–1945), the CHP did not produce (or collect and conserve) serialized or serializable identity documents for its members. The identity documents called “record files” (*sicil dosyası*) or short autobiographies (*tercüme-i hal*) were produced when people held a significant position (such as a People’s House head) or applied for one (like becoming a member of parliament).

I identified the most statistically significant social and professional groups within the database of People’s Preachers. Then, I sought out the biographies of preachers in each group, such as teachers and low-ranking officials, landowners, high-ranking officials, and women. This allowed me to create a “social portrait” of People’s Preachers and have a general idea about their social background, trajectories, and the usual steps of a partisan career during the single-party rule.<sup>125</sup> Given the emphasis on knowledge and knowledge transmission in the founding documents of the People’s Preacher’s Organization, I focused particularly on their educational background. I also examined other potential sources of social distinction, such as property or “economic capital.” When information on educational backgrounds was

---

<sup>125</sup> Claire Zalc, “Prosopographie, quel outil pour comparer ?,” in *Dictionnaire historique de la comparaison*, ed. Nicolas Delalande et al. (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2020).



unavailable, I relied on other sources. For instance, if I lacked details on the educational level of a schoolteacher in 1931, I examined the laws regarding the recruitment of schoolteachers.

This approach has its limitations, as it overlooks the potential differences in the educational and social trajectories of each People's Preacher. However, the lists were quite repetitive, and there were similarities in the occupational divide across provinces, districts, and sub-districts. Examining the People's Preachers as a group is reasonable because they all delivered public speeches on behalf of the party simultaneously in all regions of Turkey. While this does not necessarily mean that they are all party members, it does indicate that they are all somehow associated with the party. The People's Preachers Organization provides a representative sample of how the local organization of the Republican People's Party was shaped during the single-party era.

### **c. Building a Corpus of Speeches**

People's Preachers delivered speeches on various occasions. Some speeches were prepared for festive and celebratory occasions such as national holidays and the celebration of the early republican reforms such as the Language Reform and women's electoral franchise. Some speeches were delivered for commemorative occasions, such as the occupation and liberation of a city and town or the commemoration of Mustafa Kemal's death. Some aimed to inform the population about the general framework of the revolution, such as the ones that addressed the concepts of "Independence and Revolution." The CHP General Secretary required speech transcriptions on most occasions. The local sections sent speech transcriptions, summaries, or published speeches in newspapers after the events. Still, these speech transcriptions were not systematically included in the reports.

Some speeches were published in the local and national press. Others were published in People's Houses magazines. In the initial period of this research, I aimed to develop a digitized corpus of these speeches. I scanned around 80 speeches delivered on different occasions, such as the general framework of the revolution and "War of Independence," women's rights, the concept of "people," and "People's Education," different steps of the "War of Independence," liberation of some cities, and national holidays. I could also include around 200 speech transcriptions delivered between 1934 and 1945 to celebrate the Language Revolution digitized by Emmanuel Szurek who kindly shared the corpus with me. I will provide a thematic overview

of this corpus in Part 2. Still, since the corpus is too rich for speeches delivered for this particular celebration, it does not have a thematic balance. It is possible to work on the same corpus or enlarge the one I built by leaning on People's Houses publications and including the speeches delivered between 1939 and 1942 concerning the Second World War. I generally excluded these speeches from my dissertation despite collecting them because of their technical character, on the one hand, and the delays in accessing these sources on the other.

I initially aimed to work with a qualitative data analysis software called MAXQDA, which also enables lexicometric corpus analysis. However, this software cannot lemmatize Turkish words, and conducting a lexicometric analysis on a corpus lacking thematic balance did not seem productive. Despite this, working with MAXQDA provided a general overview of the collected corpus and helped narrow the research scope. I did not systematically examine this corpus, even though I collected around 280 digitized speeches. Instead, I focused on speeches and excerpts thematically linked to the research questions of this dissertation, which lie at the intersection of hegemony and coercion: education and knowledge transmission, on the one hand, and war, law enforcement, counterinsurgency, and state-sponsored mass violence on the other.

## **Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized in three sections. The first section delves into the pedagogic mission and the social categories used to frame ideas and assertions around people's education. The second section delves into a sociographic analysis of People's Preachers, their selection criteria, and motivations and rewards of working for the party. The third section focuses on the role played by war and genocide in the ways in which People's Preachers explained and legitimized early republican reforms through two case studies. These case studies aim at comparing the "civilizing mission" across different provinces.

The first section, "A Pedagogic State?" examines how the party leadership and party-aligned opinion writers transformed the question of consent into a matter of education. Exploring publications and reports on "Education of the Commoners" (*Terbiye-i Avam*) and "People's Education" (*Halk Terbiyesi*) questions the role of pedagogues and the intersection of political education of adults and "propaganda." [Chapter 1](#) reflects on the origins of intellectual discourse, focusing on the responsibility of intellectual elites to educate the masses,

and examines press debates from the late Ottoman Empire and the early Republic. It shows how political meanings attributed to intellectuals emerged and how early Republican efforts transformed this category. [Chapter 2](#), “The Power of the Spoken Word,” analyzes correspondence between the Ministry of Interior and the Directorate of Religious Affairs regarding speech, harmful words, and negative propaganda in public spaces. It highlights the diversity of opposition to the CHP’s single-party rule and presents these documents as a reflection of the central state’s anxiety. [Chapter 3](#) explores writings and life stories of important political decision-makers in the domain of education, namely Nafi Atuf Kansu, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, and Falih Rıfkı Atay, showing the intersection between state pedagogy and popular pedagogy aimed at shaping adult citizens. [Chapter 4](#) provides a detailed analysis of the directives of the People’s Preachers Organization, emphasizing the role of ethos and the social standing of People’s Preachers. [Chapter 5](#) demonstrates how the party leadership and People’s Preachers saw themselves as “*münevver*” and their mission as enlightening common people.

The second part, “The Making of Provincial Kemalism,” begins with [Chapter 6](#), “Setting the Stage,” which outlines the party’s provincial organization. Using a theater metaphor, it examines People’s Houses, party directives, and press articles on preachers’ performances, the content of their lectures, and their audience. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the participants in the Kemalist pedagogical mobilization, their origins, and their gains from preaching for the party. Using lists of People’s Preachers from 1931 and 1938, [Chapter 7](#) quantitatively analyzes their social origins and identifies dominant professional groups within the organization and reflects on their sources of social distinction. [Chapter 8](#) explores the motivations and rewards of preaching, using identity documents and memoirs of People’s Preachers who ran for legislative elections between 1946 and 1950. [Chapter 9](#) delves into party inspection reports, revealing operational disruptions, challenges, and inadequacies within the organization, and highlights issues of power negotiation and resistance in local contexts.

The final section, “Time War(p),” situates the People’s Preachers Organization within its post-war and post-genocidal context. It addresses how vividly the First World War and the genocide were remembered by People’s Preachers when they spoke about the significance of the “revolution.” To trace the imprint of the genocide in the ways People’s Preachers explained the early republican reforms, I changed scales depending on chapters and sub-chapters.

[Chapter 10](#) starts with a theoretical and historiographical overview. Then, it examines biographical information on preachers from distant provinces, highlighting the role of war experience in their life stories and their explanations of ongoing political and social changes.

[Chapter 11](#) focuses on the preachers of Kars, critically analyzing two speeches delivered in 1936 and considering the intersection of biographies and narratives of state violence.

For the continuation of the state-sponsored mass violence in the early republican era, I chose a case study from the period in which the People's Preachers Organization and People's Houses were flourishing, namely the Dersim Massacre, which lasted from March 1937 to September 1938. I looked at the activities of the People's Houses and their members and examined how hegemony and coercion intersected during a time of counterinsurgency.

## I. A Pedagogic State?

---

It is widely acknowledged that society was largely uneducated in the early years of the republic and that one of the most notable achievements of the founding cadres was the establishment of public education despite the constraints imposed by post-war economic conditions. This section examines the individuals involved in the political education of adult citizens, their perceptions of the population, and the mechanisms by which the educated segments of the population were held accountable for the education of the masses.

The first chapter delves into historical records and press archives beyond the CHP's documentation, seeking to comprehend the evolution of a critical social category tasked with educating the masses, namely the "*münevver*." This category, often assumed in the CHP's records and preachers' narratives, is scrutinized through press debates from the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the early years of Republican Turkey. The chapter examines discussions from the 1920s to the 1940s to trace the genealogy of the "*münevver*," a pivotal concept in Kemalist pedagogy.

The second chapter parallels the first by exploring state concerns regarding the "common people" (*halk*) and the significance of oral communication, which prompted the CHP to invest in local spokespeople and educators. The third chapter focuses on mass educators who were instrumental in restructuring the public education system under the Ministry of Education's control and shaping educational practices for adult citizens.

The fourth chapter, "Rhetoric and Political Education," further investigates the directives of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses, analyzing the interplay between pedagogy and rhetoric. Finally, chapter five explores how the CHP progressively expanded the category of "*münevver*" to include people's preachers and members of people's houses and how these preachers embraced the responsibilities associated with being "*münevver*."



## 1. The Question of “Münevver”

---

Münevver

Language of Origin: Arabic

*Münevver*: Lighted up, Illuminated.

*Medine-yi münevver*: The city of Medina<sup>1</sup>

Éclairé,e, illuminé,e

Fem. et pl. *münevver*

*Medine-yi münevver*: La sainte ville de Médine<sup>2</sup>

One of the most recurring terms the CHP leadership used to describe the actors gathered in its provincial sections that delivered lectures and public talks was “*münevver*.” The People’s Preachers were considered *münevver*. The People’s Houses and the party were viewed as *münevver* institutions. The CHP leadership deemed People’s Preachers and People’s Houses members working for People’s Education as “*münevver*,” assigning them intellectual responsibility. The audience of the People’s Preachers was divided between the *münevver* and others, identified as “peasants” and “ordinary-looking citizens.” Support or lack of support for the CHP was seen as an issue of *münevver*-ness.

Many preachers also embraced these designations, seeing their mission as “enlightening” people and striving to attract more “enlightened” people (*münevver*) to work for the People’s Houses. The concepts of “people” (*halk*), “*münevver*” (enlightened elite, intellectual), and “education and upbringing” (*terbiye*) were interconnected within the framework of early republican pedagogy.<sup>3</sup> *Münevver* is often translated as “intellectual” in contemporary studies. Still, “*münevver*” did not have a stabilized meaning in the 1930s.

This chapter aims to understand the meaning of this term and compare it with its current translation, “intellectual,” because this social category is a key component of the Kemalist

---

<sup>1</sup> James W. Redhouse, “*münevver*,” in *A Turkish and English Lexicon: Shewing in English the Significations of the Turkish Terms* (Constantinople: A. H. Boyajian, 1890).

<sup>2</sup> Şemseddin Sami, “*münevver*,” in *Resimli Kamus-i Fransevi : Fransızca’dan Türkçe’ye Lügat-ı Kitabı = Dictionnaire français-turc : illustré de 3000 gravures* (Istanbul: Mihran, 1905), 1238.

<sup>3</sup> For the translation of the term *terbiye*, see also Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt*, 174.

pedagogy. It will analyze dictionary entries and press articles chronologically to provide an overview of public debates about the education of the people and the identity and responsibility of the *münevver* before the foundation of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses.

According to Ottoman dictionaries published at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, "*münevver*" did not have a stabilized meaning corresponding to intellectual, *intellectuel*, or intelligentsia.<sup>4</sup> The term "*münevver*" is derived from the same root as "light" (*nūr*) in Arabic. Dictionary entries from the 1870s and 1880s defined "lighted up"<sup>5</sup> or "shining, sparkling, and glittering."<sup>6</sup> Still, there was also an intellectual signification to *münevver* that Ahmet Vefik Paşa translated as "keen, acute in understanding" as early as 1876.<sup>7</sup> The concept was also used to talk about the city of Medina (*Medine-i Münevvere*), emphasizing its enlightening and sacred qualities. The term *münevver*, used as an adjective, had a distinguishing meaning for people and ways of thinking (*münevver-i ezhān*). In 1905, Şemseddin Sami translated the term with the French *civilisé* "civilized" and the "d'un esprit éclairé."<sup>8</sup>

This first mention of civilization and enlightenment appeared in dictionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century. This meaning evolved to encapsulate, as Alexandros Lamprou noted, the "*münevver*" of the People's Houses: they had a "civilizing mission" in the predominantly Kurdish Southeastern Anatolia.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the term "*münevver*" did not point to a coherent social group comparable to "intellectuals" until the publication of *Resimli Kamus-ı Osmanî* in 1912.<sup>10</sup> Seydi Ali Bey, who published this latter dictionary, mentioned

---

<sup>4</sup> Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye'de Aydın'ın Kısa Tarihi*; Daniel Kolland, "Making and Universalizing New Time.," Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l'Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Teyfik (1849-1913) et son temps.*

<sup>5</sup> James W. Redhouse, *Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman - English Dictionary* (Istanbul: Sev, [1890] 2000), 895.

<sup>6</sup> Ahmet Vefik Paşa, "*münevver*," in *Lehçe-yi Osmanî* (Istanbul: Tab'hane-yi Amire, 1293 [1876]), 1046.

<sup>7</sup> "rüşen" *ibid.*; James W. Redhouse, *Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman - English Dictionary*, 440.

<sup>8</sup> "éclairé, illumine, d'un esprit éclairé, civilisé. *Medine-i münevvere*: la sainte ville de Médine," Şemseddin Sami, "*münevver*," 1238.

<sup>9</sup> "In the south-east, the Houses' 'mission civilisatrice' was primarily and profoundly a mission assimilatrice, 'civilization' and 'Turkishness' were interchangeably used by the bureaucrats." Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 71.

<sup>10</sup> "Nurlu, parlak, derahşān, rüşen, pertevendāz, Medine-i Münevvere," Ahmet Vefik Paşa, "*münevver*," 1046. "tenvir iden, nurlandıran, rüşen iden, münevver-i ezhān," Muallim Naci Efendi, "*münevver*," in *Lûgat-ı Naci* (1894), 1894. "tenvir iden, nurlandıran, rüşen iden," Mehmed Salahi, "*münevver*," in *Kamus-ı Osmanî*



“enlightenment” (*münevveriyyet, münevverlik*) and the “ideas of *münevvers*” (*münevveriyet efkârı*) in his entry. While the dictionary entries throughout thirty years are not enough to verify the conceptual change, the evolution traceable in Ottoman and bilingual dictionaries points to a semantic change.

The dictionary entries are informative in showing the evolution of the term “*münevver*,” which was broadly used in early republican sources – from archives to press articles – starting from 1920 before this date. Although the term existed and was used to talk about “intellectual elites,” it did not have a stabilized meaning. This, however, does not imply the absence of intellectuals in the Ottoman context before the invention and stabilization of a term corresponding to their social and political role. As Özgür Türesay has analyzed, the hegemonic figure of “intellectual” that emerged in the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century differed from its European counterparts because it was predominantly “bureaucratic” and journalistic.<sup>11</sup> While the figure existed in the second half of the nineteenth century, a more or less stabilized concept to qualify this figure of the intellectual seems to have been crystallized later, after the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

In this chapter, I will analyze a corpus of texts produced by ideologues and officers of the ruling Party on the category of *münevver* to show how its use in this post-imperial setting varied from that of the “intellectuals,” another social category that emerged in Europe in the second half of the 19th century.<sup>12</sup> I will contrast the elite conceptualizations of the *münevver* that can be found in newspapers and magazines before getting into a sociohistorical analysis of the People’s Preachers, who were also called “*münevvers*” due to their mission and “responsibility” of “enlightening” (*tenvir*) the “popular masses.”

### 1.1. Early Republican Public Controversies: “Münevver”

---

This section will analyze the press controversies debating the role and responsibilities of the “intellectual” by mobilizing the category of “*münevver*” from 1918 to 1940. I used the

---

(Istanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1895 [1313]), 554. “tenvir idilmiş, nurlandırılmış, rüşen idilmiş, rüşen. *Münevveriyet : münevverlik, münevveriyet efkârı*” Ahmet Vefik Paşa, “*münevver*,” 1035.

<sup>11</sup> Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l’Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tefvik (1849-1913) et son temps*, 76.

<sup>12</sup> Christophe Charle, *La naissance des “intellectuels”, 1880-1900, Le sens commun*, (Paris: Minuit, 1990).

snowballing method to constitute a corpus of articles about the “intellectual controversies.” I included articles in the analysis when they openly referred to another author or article and expressed opposing views. I started my research on the Turkish Homeland (*Türk Yurdu*) magazine. This magazine was closely linked to the rising movement of cultural nationalism and the spaces of socialization associated with them, namely the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*). Other than the Turkish Homeland magazine, I constituted my corpus on the articles I could reach through keyword research (if applicable) or skimming in digitized archives. As a result, my corpus was limited to digitized newspapers and magazines.<sup>13</sup> Starting from the keyword research results, I also aimed to trace the articles to which the participants of the controversies reacted or replied. Nevertheless, the authors rarely named their opponents and the articles they opposed. They talked about “opposite newspapers,” opinions, or unnamed antagonists.

The earliest press article I could find with the topic of “*münevver*” on the title was in 1913. Still, this article did not refer to other articles or an ongoing controversy. It was a survey of the opinions of the “Ottoman *münevver* class” about Pierre Loti.<sup>14</sup> In 1919, Islamist *Sebilü’r-Reşad* (Fountain of the Right Path) published an article about the ongoing national resistance movement. This article was titled “Why do the *münevvers* not unite while the nation is uniting?”<sup>15</sup> Again, this article did not openly mention an ongoing controversy.

I date the beginning of the controversies in May 1920. This does not mean there were no articles or press debates about *münevver* before 1920. Alexander Toumarkine, for instance, analyzed an article by Hayriye Melek [Hunç] on the Turkish Homeland (*Türk Yurdu*) in August 1918. The article discussed the issue of “Muslim Women” (*İslâm Kadını*) and distinguished Ottoman women into two between the “Istanbul women” and “Anatolian-Syrian women.” The educated part of the first group was called the “*münevver* class” (*sınıf-ı münevvere*).<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> This situation was compounded by the limitations imposed by the COVID pandemic, which initially restricted my archival research in Turkey. Subsequently, I faced additional constraints due to the inability to renew my residence permit in France.

<sup>14</sup> “Osmanlıların sınıf-ı münevveri Piyer Loti hakkında ne düşünüyor?,” *Şehbal*, 1913.

<sup>15</sup> Eşref Edib, “Millet Birleşiyor da Münevverler Neden İttihad Edemiyor?,” *Sebilü’r-Reşad*, 22 May 1335, 1919 [1335].

<sup>16</sup> Hayriye Melek, “İslâm Kadını,” *Türk Yurdu*, 15 Ağustos 1334, 1918. Murat Şefkatli, ed., *Türk Yurdu* (*Vol.10*), 12 vols., vol. 10 (Istanbul: Tutibay Yayınları, 1998). Cited by: Alexander Toumarkine, “Hayriye Melek

The second wave of press controversies started with the proclamation of the republic in October 1923. The subject was revived in May 1924 and 1925, respectively, by one of the participants. In 1925, one of the most prominent figures of the nationalist movement in Turkey, Akçuraoğlu Yusuf, delivered a lecture titled “Modern State and the Responsibility of the *Münevver*.” This lecture was later published in the Turkish Homeland magazine. I included this lecture in the corpus to analyze the early republican press controversies on intellectuals, although it did not provoke a press controversy. The reasons for this choice are twofold. First, this article followed the footsteps of previous controversies focusing on regime change, potential reactions, and the role of intellectuals. Second, it was adapted and reproduced by the People’s Preachers in the 1930s.

Starting from the 1930s, the CHP accelerated its efforts to mobilize educated elites and called them “intellectuals” (*münevver*). Against this background, the press controversies took another form. The articles started to talk about the ideal of intellectuals as well as those who fail to fit the ideal in derogatory terms such as “pseudo,” “half,” or even “quarter” intellectuals. In the following section, I will try to give a thematically and chronologically organized overview of the thirty-four (34) articles published between 1920 and 1940 that I consider to be part of some public controversy about the role of intellectuals in early republican Turkey. Analyzing these controversies, I aim to situate this social category largely used to refer to the People’s Preachers or the “army of lecturers” during the single-party regime in Turkey.<sup>17</sup>

### Participants in the Controversy

The corpus’s articles were published in many newspapers and magazines, ranging from the Islamist *Sebilü’r Reşad* (The Right Path) to the secular and republican daily press, such as *Cumhuriyet* (Republic), *Akşam* (Evening), *Kurun* (Generations), and *Haber* (News). In total, fifteen authors wrote about the definition, roles, and social and political significance of “*münevver*” within my corpus. All participants cumulated and switched between “intellectual” occupations such as writer, journalist, university professor, novelist, or poet. Four were

---

(Hunç), A Circassian Ottoman Writer Between Feminism and Nationalism,” in *A Social History of the Late Ottoman Women: New Perspectives*, ed. Duygu Köksal and Anastasia Falierou (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Hikmet Münir, “Kültür Yolunda: Bir Konferansçı Ordusu Yaratalım!,” *Kurun*, 11 February 1936.

university professors, while two were high school teachers. Five achieved at some point in their career a seat in parliament, and other occupations included writers, journalists, teachers, and/or university professors. Most participants had high-level education combined with private tutoring. Some studied abroad (Vienna, Paris, Berlin, New York), while others graduated from the prestigious School of Law (*Mekteb-i Hukuk*), School of Public Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), or Istanbul University (Darülfünun). Most participants had a dazzling career as writers before participating in these controversies. Suat Derviş (1904-1972) , for instance, published eight novels between 1920 and 1924.<sup>18</sup>

The political commitments of these writers and journalists also varied greatly. From Islamist opposition to former or current feminists to fervent supporters of the CHP and its reforms; all participated in the debate. While many eventually became CHP deputies, some can be considered critical voices of the CUP and the CHP. Eşref Edip [Fergan] (1882-1971) from *Sebilü'r Reşad* was one of the most vocal opponents of early republican rule from the nationalist and Islamist position. He was, overall, against the idea of “Westernization” prominent among the Unionists.<sup>19</sup> Because of his opposition to the Republicans, Eşref Edip was sent to the “Independence Courts” in March 1925, and his magazine was closed.<sup>20</sup> Sabiha Sertel and Zekeriya Sertel were left-leaning “voices of an essentially loyal opposition committed to the modernizing, secularizing, and anti-monarchical agenda of the republic.”<sup>21</sup> Their newspaper, *Tan* (Dawn), was attacked and destroyed by “fascist flocks” in 1945.<sup>22</sup> Suat Derviş became a candidate for the municipal elections in 1930 from the Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, the SCF), the short-lived opposition party to the CHP.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Kara A. Peruccio, ““Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman”: Suat Derviş, Nezihe Muhiddin, and Age in Turkey, 1923–35,” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 10, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>19</sup> Sadık Albayrak, “Eşref Edip Fergan,” in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/esref-edip-fergan>.

<sup>20</sup> Nathalie Clayer, “Religion et champ éditorial dans la Turquie républicaine,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 33 (2021): §11.

<sup>21</sup> A. Holly Shissler, “Womanhood Is Not For Sale: Sabiha Zekeriya Sertel Against Prostitution and For Women’s Employment,” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 4, no. 3 (2008): 14.

<sup>22</sup> Sabiha Sertel, *Roman Gibi* (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1987), 244. Cited by: Hülya Adak, “Suffragettes of the Empire, Daughters of the Republic: Women Auto/biographers Narrate National History (1918-1935),” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 36 (2007): 49.

<sup>23</sup> Kara A. Peruccio, ““Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman”: Suat Derviş, Nezihe Muhiddin, and Age in Turkey, 1923–35,” 19.

Mustafa Şekip [Tunç] (1883-1958) was a professor of psychology at the Istanbul Darülfünûn since 1919. While Mustafa Şekip did not have an organic relationship with the party, his translations of Bergson reflected his attitude towards the new regime. According to Dilek Sarmış, Mustafa Şekip contributed to an intellectual magazine, *Dergah* (Lodge), which combined “a mystical reading of the Turkish genius incorporated by Mustafa Kemal“ and “essentialized the Turkish nation.”<sup>24</sup> While having an overall moderate attitude towards the “revolution,” Mustafa Şekip substantiated it from his position as a university professor, publishing articles in nationalist reviews such as “National Magazine” (*Milli Mecmua*), founded a day after the proclamation of the Republic and overall supportive of the early republican reforms.<sup>25</sup>

Ağaoğlu Ahmet (1869-1939) was born in the Karabagh region of Russian Azerbaijan and migrated to the Ottoman Empire after the Second Constitutional Monarchy (1908). He became a member of the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, the CUP) and contributed regularly to the nationalist Turkish Homeland (*Türk Yurdu*). After the end of the First World War, Ağaoğlu was imprisoned in Malta along with 139 other intellectuals and politicians for war crimes.<sup>26</sup> He was liberated in May 1921, and after his return to Turkey, he fervently supported the nationalist movement. In October 1921, he was nominated General Director of Press and Information.<sup>27</sup> Until he founded the main opposition party, Ağaoğlu remained close to the CHP circles and served as a deputy between 1920 and 1927.

Şevket Süreyya Aydemir (1897-1976) started his political and intellectual career as a fervent nationalist. He became a communist for a while and attended the Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV) in Baku. Returning to Turkey, he founded the Turkish Communist Party with his peers. He played an important role in the publication of *Aydınlık* (Brightness) magazine. Because of his communist political activity, Şevket Süreyya

---

<sup>24</sup> Dilek Sarmış, “Ottoman and Turkish Psychologies (1860-1930). A Laboratory for Academic Divisions,” *Revue d’histoire des sciences humaines*, no. 34 (2019): §29.

<sup>25</sup> Ahmet Kahraman, *Kürt İsyamları : Tedip ve Tenkil*, Kürt tarihi ve kültürü dizisi, (Beyoğlu, İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, “The Documentation of the World War I Armenian Massacres in the Proceedings of the Turkish Military Tribunal,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 4 (1991).

<sup>27</sup> A. Holly Shissler, *Between Two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the New Turkey* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 207.

was condemned to 10 years of prison. In 1927, he reinvented himself as a committed Republican and started to support the CHP vehemently. He published *Kadro* magazine in 1932 with a group of left-leaning nationalist intellectuals.

The controversy surrounding the *münevver* revealed a wide range of political affiliations among the participants. Despite their differing views, all writers agreed on one thing: the *münevver*'s existence and the importance of discussing and debating it within the current political context. While the corpus contains around thirty articles, not all took a polemical stance. Some acknowledged it as an issue, while others assumed the existence of the *münevver* and explored their opinions on specific topics.

### The Timeline of the Controversy

Eşref Edip from *Sebilü'r-Reşad* published another article in May 1920 about the influence of French culture on the “Turkish intellectual.”<sup>28</sup> This article replied to an assertion voiced through an “opposite newspaper” (*karşı gazetinin*) and argued against it. The author tried to delegitimize the author of the article by claiming that he was “unaware of the world affairs” (*dünyadan bi-haber ser muharriri*) and allegedly declared that “Turks were enemies of the French culture.”<sup>29</sup> The author argued that “Frenchness has penetrated the very marrow of Turkish intellectuals” and gave the example of a Turkish Hearths member who recited Victor Hugo’s *Waterloo* by heart in the original language. This recital was applauded so much that the lecturer recited it several times more. To add insult to injury, the author reminded us that the recital happened during the Gallipoli War.<sup>30</sup>

The second controversy started shortly before the proclamation of the republic (29 October 1923). Ahmet Ağaoğlu penned an article in *Vatan* (Homeland) on 2 September 1923 that

---

<sup>28</sup> Eşref Edib, “Fransızlık Türk Münevverlerinin Ta İliklerine Kadar İşlemiştir,” *Sebilü'r-Reşad*, March 4 1336, 1920.

<sup>29</sup> “Karşı gazetesinin dünyadan bi-haber ser muharriri, eyi bilmelidir ki bize her iftirâda bulunuyorlar, bize her nakışa ‘âtıf edilir; fakat Türkleriñ Fransız lisânına ve Fransız harsına düşman olduğunu iddi‘â etmek gülünç ve zavallı bir buhtandır.” Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> “Hiç hatırımızdan çıkmaz, Çanağkale harbiniñ en âteşin günlerinden biri idi, bir âkşam Türk Ocağında! Evet, Evet Türk Ocağında! - bir edebî musâmere vardı. O musâmerede birkaç konferans soñra, Fransızca inşadı pek kuvvetli şâ‘irlerimizden biri ‘umumuñ işrârı üzerine bize Viğtor Hugo’nun « Waterloo » manzûmesini okudu ve o kadar çoşkulu âlkışlandı idi ki bir kaç def‘â tekrara mecbur oldu. ‘Karşı gazetesinin dünyadan bi-haber ser muharriri, eyi bilmelidir ki bize her iftirâda bulunuyorlar, bize her nakışa ‘âtıf edilir; fakat Türkleriñ Fransız lisânına ve Fransız harsına düşman olduğunu iddi‘â etmek gülünç ve zavallı bir buhtandır.” Ibid.

attracted much attention. This article was reproduced on 1 November 1923. The same day, Mustafa Şekip [Tunç] published another article titled “Concept of Münevver” (*Münevver Mefhumu*).<sup>31</sup> Ağaoglu’s article was titled “Movement of Thought: The Responsibility of Intellectual.” While not directly referring to this particular article or its author, three other articles were published in two magazines, *Ictihād* (Opinion) and *Milli Mecmū’a* (National Magazine), between 1 November and 13 December 1923. The *münevver* issue was revived again in May 1924 and May 1925 when Mustafa Şekip, one of the participants of the first controversy, replied to his critics.

In the 1930s, the creation of the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses made the controversy more tangible. While discussing the failures and insufficiencies of the *münevvers*, participants had more concrete actions in mind, such as learning from the people and teaching them the principles of the revolution by participating in the activities of the People’s Houses. The issue of the “*münevver*” continued to be a recurring topic in press polemics until the 1940s. The opposition between the allegedly uneducated common people and the lettered elites, along with the necessity of training republican citizens, remained central to the debates. The cover of *Yeni Adam* (New Man), published in 1940, vividly reflected this opposition.

---

<sup>31</sup> Mustafa Şekip [Tunç], “Tam Manası ile Münevver,” *Milli Mecmua*, 1 Kanunuevvel 1339, 1923.

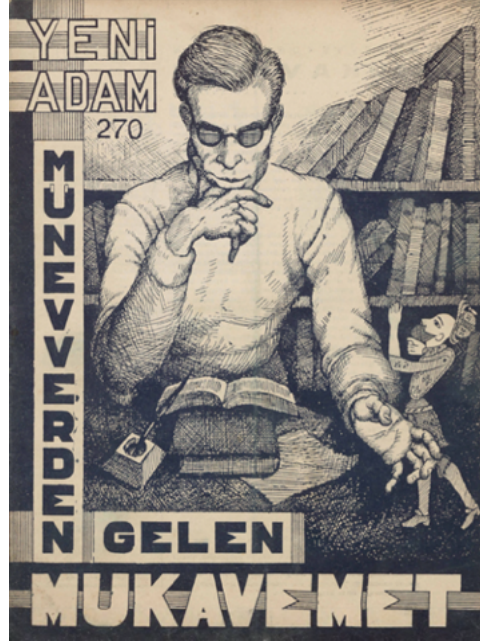


Figure 2. Resistance from the Münevver, Cover of *Akbaba*, 29 February 1940.

The cover page speaks volumes about the representations of intellectuals prevalent during the period. It features a good-looking man in Western attire (clean-shaven, wearing a light-colored shirt) sitting at a writing table cluttered with notebooks, books, papers, an inkstand, and a fountain pen, all while carefully reading a book. Behind him, we see his library and a puppet of Karagöz (Black-eye), which seems to be trying to get the attention of the *münevver* man. Karagöz was a traditional shadow theatre character, often depicted in contrast to Hacivat, a well-educated man with poetic and pompous language. Karagöz used to mock and show the weaknesses of the learned man and allowed space for political criticism even in times of increased censure and control.<sup>32</sup>

The article was penned by İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu, a renowned pedagogue and former president of Istanbul Darülfünun. The article “The Resistance of the Münevver” (*Münevverden Gelen Mukavamet*) criticized the 1940s *münevver* for their condescending attitude towards popular traditions, including the shadow play. According to Baltacıođlu, Turkish culture did

---

<sup>32</sup> Serdar Öztürk, “Karagöz Co-Opted: Turkish Shadow Theatre of the Early Republic (1923-1945),” *Asian Theatre Journal* 23, no. 2 (2006).



not recognize or understand these condescending *münevvers*, and it was necessary to prevent them from interfering with “our private affairs.”<sup>33</sup>

Baltacıođlu ‘s article highlighted several key lessons from twenty years of discussions and debates on the *münevver*. He identified two types of *münevver*: those who adapted their artistic forms and political attitudes to align with ongoing political and social changes and those who resisted these changes and needed to correct their attitudes to align with the current political climate. The debate always revolved around the responsibility of “*münevver*.” From the beginning to the end, the tasks and responsibilities associated with *Münevver* were critical in these discussions. Eventually, the debate became redundant, with the same tropes and assertions repeated over and over. In 1936, some observers began to satirize the affair.

---

<sup>33</sup> “Son günlerde karagözümüzü ele alıyoruz; bu hayâl oyunu, bu primitif tasvirler, bu irticâl ve bedahet ölmesin, bu perde inmesin, bu titrek ışık sönmesin ve bu zenginlik yokolmasın” diyoruz; yine bu “münevver”: “hayır, olmaz ekran varken perde istemeyiz, ampul varken yağmumu istemeyiz, mikimavs, sıçan varken karagöz sureti istemeyiz; biz bizden başka olan herşeyi isteriz, biz yalnız kendimizi istemeyiz” diyor. Biz “tiyatro olsun sinema olsun, radyo olsun, fakat karagöz de olsun, çünkü bu karagöz onlar değildir, apayrı bambaşka birşeydir, kendimize göre bir şeydir” diyoruz, yine bu münevver: “hayır, o geriliktir, o ölümdür” o irticadır” diyor. § Eğer bu “münevver” ilk, orta, yüksek okulun yetiştirmek istediđi münevverse, çok korkunç bir şey! Eğer bu “münevver” diri ve canlı Türk kültürünün ve Türk vicdanının tanımadıđı ve anlamadıđı “münevver” ise, ondan kendimizi sakınmalıyız ve onu mahrem işlerimize karıştırmamalıyız.” İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu, “Münevverden Gelen Mukavemet,” *Yeni Adam*, 29 February, 1940.



Figure 3. Cover of *Akbaba*, 15 February 1936.

Look, Ağaoğlu Ahmet has written an article called “Debts of intellectuals” – I don’t believe that. Who lends money to intellectuals?”<sup>34</sup>

The reference to Ahmet Ağaoğlu was crucial. He was among the first to ignite the controversy over the term “*münevver*” in November 1923.<sup>35</sup> The first article was titled “Movement of Thought: The Responsibility of the *Münevver*.” By the 1930s, he kept publishing articles on the same issue, this time replacing “*münevver*” from Arabic etymology with “*entelektüel*” from French. This was a recurrent way to comply with the Language Revolution. Many people replied to Ahmet Ağaoğlu’s articles, which created the “*münevver* controversies.”

The magazine *Akbaba* (Vulture) was created by writers and cartoonists who observed political debates from the sidelines. While they agreed with the current regime on many issues, such as republicanism and secularism, they were also critical of municipal corruption and clientelism within the party. This is why their satire focused on the economic power of the elite rather than their obligations to the rest of society.

---

<sup>34</sup> *Akbaba*, 15 February 1936.

<sup>35</sup> Ahmet [Ağaoğlu], “Hareket-i Fikriye: [Münevverlerin Vazifesi],” *İctihad*, 1 Teşrinisāni, 1923.

The press discussions about the “*münevvers*” were multifaceted. As the term was relatively new and referred to a group of people esteemed for their knowledge, education, and involvement in political issues, many articles began by defining who could be considered a “*münevver*.” Therefore, the initial controversy revolved around the definition of the term and the criteria for being included in this category.

The following section will analyze the press debates of the 1920s to provide context for the discourse on *münevver* during the creation and maintenance of the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses in the 1930s. This historicization is necessary as it reveals the origins of assumptions in sources about the 1930s and highlights the commonalities and differences between the concept of *münevver* in Ottoman and Modern Turkish contexts and its Eurasian counterparts.

## 1.2. What was a *Münevver* in 1920s Turkey?

---

The initial wave of press debate during the early 1920s centered on defining the term “*münevver*.” This relatively new social category’s definition was closely tied to determining the tasks and responsibilities of those included. The discourse aimed to clarify not only who qualified as a *münevver* but also the roles and duties expected of them within the context of the nascent Republic’s socio-political landscape.

The first article that I could trace from the 1923 controversy was written by Ahmet Ağaoğlu. Parts of this article were reproduced in November 1923. The first article discussed the ongoing social and political changes and characterized them as “Westernization.” According to Ağaoğlu, the “progress in the last fifty, sixty years, movements in music, sciences, and philosophy” showed that “all Turkish *münevvers*” were “inclined towards the West.”<sup>36</sup> Hence, “*münevver*” was associated with literature, arts, sciences, and philosophy. While he was content with the turn towards the “West,” Ağaoğlu identified a problem with the ongoing social change: the masses (*kitleler*). Everyone knew that the “masses” and the common “people” (*halk*) were generally “inclined towards conservatism.” The masses preferred “calm and silent

---

<sup>36</sup> “Edebiyât sahasındaki elli altmış senelik tekâmülümüz, musikideki cereyanlar, ‘ilim, fenn, felsefede cereyanlar, siyasi, ‘ilmî, ictimâ‘î temayüller hülâsâ bir zümre-yi münevvereniñ maqnevî añlayışlarını teşkil iden bütün ‘avâmilde, Türk münevverleriniñ şarqdan kaç‘î şürette yüz çevirerek ğarbe doğru teveccüh itdikleri bu gün inkâr olunmaz bir vaq‘âdır!” Ibid.

movements” and were violently afraid (*tevaḥḥuṣ*) of changing the things they trusted.<sup>37</sup> Hence, for Ahmet Ağaoğlu, the “masses” (*kitleler*) or the “people” (*halk*) were key to the determination of the “*münevver*.”

They are generally incapable of determining and appreciating the path to be followed. Among the people ready to take advantage of this common condition, which is peculiar to all people and crowds, there can also be found a group of people. These people, failing to understand the lessons and meanings expressed by history, sincerely support the preservation of the existing state and oppose the changes being made, or driven by their personal interests, struggle against renewal with prejudice and obstinacy.

Politically, the intellectual incapacity accorded to the “masses” explained their exclusion from decision-making. Despite deeming the masses incapable of determining the “path to be taken,” the author considered their “sincere” insistence on maintaining the current affairs of things through selfishness, prejudice, and obstinacy. In contrast, “*münevvers*” could participate in norm and decision-making, but their role did not stop there.

Thus, the duty of a group of *münevvers* who are faithful to their convictions and ideas should consist of not avoiding their struggle with the[se ideas], not hesitating to show the pure and necessary path for the country and nation, and stating the truths as they are!

I confess that the struggle is arduous and difficult. The battlefield is not favorable, and the weapons used are not equal. It is so easy to follow the logic of the street to please the street. Accusing any innovator of heresy, irreligion, and treachery to the nation and state in the eyes of immobile and bigoted masses is usually akin to forcing an open door. Moreover, if there is a bit of a desire for fame, name, and reputation among the common people, this heroism becomes very attractive.<sup>38</sup>

Ağaoğlu’s conception of *münevver* only made sense in relation to the image of a “people” (*halk*) associated with irrational, reactionary, and suggestible crowds. Within this framework,

---

<sup>37</sup> “Kitleler, sükünî hareketleri tercih ederler, i’tiyād etdikleri şeyleri deęiřtirmekden tevaḥḥuṣ ederler.” Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> “İřte kanā’āt ve fikirlerine řadık münevver bir zümreniñ vazifesi bunlarla mücâdeleden kaçınmamak, memleket ve milleti için nakî ve elzem gördüğü řarîki irâ’e etmekten çekinmeyüb ḥaḳîkatleri olduđu gibi söylemekden ‘ibâret olmalıdır! ř İ’tirâf ederim: mücâdele çetin ve ađırdır. Mücâdele saĥası gayr-ı müsâ’id olduđu gibi kullanılan silahlar da müsâvî deđildir. Soĥaĥ mantıđına uyarak soĥađı memnün etmek o ĥadar kolaydır ki herhangi bir müceddidi ĥareketsiz ve muta’ařşib kitleleriñ nazarında kafirlikle, dinsizlikle, millet ve devlet ha’inliđi ile ithâm etmek ‘âdetâ açık ĥapıyı zorlamak kâbilinden bir ĥahramanlıđdır. Hele biraz da ‘avâmm nezdinde řöhret, nâm ve řıt hevesi olursa bu ĥahramanlık pek câzib olur.” Ibid.

the responsibility of the *münevver* was seen as a call to duty or action. Shortly after the War of Independence ended, the *münevver* was now called to fight against the reactionary masses.

Ağaoğlu almost directly referred to Gustave Le Bon while discussing crowds. The first example, after mentioning the danger of crowds and their susceptibility to manipulation, which could lead them to consider *münevver* enemies of the state or religion, was the Renaissance preacher Girolamo Savonarola. According to Ağaoğlu, Savonarola led “wild fanatical mobs” to burn books amidst the “applause of the commoners.”<sup>39</sup> Against Savonarola and Ignatius of Loyola, who were the reactionary “leaders of the crowds,” Ağaoğlu gave the example of Galileo, the ideal of a *münevver* who risked his life to tell the truth. Again, this example also stemmed from Le Bon’s *Psychologie des foules*.<sup>40</sup>

For Ağaoğlu, the ideal of the *münevver* was more or less the same as that of a good *meneur des foules*. A good *meneur des foules* opposed the bad, reactionary ones and explained the necessity of ongoing reforms, such as the abolition of the sultanate a year earlier and the current debates about the proclamation of the republic.<sup>41</sup> This idea was not shared by intellectuals with a more moderate attitude towards the ongoing political changes, such as Mustafa Şekip, a professor of psychology at the Istanbul Darülfünun. On the very day that Ağaoğlu’s article was reprinted in *İctihad*, Şekip unveiled his own piece entitled “The Concept of *Münevver*” (*Münevver Mefhumu*).<sup>42</sup> While Şekip’s article did not overtly counter Ağaoğlu’s stance, its full comprehension necessitates contextual consideration of Ağaoğlu’s views. Mustafa Şekip’s contributions to the *münevver* debates were more academic, focusing first on the historicization of the category.

I do not know how many years it has been since the word “*münevver*” became a proper noun after being tired of being used as an adjective for various nouns. Let the linguists studying the history of the words’ evolution and changes understand this. If there is one thing, we all know, it is very recent for this word to have become common to a certain class of people. When religion and science were one and the same (*yekvücūd*), the intellectuals (*münevvers*) were called “‘ulemā,” and their disciples were called “‘şofta.” According to Mu‘allim Nāci, a kind of scholarly rank above that of a mu‘derris was also

---

<sup>39</sup> “Vaķtîle (Savanārola) [\*] lar arķalarına toplamıř oldukları vahřı muta‘ařıř katoлик sūrūleri ile evlere hūcūm ederek bulduķları āřār-ı nāķiseyi, kitabları meydanlarda‘āvāmmiñ alķıřları arasında yaķıyor ve řahibelerini de parçalatdırıyorlardı.” Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules* (Paris: Édition Félix Alcan, 1905), 71.

<sup>41</sup> Hasan Türker, “İlanından Önce Cumhuriyet Tartıřmaları,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, 1998.

<sup>42</sup> Mustafa Şekip [Tunç], “Münevver Mefhumu?,” *Milli Mecmua*, 1 Teřrinisānı 1339, 1923.

called “mollā.” For example, when Mevlana was mentioned, he was called “Mollā-yı Rūm.” The term “Efendi,” taken from the Rum (Greek) language, has a similar meaning. Compared to these terms, the words “*münevver*” and “*güzideler*” may express what need?<sup>43</sup>

From the onset of the article, Mustafa Şekip granted that “*münevver*” and “*güzide*” were new social categories. He explained the emergence of these categories with new needs following the secularization of science (*ilm*). The secularization of the sciences in the Ottoman domain had to do with the development of secular educational institutions to reform the empire, which was considered declining by the governing elites. Mustafa Şekip claimed that “*münevver*” and “*güzide*” were translations of the French “*intellectuel*” and *élite*.”<sup>44</sup> He recognized that “*intellectuel*” was also a new social category in French and identified “thinker” (*penseur*) as its precedent. He explained the switch from “thinker” to “intellectual” in the French context as a matter of the “emergence of new needs” rather than a “trend” (*moda*).

Mustafa Şekip had an overall celebratory definition of the “*münevver*.” Being a *münevver* depended on a high level of education. For Mustafa Şekip, identifying institutions in charge of forming intellectuals was the first step of the discussion. He spotted Sultanis and Darülfünun among these institutions. Based on the French example, he evoked the importance of knowing a corpus of work that he called the “masterpieces of Greek and Roman civilizations and great classics of their nations.”<sup>45</sup> This high-quality education in “humanities” and breeding allowed

---

<sup>43</sup> “« Münevver »kelimesiniñ muhtelif isimlere şıfatlık etmekden yorularak müstaķil bir isim hāli ālması kaç sene oldu bimiyorum, bunu kelimeniñ tarih-i zuhur ve teħavvūlatile ile uğraşan lisāniyatçılar taħķik etsin. Hepimiziñ bildiđi bir şey varsa bu kelimeniñ bir sınıf insanlara ‘ālem olmasınıñ pek yeñi olduđudur. Dil ile ‘ilmiñ yekvūcūd olduđu zamanlarda münevverlere « ulemā » ve bunlarıñ çömezlerine « softa » denilirdi. Mu‘allim Nāci’ye bakılırsa müderrisliđiñ fevķinde bir nev’i rütbe-yi ‘ilmiyyeye de « mollā » denilirdi. Meş‘elā Mevlana’dan baħş edildiđi zaman « Mollā-yı Rūm » denilmesi gibi. Rūmcadan alınmış olan « Efendi » ta‘biri de buña yaķın bir ma‘nā ifāde etmektedir. Bu ta‘birlere nisbetle « münevver »lerle « güzideler » kelimeleri ‘acabā hangi iħtiyāciñ ifādesindeler?” Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> “Yalnız münevver ta‘biriniñ Fransızca « Intellectuel », ve « güzide » ta‘biriniñ « Elite » muķābili oldukları ma‘lumdur. Bina-enaleyh bu kelimelerin medlüllerini öğrenmek ğarbin ve bilhaşşa hayat-ı fikriyesinden en ziyāde müte‘essir olduđumuz Fransızlarıñ bunlar haķķındaki telaķķilerini bilmeye vā-bestedir.” Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> “Fransızlar Yunan-ı kadim ve Romā şaheserlerini aşillarından mütāle‘a ve kendi lisānlarına tercüme ederlerken yalnız eñ hür bir māzī-ı tefekkürler ilşak peydā etmiş ve yetişmiş deħālardan istifāde bulunmuş olmalıdırlar ‘aynı zamanda kendi deħālarınıñ, yāni tarz-ı tefekkürleriniñ huşuşiyetini keşfettiler ki şu‘ürli bir milliyetçilik için bundan daha esaslı bir kazanç olamaz.” Ibid.

to emerge a specific consciousness marked by a “lofty and creative thought, altruistic and noble sensitivity, sense of promise, sacrifice, bravery, valor, and heroism.”<sup>46</sup>

Mustafa Şekip was relatively demanding concerning the required education level of the “*münevver*.” He emphasized the educational institutions that contribute to producing and reproducing the “*münevver*.” He underlined the importance of knowledge in humanities in the development of certain sensibilities and discussed the methodology of translation. In the next article titled “Münevver in its fullest sense,” he also mentioned objectivity (*bi-ṭaraf olmak*), method (*uṣūl*), “principle” (*prensip*), “experience” (*tecrübe*), and the capacity of deduction (*istidlāl*).<sup>47</sup>

The values Mustafa Şekip mentioned for an ideal of “*münevver*,” such as “altruistic and noble sensitivity, sense of promise, sacrifice, bravery, valor and heroism,” can be associated with the fundamentals of any nationalist discourse starting from the one by Mazzini.<sup>48</sup> Mustafa Şekip did not use the terms “nation” or “nationalism” until the end of his article, but “nationalism” was the implicit premise of his intervention.

These known introductions have reminded the present generation to prepare a renewed ground for reflection and education. Here are some very relevant questions to our intellectual life: How many perceptions do we have of *münevver* in Turkish historical civilization? On what principles were preparations made to counter these perceptions, and which institutions supported these preparations? What is the value of Arabic and Persian masterpieces? What are the differences between their geniuses? What of these geniuses did the Turks accept, and what did they reject? What is the state of Turkish style and contemplation today? What are its virtues and flaws? Are the genius of the East and the genius of the West essentially different? What is this separation’s significance and civilizational value if they are separate?<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> “Beşeriyetiñ en hür ve büyük mütefekkirleri ile genç yâşda te‘mîn edilen bu yakın temâs onlarıñ rûhunda sâdelik, ihâta, vuzûh, âhenk, yüksek ve ibtikârî tefekkür, alicenab ve ‘aşil teħassüs, hiss-i vazîfe, fedâkarlık, şecâ‘at, kahramanlık ve ila-ahirihi gibi haşâ‘il-i rûhiyeyi kökleşdiriyor.” Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> “Yalnız zekî olanlar da teşâdüf olunan kurnazlık veya dirâyet gibi kâbiliyyetler yerine münevverde uşûl, prensip, tecrübe ve istidlâl gibi esaslı ve geniş ve firâset hâkimdir.” Mustafa Şekip [Tunç], “Tam Manası ile Münevver.”

<sup>48</sup> Giuseppe Mazzini, *The Duties of Man* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1862).

<sup>49</sup> “(…) ki şu ‘ürlü bir milliyetçilik için bundan daha esaslı bir kazanç olamaz. Bütün bu ma‘lûm muqaddimât bugünkü nesle münevverlik hakkında yeni baştan bir tefekkür ve terbi‘ye zemini hazırlamak için hatırlatılmıştır. İşte bir takım su‘âller ki hayat-ı fikriyemizle çok ‘alâkadâr: Türk tarihî medeniyetinde münevverlik ‘acabâ kaç telaqqiye uğradı? Bu telaqqilere karşı hangi esaslar dâ‘iresinde hazırlıklar yapıldı ve bu hazırlıkları hangi mü‘esseseler te‘mîn etdi? ‘Arab ve ‘Acem şaheserleri ne kıymettediler? Dehâları arasındaki farklar nelerdir? Türkler bu dehâlardan neleri kabul neleri red etdiler? Türk tarz ve sü-i tefekkürü bugün ne haldedir? Meziyet ve kuşurları nelerdir? Şark dehâsile ğarb dehâsi esâsen ayrı şeyler midir? Ayı ise bu ayrılığın huşuşiyyet ve kıymet-i medenîsi nedir?” Mustafa Şekip [Tunç], “Münevver Mefhumu?”

This allowed the “*münevvers*” to be better “guides” and mentors.”<sup>50</sup> While Mustafa Şekip’s language was more careful and moderate than the other three voices analyzed in this chapter, the four articles shared a common assumption. While the apparent controversy had a point of disagreement, “nation” and “nationalism” were not part of it. Mustafa Şekip’s moderate and respectful defense of the well-educated and “intelligent” intellectuals who progressively obtained national consciousness thanks to their education in “humanities” was criticized for its emphasis on “intelligence” and “genius.” Mustafa Şekip did not identify his opponents but replied to his critics in another article published a month later. In his response, Mustafa Şekip distinguished “intelligent, knowledgeable, and meddling people” from the “*münevver*.”<sup>51</sup> He argued the definition of the true “*münevver*”:

The characteristic that distinguishes the *münevvers* from all other people is not the agility or brilliance of their intelligence, nor does the fact that a person is very intelligent, knowledgeable, or a great intellectual cause him to be a *münevver*. The natural and general function of intelligence is the same in every human being: to respond to circumstances and needs. In essence, the intelligence of the intellectual is nothing other than this intelligence. What distinguishes the *münevver* from the intelligent is not the type of intelligence but the dignity of their aims, personality, and unique excitement and enthusiasm.<sup>52</sup>

This measured retreat was a modest appeal to support and embrace the ongoing political changes, as they addressed the “circumstances and needs” of the time. Mustafa Şekip cited André Chénier, an 18th-century French poet who fell victim to the Reign of Terror due to his opposition to the Jacobins, as an exemplar. According to Mustafa Şekip, Chénier regretted his death less than not being able to tell what he had on his mind at the moment of his execution.

---

<sup>50</sup> “Bu terbiye-yi esâsiye ile yetişen bir nesil tam ma’nâsile rehber ve mürşid olacak vir olgunluk kazanıyor.” Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> “Zekî, bilgiç ve işgüzârlarla münevverler ârasındaki farkın nerede ve hangi hâsiyyetde olduğunu tâ’inde bu gençler müreterrid idiler.” Mustafa Şekip [Tunç], “Tam Manası ile Münevver.”

<sup>52</sup> “Münevveleri ‘ale’l-umûm insanlardan ayıran şîfât-ı kâşife zekâlarının çevikliği veya fevkal’adeliği olmadığı gibi bir insanın çok zekî, çok bilgiç veya büyük bir fa’âl olması da münevver olmasına bir sebep teşkil etmez. Zekânın tabî’î ve ‘umûmî vazîfesi her insânda aynıdır: ahval ve icâbete inţibak etmek. Esâs i’tibarile münevverin zekâsı da bu zekâdan başka bir şey değildir. Münevveri zekîden ayıran zekânın cinsi olmayıp bir nevî’ hâsiyyeti, ğâyesi, ve kendisine mahşuş heyecân ve ihtiraşdır.” Ibid.



<sup>53</sup> For Mustafa Şekip, a true *münevver* was neither a traditionalist nor a revolutionary nor a Jacobin. A true *münevver* would respond with a smile if posed with such a question.<sup>54</sup>

A few days later, Yahya Saim [Ozanoğlu] published an article titled “Response to the Survey on Münevver-ness,” reacting to the earlier pieces and to a certain F.L. Saim’s article was an imaginary dialogue between him and another person conversing about intelligence and heroism to determine what “enlightened” a *münevver*. Saim’s definition of *münevver* was similar to the previous ones, emphasizing intelligence and education. A *münevver* needed to be knowledgeable about important issues, speak foreign languages, follow scientific developments, read philosophy, and conduct research.<sup>55</sup> He traced the emergence of the category and the need for *münevvers* through historical developments, citing scientific discoveries such as gunpowder, steamboats, electricity, and industrialization. The “era of the poets” had ended thanks to these developments, and the “era of the sciences” had started.<sup>56</sup> The term “*münevver*” became significant during the “era of the sciences.” The revolution was conceptualized in a scientific and positivist framework, making adherence to the revolution’s requirements synonymous with being recognized as a man of science.<sup>57</sup>

Saim distinguished between “noble” and “cripple” intelligence. His examples of “noble intelligence” included “Blaise Pascal from Clermont Ferrand,” who, according to the author,

---

<sup>53</sup> “Bu münevverlerde tecellî eder. Fransa ihtilâl-i kebîriniñ kurbanlarından olan genç şa’ir André Chénier belediyeniñ çöp arabasile siyâsetgâha görürülürken: « Öleceğime yanmıyorum: fakat bu başta söylenecek daha çok şeyler vardı. » demişdi.” Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> “Münevverler ne ihtilâlcî, ne de ‘an’ancilerdir. Buñlardan hangisini tercih ederseniz diye şorsanız alacağımız cevâb: tebessümdür. Çünkü münevvere ‘ilâve edilecek başka herhangi bir ‘unvân olan ma’nâ ve mâhiyeti boğar.” Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> “Evvelâ esâslar, şumüllü, elzem, ma’lumatdan soñra haқиқî ‘ilm, felsefe ve daha eşerlerini okuyub añlayacak kadar – lâ-ekâl – bir ecnebî lisânî öğrenmeğe, usulü vechîle çalışmaya tettebbu’ sahamızda mütemâdî diğkâte, yeñi bulduğumuz esasları: maddeleri toplamaya, fikirse kayda, taşnife öğrendiğmiz esâslı şeyleri unutmamaya ‘ömrümüzüñ devâmınca mu’ayyen bir ğâye içün dağılmayarak bir nokta üzerinde bütün irâdemizle toplanma i’timâdını, imânını iştîyâkıñı = rénergie ğayb etmeğe, mütemâdî tecrübe yapmaya ve düşünmeğe...” Yahya Saim [Ozanoğlu], “Münevverlik Hakkındaki Ankete Cevap: Asıl ve Topal Zekaya Dair,” *Milli Mecmua*, [13 Kanunuevvel 1339] 13 December 1923.

<sup>56</sup> “Seyâhatler, maţba’acılığın inkişâfı, barut, buhar ve elektririk kuvvetleriniñ keşfi, bunlarıñ maşinelere, sanâiyî’ye taţbiki, milletler arasında dinî, millî mücâdeleleriñ ma’kul bir hadde vâsıl olması müstebbîd idâreler yerine halktan kuvveti alan hükümetlerin te’sisi, nüfusuñ tezâyüdü, ğalabalık şehirlerin ‘asrî vaşıtalarla birbirine ribatı, felsefî, ‘ilmî, meslekî fikirleriñ intişârı, bu ğâyelere göre bir takım mü’esselerin zühuru, kıymet hükümleriniñ tebdîli, teakkülü, zümre ve sınıflarıñ teşkîli, tenkîdcilik, siyâsetcilik, hуқukculuқ, şahramanlık, şa’irlik devreleriniñ kapanub ‘ilm ve fenn devresiniñ açılması, icâb etdiriyor.” Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Banu Turnaoğlu, “The Positivist Universalism and Republicanism of the Young Turks,” *Modern Intellectual History* 14, no. 3 (2017).

defined “intelligence” as the one who can recognize “ignorance,” knows to not “assume errors,” and gives priority to “judgment and experience.”<sup>58</sup> Saim interpreted the distinctions made in Blaise Pascal’s *Pensées* to create a hierarchy of intelligences. The “noble intelligence” was distinct from the “pedantry, impudence, and obstinacy” of the “charlatans.”<sup>59</sup> At this moment, the author’s interlocutor asked about “heroism.” Yahya Saim did not question the pertinence of the question about heroism while replying to the survey on the *münevver*.

A hero sees the truth as it is, loves his homeland above all else, and understands that emotions such as interest, ambition, hatred, and love, which stem from human nature, can only temporarily influence him. However, when his homeland is in danger or the truth is at risk, he immediately withdraws from his personal concerns and takes action.<sup>60</sup>

After evoking the heroism of the *münevver*, the author surprisingly brought up Napoléon Bonaparte. According to Saim, Napoléon was an exemplary *münevver* until he lost his reason due to the pride caused by his successive military and political successes. What was “noble” about Napoléon’s intelligence was his ability to ascend the social hierarchy despite his modest origins on the one hand and his “intelligence ready to act.” In the end, the true *münevver* was a national hero (*münevver kahraman*) “who contributes to the benefit of their country and the truth” and who allowed “nationalization” like in the Japanese example. In the end, Yahya Saim’s article was another call to action for the educated elites of the country in service of the revolution. Working for the nation was akin to the “orderly march” of the military, “directing their efforts towards a common goal.” It required “unification” rather than the fragmentation of all differences, including those of “interest” and “opinion,” “as much as possible.”<sup>61</sup>

In this first round of debate on *münevver*, the most palpable opposition was between autonomy and heteronomy. Mustafa Şekip emphasized knowledge, intelligence, and the

---

<sup>58</sup> “Cahili teslîm eden, haţâyı inkâr etmeyen, muhakeme ve tecrübeye eñ büyük kıymeti veren zekâya bir isim vermek lâzım gelse ne dersiniz?” Yahya Saim [Ozanoğlu], “Münevverlik Hakkındaki Ankete Cevap: Asıl ve Topal Zekaya Dair.”

<sup>59</sup> “Şu hâlde siz; münevver, zekî, ma’lumâtlı, fa’âl arasında mu’ayyen bir ğayeye göre bir takım dereceler ta’iyin ediyorsunuz ki bu dereceler kabul edildiği takdirde ma’lumâtıfuruşâna, şarlatana, küstaha ve serkeşe hayatta bir cevelan sahası kalmayacak.” Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> “Kahraman odur ki haqîkati olduğu gibi görür, vatanını herşeyden ziâde sever, insanlığın icâbetinden olan menfa’at, ihtiraş, nefret ve muhabbet gibi hissiyât ve bunların muhtelif dereceleri onun üzerinde ancak bir zamân için te’sirini icrâ edebilir. Fakat, vatanı tehlikede, haqîkati ziyanda görünce baş odayından ğâfil fa’âlinde derhâl rica’at eder.” Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> “Eñ fâ’ideli iş müntezim yürüyüşdür ki bunu te’min için münevverlerin ittihadına, menfa’at ve icthâd farklarını mümkün mertebeye tâ’lif ederek bir ğayeye doğru teveccüh etmelerine lüzüm var.” Ibid.

institutions of social reproduction, avoiding an open call to action. For him, a true *münevver* was neither traditionalist nor revolutionary. This is why his example was André Chénier, a victim of the Jacobins in France. On the other hand, Yahya Saim and Ahmet Ağaoğlu envisioned the *münevver* as the revolutionary avant-garde who had to ignite and guide the rest of the population while also serving as guardians of the revolution, fighting against reactionary forces.

The primary focus of this initial debate was on the dichotomy between autonomy and heteronomy rather than independence and opposition.<sup>62</sup> The repertoire of intellectual actions did not include challenging established norms and political authority for truth and justice, as exemplified by the French intellectuals during the Dreyfus Affair. *Münevvers* were expected to endorse the ongoing revolution, either adopting a moderate or Jacobin stance. Intellectuals identified as *münevvers* were consistently aligned with the state's interests, the "country," or the "nation."

In June 1925, amid the violent repression of the Sheikh Said revolts, Akçuraoğlu Yusuf delivered a lecture at the Turkish Hearths titled "The Modern State and the Responsibility of the Münevver." In this lecture, Akçuraoğlu emphasized the urgency of discussing the responsibility of the *münevver* in light of the "revolts in Kurdistan." These revolts highlighted the necessity of protecting the republic from "reactionary" forces. According to Akçuraoğlu, if some "classes, groups, and individuals" had "deviated" from the truth, it was because they failed to understand the "present and future situation."<sup>63</sup> Thus, it was the *münevver*'s duty to "tell and write" their "opinions" during this "important moment of our history." Not doing so was similar to deserting the "front of the *münevver*."<sup>64</sup>

Again, "*münevver*" did not have the freedom of thought in a post-revolutionary context but rather the obligation to fight. Akçuraoğlu warned about the danger of "freedom" (*hürriyet*)

---

<sup>62</sup> Gisèle Sapiro, "Modèles d'intervention politique des intellectuels. Le cas français," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 176-177, no. 1 (2009): 14.

<sup>63</sup> "Bazı sınıf, zümre ve eşhasın dalâlet nazarları, vaziyet-i hâzıra ve âtiyeyi iyi kavrayamamaktan neş'et ediyor." Yusuf Akçuraoğlu, "Asrı Türk Devleti ve Münevverlere Düşen Vazife," *Türk Yurdu* 17-3, no. 174-13 ([Teşrinievvel 1341] October 1925): 19.

<sup>64</sup> "Münevverler zümresinden muayyen ve tam bir kanaat sahibi olanlar tarihimizin şu çok mühim anında, her yerde ve her şeye karşı kanaatlerini beyan ve neşretmekle mükelleftirler. Bu mükellefiyeti ifâ etmeyenleri Türk tarihi münevverlerimiz cephesinin firarîleri diye zikredecektir." *Ibid.*

during revolutionary times.<sup>65</sup> He cited the examples of the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety during the French Revolution. Akçuraoğlu argued that creating these repressive organizations during the Reign of Terror was necessary for the French to secure their liberties in the 1920s.<sup>66</sup>

During the revolution era, freedom served the reactionaries more than the revolutionaries. This is because it means the freedom to defend widespread and entrenched ideas and interests. Every revolution has succeeded with the complete sovereignty of one or more classes. This is because new ideas and interests can only be secured by force. Finally, do not forget that in every revolutionary war, the general staff of certain classes is composed of their ideologues, *that is, the münevver*. If our *münevvers* truly desire the establishment and consolidation of a modern state in Turkey, they must all join the general staff of those working for this goal. All *münevver* must be resolute against reactionism; otherwise, they would betray the common cause.<sup>67</sup>

Akçuraoğlu's speech is noteworthy for introducing the concept of "ideologue" into the discussion. He did not differentiate between "münevver" and "ideologue," and thus between the production and circulation of political ideas. Since the "War of Independence," calls for the unification and mobilization of the "münevver" had been common. However, by 1925, Akçuraoğlu perceived an increase in political repression as normal in the post-revolutionary context. Before Akçuraoğlu's speech, the failure of the *münevver* to fulfill their responsibilities was never equated with treason. The context of the Sheikh Said Revolt led the government to promulgate the Law on the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu*) on March 4, 1925. This law also reinstated the Independence Tribunals, first created during the Turkish War of Independence. Within this context, the responsibility of the Turkish *münevver* was to unite again and work.

---

<sup>65</sup> "Efendiler, bir hakikat-i tarihiyeyi asla hatırdan çıkarmayınız: İnkılâp devirlerinde hürriyet, inkılâpçılardan ziyade mürtecilere hizmet etmiştir." Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> "Fransız İhtilâli'nde konvansiyon ve salupublik olmasa idi, Fransızlar bugün hâiz oldukları siyasî hürriyetleri acaba kazanmış bulunurlar mıydı?" Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> "İnkılâp devrinde hürriyet, inkılâpçılardan ziyade mürtecilere hizmet etmiştir. Zira yayılmış, kökleşmiş fikirlerin ve menfaatlerin müdafaa hürriyeti demektir. Her inkılâp bir veya birkaç sınıfın tamamîyet-i hükümranîsi ile muvaffak olabilmıştır. Zira, yeni fikir ve menfaatler kuvvetle temin olunabilir. Nihayet şunu da unutmayınız ki her inkılâp harbinde muayyen sınıfların erkân-ı harbiyesi ideologlarından, yani münevverlerinde teşekkül eder. Eğer bizim münevverlerimiz de idealleri olan asrî devletin Türkiye'de cidden teessüsünü, takarrürünü istiyorlarsa cümlesi, bu gaye uğrunda çalışanların erkân-ı harbiyesine dahil olmalıdırlar. Bütün münevverler, irticaa karşı müteheddid bulunmazlarsa, müşterek gayeye hıyanet etmiş olurlar." Ibid.

The current duty of Turkish intellectuals is to collectively and unwaveringly commit to this monumental task and to work unitedly without succumbing to divisions.<sup>68</sup>

After the repression of the revolt, between 1927 and 1928, the discourse on “*münevver*” became milder, and the issue returned to the People’s Education rather than intellectual counterinsurgency. Of course, people’s education was linked to the state’s ambition to prevent popular revolts. Still, *münevver*’s responsibility became to have a better relationship with and educate the people.

### 1.3. The Incredible “Halk”

---

After 1925, discussions regarding the tasks and responsibilities of the *münevver* took on a more explicitly populist tone. I distinguish “populism” from “opportunistic” and “demagogic” types of political discourse that try to create consent by “pleasing people/voters” and base my analysis on Mudde Cas’s definition.

[...] populism as an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, the ‘pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite,’ and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.<sup>69</sup>

Populism was one of the six arrows symbolizing the ideological tenets of the CHP. However, populism is more than a set of ideas against the class struggle as expressed by the party program. It was about the imagination of a homogenous entity called “people” through its opposition to the “*münevver*.” The distinction between the *münevver* and the rest of society—referred to as the “people,” “peasants,” or “workers”—became increasingly pronounced. The term “*münevver*” came to describe individuals with higher intellectual capacities due to their education and those who served as educators and guides for the common people. This evolving discourse emphasized the role of the *münevver* as both intellectuals and teachers, responsible for disseminating knowledge and revolutionary ideals to the broader population.

---

<sup>68</sup> “Türk münevverlerinin bugünkü vazifesi, işte bu muazzam işe el birliğiyle, dağılmaksızın sarılmak ve itizallere kapılmaksızın müttehidten çalışmaktır” Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 543.

In January 1927, philosophy professor Mehmed Emin [Eriřirgil] wrote about the education and training of a *münevver* class. He emphasized the importance of this class in shaping future generations. The role of the *münevver* class involved transmitting revolutionary values, which would enable the country to benefit from the revolution fully. Mehmed Emin focused on educational institutions, arguing that the youth should be taught the “ideal” or “ideology” (*mefkure*). He believed this required reforming the educational system to include political issues in the curriculum.

The founder of the Gazi Teachers’ Training College, Halil Fikret [Kanat], wrote about the same issue a couple of months later by focusing on education, but this time, teaching good manners instead of revolutionary ideals or ideology. For Halil Fikret, the “Turkish revolution” was both “political” and “social.” The political revolution consisted of a change of government and administration. Attacking dangerous ideas and habits (*i’tiyādlār*) and adopting new ones in their place was part of the social revolution. The Turkish Revolution allowed the nation to jump from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. The scope of the Turkish revolution was so great that even “us, the *münevvers*” were “stunned” for a while. But this was normal. A mind becomes slower if it cannot compare great events with others. As a result, those who participated in the latest to a novelty had hardened habits and a lost spiritual elasticity because of their renewed intellectual level (*fikrī seviyesi müceddid olanlardır.*)

This is why the first duty of the intellectual masses who support the great revolutions and the revolutionary faction is to take measures that will shed light on dark environments and to try to acclimate minds to the new situation.<sup>70</sup>

Halil Fikret’s approach to the issue of the *münevver* was intriguing because he equated the responsibility of the *münevver* with the responsibility of propaganda. This connection helps explain the link between the People’s Preachers and the *münevver* discourse promoted by the early republican leadership in their correspondence and publications. Halil Fikret referred to a “propaganda organization” (*propaganda teşkilātı*) that would organize “People’s Conferences” (*Halk konferansları*). These “lectures” allowed to “enlighten people and the

---

<sup>70</sup> “Bunun içindir ki büyük inkilāplar arda inkilābı taraftar olan münevver kütlenin ve inkilāpçı fārikanın ilk vazifesi, karanlık muhītlere ışık saçacak tedbīrler almak ve rühları yeni vaziyete karşı ısındırmaya çalışmaktır.” Halil Fikret, “Münevverler ve İctimai İnkılabımız,” *Hayat*, August 16, 1928.

regular workers.” His reference to this propaganda organization was “Bolshevik Russia.” According to Halil Fikret, the Bolsheviks did everything possible to “warm up the people to the new administration.” They communicated their achievements through statistics, cinema, and spoken or written words. Halil Fikret believed those who truly understood the “psychology of the people” would “sincerely appreciate this need.”<sup>71</sup>

Forming a “*münevver* class” was necessary to “rapidly internalize the revolution and new ideals” and “implement the revolution throughout the country.”<sup>72</sup> For Halil Fikret, “youth” and “*münevvers*” were distinct groups. While others focused on the “youth,” he emphasized the need to form and mobilize the *münevvers* through “various organizations” so they could “organize social life according to the wishes and ideals of their leaders.” The responsibility of the *münevver* was to educate and guide the rest of the population, including the “workers,” to align them with the ideals of their “leaders.”<sup>73</sup>

After talking about the formation of the “*münevver* class,” Halil Fikret discussed the failure of the revolutionary ideal. “Unfortunately, the ideal has not yet been established.” To illustrate the failure of the ideal to become established, Halil Fikret wrote about his experiences in Ankara’s public spaces. His examples were about his fellow citizens’ bad manners and moral decay. Halil Fikret complained about the street vendors in Ankara who lie about the quality of their products, people who smoke at the cinema despite the sign board in the building and who mock the sign about the prohibition of smoking, children’s bad behavior, adult’s uncivilized manners while eating, or chatting in public with their friends, children’s public defecating in parks, a distinguished men’s disrespectful and insulting behavior against the peasants, and finally, the *münevver*’s indifference towards all of it.

---

<sup>71</sup> “Bu tedbîrlerin en esâsısı “propaganda teşkilâtı”dır. Halk ve ‘ameleî müntezeim hakîkî “Halk konferansları” ile tenvîr eden ve çok sistemli çalışan bir propaganda idâresi Bolşevik Rusya’da görüyoruz. Halka yeni idâyeye ısındırmak için yalnız az zaman içinde, neler yaptığını istatistiklerle sinemalara la sözle ve yazı ile halka bildirmek lâzımdır. Halk psikolojisinin idrâk edenler bu ihtiyâcî şamimî olarak taqdîr ederler. Bu tedbîrler yanında inkilâb “müsbet teşkilâtları” çok daha ehemniyetlidir. Bu da baş inkilâbilerin mefkûrelerini ‘askarî bir zaman içinde tahkîk etmeye çalışmakla olur.” Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> “En mes’ul inkilâbî, yeniye mefkûreleri sûratle benimseyen ve onları memleketin her tarafında tatbîk etmek için canla başla çalışan kuvvetli mütêsânid, cesûr ‘azîmkâr ve mefkûreci bir “münevver şabâkanın” teşkil edildiğini görendir.” Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> “Onun çok kuvvetli ve her harâretli gençlerinden başka, çok kuvvetli bir münevver zümresi daha vardır ki, bunlar sözle değil “muhtalif teşkilâtlarla” içtimâ’î hayâtî re’îslerinin dileklerine ve mefkûrelerine göre tazîm etmeye çalışıyorlar.” Ibid.

As a result, for Halil Fikret, the *münevvers*' responsibility was not only to teach the "ideal" or "ideology" (*mefkûre*), but also to teach good manners. Good, civilized, or bourgeois manners were not distinct from what the intellectual elites of the period called the "ideal." In a future article, Halil Fikret put "Turkish *münevvers* and administrators" in the same group as those who destroyed and damaged the country since the Tanzimat. According to Halil Fikret, the post-revolutionary order required the *münevvers* to "love the people."<sup>74</sup>

The situation has completely changed with the new revolution. The slogan, "The master of the country is the peasant," has opened a new path for us. This path shows us not mortality but eternity and happiness. To be a populist is to love the people. Loving people comes from understanding them. Something whose essence is unknown can only be loved unconsciously and theoretically. Therefore, our duty is to show our love for the people not through words but through all kinds of assistance by elevating them.<sup>75</sup>

Halil Fikret referred to Mustafa Kemal's speech from 1922 in which he qualified the "peasantry" as the "masters of the country." While the peasantry were the country's masters, they also needed to be "elevated" and "assisted." Halil Fikret was a pedagogue, the first pedagogue with a Ph.D. in Ottoman history; his vision of "social education" (*içtimâ'î terbiye*) was marked by an infantilizing conception of "people." He drew inspiration from the "pedagogy" (*Terbiye ilmi*). The best pedagogic methods for children were those adapted to their "spiritual development and abilities." It was the same for the "people." It was necessary to "learn about people" to succeed in "People's Education."

This principle must also be applied in the education of the people. To influence people, one must know their abilities and inclinations. The people are not just a mass that works and is made to work. They also have their own pleasures and aspirations, their own philosophical conceptions related to revival and life. Often, the pleasures and aspirations of the people are finer and more sincere than those of us from the cities.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> "Türk münevverleri her milletten ziyâde halkı sevmek mecbûriyetindedir." Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> "Yeni inkilâpta vaziyet tamâmen deęişmiştir. "Memleketin efendisi köylüdür" şiarı, bize yepyeni bir yol açmıştır. Bu yol, bize fânîliği deęil, ebedilięi ve sa'adeti gösteriyor. Halkçı olmak, halkı sevmektir. halkı sevmek, halkı anlamakla olur. Mâhiyeti bilinmeyen şey, ancak ğayr-i şu'urî ve nezrî bir surette sevilebilir. Binâ'en-'aleyh bize tertîb eden vazîfe, halkı sözle deęil, halka her türlü yardımdan bulunarak onu yükselterek sevdiğimizi bilfi'il göstermektedir." Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> "halk terbiyesinde de bu kâ'ideyi tatbîk etmek zarûridir. halkı tesîr etmek için, halkın isti'dâdlarını temâyüllerini bilmelidir. halk, yalnız çalışan ve çalıştırılan bir kitle deęildir. Onun da kendine göre hâz ve emelleri, onun da ihyâ'a ve hâyâta 'âit felsefî telâkķileri vardır. Çok defa halkın hâz ve emelleri biz şehirlerden daha ince ve daha çok şamîmidir." Ibid.



As discussed in the previous article, Halil Fikret's disdain for popular culture and manners contrasts sharply with his admiration for the "sincerity" of the popular classes in this one. He and other contributors to the debates refrained from defining the "people." Like "*münevver*," "the people" was a social category often presumed to be understood in late Ottoman and early republican discourse. As a result, the term "the people" was rarely explicitly defined in press debates. While the question "What is a *münevver*?" was raised by some, "What is the people?" was seldom, if ever, questioned.

Despite the clear definition of these social categories, thinking about one without the other was impossible. The *münevver* were tasked with educating the people and learning about their authentic national culture. The people, perceived to have bad manners, needed to be taught, enlightened, and guided along the right path to align with the revolution. From the outset of the controversy, the people were characterized as conservatives who preferred to maintain the status quo. They were seen as favoring calm over change and were "scared like wild beasts" (*tevaḥḥuṣ*) of transformation. Consequently, they were unable to determine the direction to take. As a result, the struggle of the *münevver* was a difficult one. The people, or the masses, were inclined toward fanaticism (*muta'aṣṣīb*) and could easily accuse the leaders of the revolution of "godlessness and treason."<sup>77</sup>

By the 1930s, the discourse on *münevver* had become increasingly populist. Some participants in the press controversies, such as Reşat Feyzi [Yüzüncü], who expressed himself in one of the most prestigious intellectual magazines since the late nineteenth century, went so far as to include himself in the category of "people."

"We have never really understood the meaning of "*münevver*." In our opinion, the quality of being a *münevver* is only given to two types of people. In the first category, being a *münevver* corresponds to a *titre*, a label. An example of the title: director in such an institution, general manager in such a ministry, professor of such a subject in such a high school, etc. An example of *etiquette*: graduate of this school... § In the second category, the meaning of *münevver* is entirely different. Those who belong to this class, so those who are counted as *münevvers*, are cosmopolitans. They do not trust their society, the art, the culture, or the intelligence of their people and those around them. There is a

---

<sup>77</sup> "İ tiraf ederim: mücâdele çetin ve ağırdır. Mücâdele saḥası gayr-ı müsâ'id olduğu gibi kullanılan silahlar da müsâvî değildir. şoḳaḳ mantığına uyarak şoḳağı memnûn etmek o kadar kolaydır ki herhangi bir müceddidi hareketsiz ve muta'aṣṣīb kitleleriñ nazarında kafirlikle, dinsizlikle, millet ve devlet ha'inliği ile ithâm etmek 'âdetâ açık kapıyı zorlamak kâbilinden bir qâhramanlıktır. Hele de biraz 'avâm nezdinde şöhret, nâm ve şıt hevesi olursa bu qâhramanlık pek cāzīb olur." Ahmet [Ağaoğlu], "Hareket-i Fikriye: [Münevverlerin Vazifesi]."

kind of admiration for the West among them. These people are not interested in their countries' material or spiritual aspects. They have all studied in Europe or America. Or they have spent a few years in these countries and then returned home as foolish admirers. They have nothing to do with our society. But strangely enough, they consider themselves the sole *münevvers* in this country. They don't read anything in Turkish. Because they distrust and disdain us. <sup>78</sup>

This quote was taken from an article titled "Who do we call the *münevvers*?" published in July 1931, two months before the circulation of the directives of the People's Preachers Organization. The author complained about the ambiguity of the term "*münevver*" and criticized the definition of the term by professional titles or academic credentials. Referring to the second type of the *münevver*, in other words, Europe-educated, polyglot, and politically (read "nationally") indifferent intellectual elites, he condemned them for being more interested in the streets in Paris and Berlin than in local issues such as the meaning of family in different neighborhoods in Istanbul.<sup>79</sup> The actual "*münevvers*," according to Reşat Feyzi, were not only those who distinguished themselves by their academic and professional credentials but those who genuinely "knew the people, the movements of the society, and the institutions" around them.<sup>80</sup> When it comes to the first type of "*münevver*," those civil servants working in various ministries, high school teachers, or high-ranking officers in state institutions, Reşat Feyzi argued that as long as they did not care about the new developments such as the "gymnastics festivals organized since five years in this country," they were not true "*münevvers*."<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> "Bizde "*münevver*" in manası hiçbir zaman anlaşılamamıştır. Bizim telâkkimize göre *münevver* adam vasfı iki sınıf insanlara verilir. Birinci zümrede *münevver* olmak, bir titre, bir etiquette sahibi olmağa vabestedir. Titre'e misal: Filân müessesede direktör, filân vekâlette müdürü umumi, filân lisede bilmemne hocası gibi. Etiquette'e misal: Filân fakülteden mezun, filân âli mektepten diplomalı gibi... İkinci zümrede *münevver*'in manası daha bambaşkadır. Bu sınıfa dahil olan ve *münevver* sayılanlar kozmopolitlerdir. Bulunduğu cemiyetle, o cemiyetin san'atine, kültürüne zekâsına, etrafındaki insanlara itimadî olmayan kimselerdir. Onlarda garba karşı bir hayranlık vardır. Bu sınıf insanlar memleketin maddî manevî hiçbir faaliyeti ile alâkadar değillerdir. Bu insanlar ekseriye tahsillerini Avrupada Amerikada yapmışlardır. Yahut oralarda birkaç sene dolaşmışlar, memlekete sadece deli bir hayran olarak dönmüşlerdir. Bu insanların bizim cemiyetimizle alâkaları yoktur. Fakat tuhaftır ki kendilerini bu memleketin yegâne *münevver*leri addederler. Türkçe hiçbir şey okumazlar. Çünkü onlarda bize karşı bir itimatsızlık bir istihfaf vardır." Reşat Feyzi [Yüzüncü], "Münevver Kime Denir?," *Uyanış: Servet-i Fünûn*, 14 July, 1931.

<sup>79</sup> "Memleketi bilmezler. Bigânedirler. Nişantaşında aile nedir, Fatih'te aile nedir; farkında değildiler. Onları Paris, Berlin sokakları alâkadar eder." Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> "Münevver adam hayatı, içinde yaşadığı cemiyetin hareketlerini, insanlarını, teşkilâtını tanıyan insandır." Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> "Bir lisede edebiyat hocası beş senedir bu memlekette jimnastik şenliği yapıldığını daha duymamıştır." Ibid.

In other words, general interest in political affairs, but especially in the partisan activities initiated by the single-party regime, was more important in order to become a true *münevver* than professional titles and academic credentials. Reşat Feyzi criticized including people in the category of the “*münevver*” based on profession and level of education. Still, he did not imagine “*münevvers*” without those assets. He aimed to prompt those who belong to the social strata to become more interested in national and nationalist causes. Reşat Feyzi’s understanding of true *münevvers* echoed the mobilization of the provincial elites as spokespeople of the single-party regime. He also implied that he was part of what the *münevver* disdained: “us,” implying that he was closer to the popular strata of the society.

It was never clear what exactly entered into the category of *halk*. A regular contributor to one of the most respectful intellectual magazines of the era could include himself in the same group as the Anatolian peasantry and the working classes according to the context and his strategies. The people had multiple meanings. It was used derogatorily when it came to reforming the provinces or taming the uncivilized behavior of Ankara’s inhabitants, spitting or defecating in the streets. It was used in a praising sense when it came to criticizing intellectual elites, *münevvers*, for their disdain of the popular classes.

In any case, “*halk*” was most often used to talk about the Anatolian peasantry and/or the common folk as opposed to the intellectual, economic, and political elites. From its inception, the CHP claimed to sing people’s songs. It adopted the name People’s Party (*Halk Fırkası*) before integrating ‘republican’ into its title in 1924.<sup>82</sup> The CHP targeted “*halk*” as the main recipient of its nationalization and Westernization efforts. The party documents frequently highlighted this focus, reflecting the dichotomy between the commoners and the distinguished ones (*avam-havas*), the governing elites and the governed (*askeri-reaya*), or the enlightened elites and the common folk (*münevver-halk*). Hence, the *münevver-halk* dichotomy was an actualization of the existing social and political dichotomies in the Ottoman Empire.

The creation of the People’s Preachers Organization maintained this dichotomy by dividing their audience between the *münevver* and “ordinary-looking citizens.” The latter was divided into two: the “peasantry” (*köylü*) and “common folk” (*halk*). With the influence of Ziya

---

<sup>82</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, “The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?”

Gökalp, “people” (*halk*) remained the bearers of the national wisdom. Many articles published in the early republican era reproduced this idea. In 1933, for instance, Sadri Ertem published an article titled “Ignorant Men of Letters, Wise Peasants.” In this article, he contrasted the knowledge of the urban intellectual elites with that of the rural peasantry. He argued that while Ottoman science and institutions were less effective, the wisdom of the peasants was invaluable. Ertem’s anecdote highlighted the need to immerse in the “illiterate people’s sea” for genuine understanding and progress.

While the *halk* was celebrated as the true bearer of national wisdom, it was also perceived as a potential threat. The CHP leadership saw the *halk* as both the foundation of the nation and a source of counterrevolutionary anxiety. This duality necessitated strategies to educate and integrate the *halk* while mitigating risks of opposition and unrest. The concept of “*halk*” was thus integral to the Kemalist vision, embodying the promise of a unified national identity and the challenges of maintaining political stability amidst diverse social forces.

Against this background, it is difficult to differentiate early republican populism from its elitism. The dichotomy of *münevver-halk* was elitist for its disdain of the less educated and rural populations and “populist” for its celebration of popular culture as the source of national culture and its dichotomic understanding of society. While elitism and populism are often opposed, they go hand in hand. But because of the meanings assigned to the “*münevvers*,” the early republican regime was far from being “anti-intellectualist.”<sup>83</sup> What is perceived as a critique of “intellectualism” was only a way of criticizing certain intellectual elites, not a general rejection of the political role and pertinence of intellectuals.<sup>84</sup>

#### 1.4. Against the Specter of “Reaction”

---

The crises of the 1930s sustained and intensified the discourse on the *münevver*. I argue that while the republican regime’s *münevver* discourse originated from late Ottoman populism influenced by the Russian Narodnik movement, three significant events in 1930 brought about a change. The first was the ongoing Ararat Revolt in eastern Anatolia in 1927. Press coverage

---

<sup>83</sup> Morton White, “Reflections on Anti-Intellectualism,” *Daedalus* 91, no. 3 (1962).

<sup>84</sup> Doğan Gürpınar, “The Reinvention of Kemalism: Between Elitism, Anti-Elitism and Anti-Intellectualism,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 3 (2013).

of the Ararat Revolt was directed towards the state grammar of counterinsurgency. The “rebels” had to be “annihilated” or “eliminated.” The opinion articles of the period did not frame this event as a problem about the responsibility of the “*münevver*.”<sup>85</sup> Although familiar with Kurdish revolts, what truly impacted the early republican leadership was the “Menemen Event” and the establishment of the opposition party, the Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, SCF).

The discourse on creating an “organization” (*teşkilat*) for public lectures, among other initiatives, had already been discussed in 1928, drawing on the Russian example. Despite these early discussions, the party leadership did not establish the People’s Preachers Organization until September 1931 and the People’s Houses until February 1932. Meanwhile, independent organizations like the Turkish Hearths were already engaged in informing the public about the benefits of the revolution and ongoing reforms. Throughout the 1920s, the party leadership was primarily focused on counterinsurgency and the promulgation of laws to establish the framework for their revolution according to their “ideals” (*mefkure*).

The foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization followed political events that shook confidence in the party leadership’s power and authority in Turkey during the year 1930. The first event was the foundation and unexpected electoral success of the Liberal Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, SCF). Besides its electoral success, some political rallies organized by the SCF leadership attracted the masses who saw the Liberal Party as their savior from Kemalist authoritarianism, especially in Izmir.<sup>86</sup> Three months after its foundation, Fethi Okyar and Ahmet Ağaoğlu dissolved the Party on Mustafa Kemal’s order.<sup>87</sup> The foundation of the People’s Preachers chronologically followed the short experience of the multi-party regime with the forging of the Liberal Party. Moreover, the directives referred to the local elections and potential oppositional movements while enumerating the occasions the preachers were supposed to speak up. The preachers had to speak up on local election days and at oppositional

---

<sup>85</sup> “İmha ve Tenkil Vaziyeti Leyhimize İnkişaf Ediyor,” *Vakit*, 10 July 1930; “Şakiler yer yer imha ediliyor: Eşkıyanın kısmı küllisi ihata edilmiş bir vaziyettedir,” *Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul), 10 July 1930 1930.

<sup>86</sup> Hamit Bozarlan, “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930,” §28.

<sup>87</sup> Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Serbest Firka Hatıraları* (Istanbul: İletişim, [1949], 1994), 116-17.

rallies to repeat and “perform an exegesis” of the values and principles of the party “in a language that their audience can understand.”<sup>88</sup>

The CHP saw its failure to mobilize the masses like the forged opposition party as a problem of mobilizing the “*münevvers*” capable of understanding but also “exegeting” the ideological message of the Party. On the other hand, when one of the founders of the Liberal Party, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, referred to the unexpected success of their Izmir rally, he explained their success by the prosperity of the region and the high concentration of disinterested “*münevvers*” deeply attached to their freedom.

Izmir was a place that reacted to the foundation of the new party with the most remarkable fervency! Generally, this milieu is more “*münevver*,” more zealous, and a more sensitive part [of the population]. This milieu is rich. As a result, they don’t have their eyes set on the state’s treasure. These people live by their own toil and their own work. They naturally had a more developed sense of liberty. Besides, this milieu is relatively more “*münevver*” (*aydın*). A considerable part of the press of his country is there. Most of the “*münevvers*” (*aydın*) of the country are also there.<sup>89</sup>

Despite the political faction within the party that led Ağaoğlu to create the SCF and end his political career with its closure, the issue of the *münevver* was understood similarly by both the remaining CHP members and their opponents. Political disagreements centered on the level of involvement of the *münevver* in political affairs, particularly the opposition between autonomy and heteronomy during the first wave of controversy. However, this divergence did not prevent different political tendencies from maintaining the dichotomy between the *münevver* and the rest of society.

The issue of mobilizing the “*münevvers*” surfaced again during a significant event in late 1930 that challenged the power and authority of the CHP. In Menemen, a Naqshbandi sheikh named Mehmet delivered a public speech, proclaiming himself the messiah and labeling

---

<sup>88</sup> “Fakat meselâ mahallî muhalif bir cereyan veyahut bir intihap günü birinci ve ikinci esaslardan maksadı tenvir için istifade edilmekle beraber asıl sözü müessir ve hararetle kısımları ve neticeleri o günün meseleleri üzerinde teksif olunur. Fırkamızı uzaktan yakından alâkadar eden cereyanlar mahsûs olunca, hatiplerimiz herhangi bir vesileden ve toplanmadan istifade ederek bu cereyanlara karşı Fırkamızın ana maksatlarını o yerdeki muhatapların anlayacağı lisan ile teşrih ederler.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>89</sup> “İzmir yeni fırkanın çıkışını her yerden ziyade hararetle karşılayan bir muhitti! Umumiyyetle bu muhit nisbeten daha münevver, heyecanlı ve hassas bir kısımdır! Bunun sebepleri meydandadır. Bu muhit zengindir. Binaenaleyh devlet hazinesine en az göz dikmiş yerdir. Kendi zahmetleri ve kendi çalışmasıyla geçinen insanlarda tabiatıyla hürriyet ve serbesti duygusu gelişmiştir. Sonra bu muhit nisbeten daha aydındır. Memleketin canlı matbuatının bir kısmı oradadır. Memleket aydınlarının yine çoğu oradadır.” Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Serbest Fırka Hatıraları*, 55.

Mustafa Kemal as the *deccal*, a malevolent creature prophesied to appear at the end of the world.<sup>90</sup> Sheikh Mehmet also denounced the “Hat Revolution” that had mandated Western-style hats.<sup>91</sup>

The Menemen Revolt, which led to the murder of Kubilay, a teacher performing his military service, by Sheikh Mehmet’s followers, was minor in scale but deeply outraged the Kemalist leadership and elite.<sup>92</sup> The crowd’s applause during Sheikh Mehmet’s speech caused significant agitation. Hamit Bozarslan described this event as the “symbolic killing” of the Republic from the Kemalist perspective.<sup>93</sup> He noted that the CHP employed various tactics to prevent such occurrences, including the violent repression of opposition movements and adopting more Islamic rhetoric for self-legitimization.<sup>94</sup> This event, coupled with the experience of the Liberal Party, prompted the CHP leadership to enhance its propaganda efforts.

The Menemen event underscored the challenge of mobilizing *münevvers* for the CHP. Unlike Sheikh Mehmet’s messianic dervish order, the CHP lacked orators capable of moving the masses and generating applause. Aka Gündüz, a writer and columnist who later became a CHP deputy, addressed this issue in an article published soon after the Menemen Revolt in February 1931. He linked the revolt’s failure to the responsibility of the *münevver*, criticizing commentators who rejoiced over the absence of “*münevvers*” among the Menemen rebels.<sup>95</sup> Gündüz opposed labeling the protesters as “a couple of *sans-culottes*” or “total ignorants” (*karacahil*), arguing that there were “ultra-*münevvers*” hostile to the regime. He insisted that not all “*münevvers*” were progressive and revolutionary.<sup>96</sup>

In his article, Gündüz emphasized the need for the CHP to recognize that the *münevver* class was not monolithic and that some intellectuals opposed the regime. He called for a more

---

<sup>90</sup> David Cook, B., “Dajjāl,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*, ed. Kate Fleet et al., *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Brill, 2012).

<sup>91</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930,” §6.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., §7.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., §8.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., §37.

<sup>95</sup> “Çok şükür, görüyoruz ki bu son irtica hâdisesinde bir tek münevver vatandaş yoktur.” Aka Gündüz [Aka], “Sayı ile Kendimize Gelelim,” *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1931, 3.

<sup>96</sup> “Ahrar Fırkaları, serbesti partizanları, hâlâskâran grupları, meclis hizipleri, Fiçmorisler, Kont Ostroğoflar boş herifler, Damat Ferit’ler, Ali Kemal’ler karacahil mi idiler?” Ibid.

nuanced understanding of the *münevvers*' role in society and urged the party to develop strategies to mobilize them effectively. By addressing these challenges, Gündüz highlighted the complexities of aligning the intellectual elite with the revolutionary goals of the CHP, underscoring the importance of effective communication and engagement with diverse ideological perspectives within the *münevver* class.

According to Aka Gündüz, the political “reaction” expressed through this revolt could not emerge without some “*münevvers*” behind it. “If the *münevvers* did not constitute their military units and general headquarters, no dervish in the world, nor any dervish Mehmet, could go to Menemen.”<sup>97</sup> In sum, if the state used its “metallic and unconscious weapons,” those like “dervish Mehmet” had their disciples.<sup>98</sup> To give more examples of a reactionary *münevver*, Aka Gündüz also mentioned *La République enchaînée*, a French-speaking oppositional newspaper published in Paris. This media was founded by a former Interior Minister who was expelled from Turkey with 150 personae non grata and was constantly accusing the Kemalist regime (*le régime kémaliste*) of establishing “a regime of terror.”<sup>99</sup>

To make his point about the necessity of forming *münevvers* to oppose the “reactionary” ones, Aka Gündüz referred to the French case during the Dreyfus Affair. He mentioned Léon Daudet, son of Alphonse Daudet, a celebrated novelist known to the late 19th-century Ottoman literati, a famous anti-Dreyfusard, and one of the primary political figures of the Action française. For Gündüz, Léon Daudet exemplified that being a *münevver* was not merely about knowledge. Daudet was not an “ignorant.”<sup>100</sup> To counter figures like Léon Daudet or Sheikh Mehmed, it was necessary to form revolutionary *münevvers*.

The figure of the reactionary *münevver* emerged concerning two types of people. The first type included religious dignitaries and Sufi masters like Sheikh Mehmet, who led the masses by leveraging their unsecular knowledge and social distinction. The second type encompassed

---

<sup>97</sup> “Karargâhı umumilerini, büyük cüzütamlarını münevverler teşkil etmese, dünyada hiçbir derviş Mehmet, hiç bir Menemen’e gidemez.” Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> “Derviş Mehmetler, rejime düşman münevverlerin madeni ve şuursuz silahlarıdır. Tıpkı inkılapçı yüzbaşının bizzat kullandığı otomatik tüfek gibi madeni ve şuursuz bir silah...” Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Mehmed Ali, “La Terreur,” *La république enchaînée*, 15 February 1931.

<sup>100</sup> “Üçüncü cumhuriyetin altmış küsürüncü senesindeki gazeteci Leon Dode münevver değil midir? Rabbine kavuşan Kutbülâkta’b’ın kavuğunu ve kavuğunun ibiğini öpelim geliyor. Haydi ona da cahil deyiniz!” Aka Gündüz [Aka], “Sayı ile Kendimize Gelelim,” 3.



late Ottoman intellectual elites who were critical of or indifferent towards the new regime. These *münevvers* were closely associated with the former capital, Istanbul, and represented a significant challenge to the new revolutionary ideals promoted by the CHP. To warn against this old type of *münevvers*, Şevket Süreyya [Aydemir] coined the term “half-*münevver*” in 1932. This article provoked a second wave press debate on the same category. This time, Nurullah Ata [Ataç] and Şevket Süreyya [Aydemir] debated the new status of the Istanbul *münevvers* and their obsolescence after moving the capital to Ankara.

According to Şevket Süreyya, the old generation of *münevvers* who lived and worked in Istanbul became “provincialized” under the new regime. He perceived the “provincial *münevver*” as less influential and politically relevant. To illustrate his point, Şevket Süreyya referenced the Italian Unification’s impact on the Italian *münevver*, relying on a highly ethnocentric interpretation of history. He noted that cities like Florence and Venice, which once produced figures like Machiavelli and Michelangelo, lost their cultural prominence after the capital moved to Rome.<sup>101</sup> This comparison reveals his view of the *münevver* as vital cultural and political agents, akin to vanguards or advisors to the prince, integral to societal transformation through their cultural contributions. Şevket Süreyya and many other columnists of the period viewed the *münevver* as essential to social and political transformations through their cultural productions.

---

<sup>101</sup> “Çünkü bugünkü Floransa ve bugünkü Venedik, hiç şüphe yokki artık, oniki ve on birinci asırların Venediğ’i ve Floransa’sı değildir. Kurunuvustada Avrupa’nın hemen bütün şehirlerine karşı, asırlarca zanaat ve para hocalığı eden, Floransa şimdi sadece bir eyâlet şehridir. Bugünkü Floransa, ne bir Machiavel, ne bir Mikel-anj yetiştirebilir.” Şevket Süreyya [Aydemir], “Yarı Münevverler Kulübü,” *Kadro*, 1932, 40.

## Conclusion

Becoming a *münevver* required a certain level of education, public visibility, usually from the printing press, and a resulting social distinction. The debates on *münevver*-ness also revolved around the political meaning and repercussions of their artistic or literary inclinations.

Contrary to the case of France, the salient moment that can be considered as the emergence of “*münevver*” as intellectuals did not rest on a polarized debate in which clear-cut camps opposed each other. This impressive production of articles and pamphlets on the *münevver* gives the impression of observing a controversy. Still, the opposing parts of this controversy were never crystal clear.

As mentioned throughout the chapter, the most palpable divergence in this press was an extremely carefully voiced appeal for more autonomy from the revolutionary fervency of the early republican elite (Mustafa Şekip). The rest of the interventions converged on the increased importance of the work by the “*münevver*” for the education of the population and for the repression of the revolts. The press articles multiplied and became more and more heated in every moment of political crisis, from the Sheikh Said Revolt to the murder of the republican teacher by the disciples of a sheikh in Menemen. The unification and almost military mobilization of the *münevver* were seen as crucial for the maintenance of the new regime and the public order. In the French case, the category of “intellectual” emerged out of the conflict about the destiny of Alfred Dreyfus, thanks to the relative autonomy of the intellectual field.<sup>102</sup> In the Ottoman-Turkish case, “*münevver*” emerged out of a revolutionary consensus on the necessity of uniting and mobilizing the intellectual elites around a common political cause. In this sense, the early republican “*münevver*” had more to share with Julien Benda’s “clericals” working for the sake of “order” than with the Dreyfusards.<sup>103</sup>

Populism was an integral part of the revolutionary discourse of the early republican political and intellectual elites. As a result, the category of “*münevver*” was built through its opposition to the common people. The figure of *münevver* was instrumental in placing “*halk*” at center

---

<sup>102</sup> Christophe Charle, *Birth of the Intellectuals : 1880-1900*, 181.

<sup>103</sup> Julien Benda, *La trahison des clercs*, Classiques des sciences sociales, (Chicoutimi: J.-M. Tremblay, 2006), 5, 128.

stage, just like the figure of the preacher, who is instrumental in placing the state at center stage.

These debates informed by *münevver* were not really about the participants. They were rather about the construction of the “people,” and every *münevver* agreed that “people” were more or less distinct from them. The question was rather about how these intellectually superior, educated, and lettered milieus would contribute to building the new regime. Hence, in some of its uses, “*münevver*” only denoted the social distinction of a larger group of educated elites – not limited to writers, journalists, and professors, but also mayors, governors, provincial administrators, deputies, and ministers. Hence, “*münevver*” had a closer relationship with the state apparatus than the “intellectual.” “*Münevver*” was somewhere between the Ottoman “*havas*” (the distinguished ones) and the “*askeri*” (the governing elite).

Given the prominence of international intellectual references ranging from Pascal to Daudet, “*münevver*” was an adaptation of the “intellectual” into the local context within the framework of newspaper debates and opinion articles held by writers, journalists, professors, and politicians. The CHP leadership accelerated its efforts to mobilize the “masses” by mobilizing the “enlightened elites” against the background of ongoing discussions about “People’s Education” (*Halk Terbiyesi*) and the “Responsibility of the *Münevver*.” The debates on the *münevver*’s responsibility were more inclined towards a more direct engagement with the rest of the population. This implied “speaking” rather than “writing” to the people.

Against this background, the CHP leadership accelerated their efforts to mobilize the masses. But since oratory was seen as a requirement for mass mobilization, as was the case around Fethi Okyar and Ahmet Ağaoğlu during their Izmir rally or around Sheikh Mehmet during the Menemen Revolt, the Party needed its own local *münevvers*. For this purpose, the Party sent the “People’s Preachers Organization” directives in book format to each province in 1931.<sup>104</sup>

As shown in the next chapters, People’s Preachers’ social origins and prospects for social mobility were modest compared to columnists debating the true definition of the “*münevver*” in the press. But it also echoed the early republican critique of the “Ottoman” *münevvers*. In

---

<sup>104</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı.*

this sense, the CHP leadership produced an alternative model of the *münevver* by establishing its communicational apparatus. Unlike the late Ottoman *münevvers*, the People's Preachers were close to ordinary people. The party leadership ordered the provincial directorates to select its preachers among those capable of interacting with ordinary people by speaking their language.

The discussions on *münevver* in the 1920s and 1930s press provide background information on the public debates that led the CHP leadership to create organizations like the People's Preachers and the People's Houses. Another side of the coin was the anxieties about the power of the spoken word and the danger from ordinary people. The following section will analyze selected documents from the party and state archives about this side: the danger of word of mouth spread by actors ranging from Islamic preachers to ordinary city dwellers.

## 2. The Power of the Spoken Word

---

Every member of the Republican People's Party who sees the success of our party as essential to the foundation and felicity of the state and nation is a permanent preacher of the party. Every member, wherever and in any situation, if they witness a conversation that does not align with the principles and foundations of the party or hear such an idea or statement, must immediately, according to the needs of the situation and the (local) context, and with an appropriate manner — sometimes sternly, sometimes softly as needed — explain the truths, correct the mistakes, and prevent the audience from forming false opinions. In cases of continuous propaganda marked by opposition or political conditions with a public impact, notifications will be sent from the center via telegram or mail regarding the key points that should form the basis of the People's Preachers' speeches, depending on the nature of the matter. For important local issues, the local administrative committees decide the main points to be addressed and, if necessary, communicate them to the provincial, district... People's Preachers. For instance, at a meeting held for any purpose or at lectures given by others, if a party member sees an expression or trend that does not align with the identity, honor, and principles of our party, they must immediately take the floor, regardless of who they are, and enlighten the public present to the best of their knowledge.

Similarly, during a train journey, a coffeehouse conversation, or a hotel or inn companionship, if the speakers say wrong and harmful things, the party member should join the discussion in a way that the listeners will receive well and correct the errors. In any case, in situations that would harm the great ideals of the party, every member must courageously engage in intellectual struggles and take initiative regardless of the existing conditions. There is no requirement for eloquence in speech, even when there is such a need. These points are both a national duty and an honorable task for our party members. In such and similar places, situations, travels, gatherings, and conversations, even if there are no opposing and contrary suggestions, every party member should spontaneously bring up and convey a principle, rule, or action of our party that fits the time and place and should enlighten and express the topic to everyone with satisfaction.

1

---

<sup>1</sup> “Fırkanın halk hatipleri teşkilâtı:

Bu kısmı yazmadan çok mühim bir noktayı esas olarak tesbit etmek lüzumludur.

(Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkasına mensup olan ve devletin, milletin kuruluşunu ve saadetini firkamızın muvaffakiyetinde gören her firkacı arkadaş, fırkanın daimî hatibidir. Her firkacı nerede ve herhangi vaziyette olursa olsun, fırka prensiplerine ve esaslarına uymıyan bir sohbeta şahit olur, böyle bir fikir ve bir söz işitirse derhal zeminin ve vaziyetin icabına göre ve yine vaziyetin gösterdiği bir eda ile, yani icabında sert ve lüzumunda yumuşak olarak hakikatleri izah, hataları tashih ve samilerde yanlış kanaat husulünü menetmeğe mecburdur. Devamlı muhalif propagandalar veya tesiri umumî olan siyasi hallerde hatiplerin sözünde esas fikri teşkil edecek noktalar hakkında merkezden işin mahiyetine göre telgraf veya posta ile tebligat ta yapılır. Tesiri mahalli olan mühim meselelerde mahallî idare heyetleri söylenecek söz zenmininin esasını kararlaştırıp lüzumuna göre vilâyet, kaza ilâh... halk hatiplerine tebliğ eder. Meselâ: herhangi bir mahsatla yapılmış bir içtimada veya başkalarının verdikleri konferanslarda firkamızın hüviyetine, şerefine ve prensibine uymıyan bir ifade ve cereyan gören firkacı,

This excerpt from the directives of the People’s Preachers Organization (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*) shows that the party leadership was concerned about everyday conversations, especially when these were critical of its actions, values, and principles. The creation of the People’s Preacher’s Organization, among other things, was an attempt to infiltrate daily conversations in the coffeehouses and hotel lobbies. Since the early modern era, coffeehouses in urban centers were often situated next to mosques.<sup>2</sup> This emphasis on the coffeehouses raises the question of critical utterances by Islamic preachers and Sufi sheikhs.

The CHP established the Preachers Organization to gain legitimacy across Anatolia. The growing support for short-lived opposition parties, insurrections, revolts, and other subtle forms of opposition raised concerns among government officials about the public’s susceptibility to react to political messages spread through spoken word (*söz*). The CHP leadership and the Interior Ministry labeled these messages as “rumors” (*dedikodu*) and “propaganda.” Rumors and propaganda became a significant issue for members of the party who produced numerous documents kept in the archives of the Interior Ministry. The party’s General Secretary, who also served as the Interior Minister, wanted to ensure that these issues were taken seriously and that those responsible were punished. The documentation on “rumors and propaganda” about seemingly random individuals can be considered a way to monitor “public opinion,” as understood by Arlette Farge and later by Sophie Wahnich.<sup>3</sup>

One of the most remarkable aspects of the founding document of the People’s Preacher’s Organization was the emphasis on the spoken word or word of mouth. The terms used for the danger of the spoken word in the archives were “*dedikodu*,” literally translated as “said and

---

kim olursa olsun, derhal söz alarak bildiği, gördüğü kadar mevcut halkı tenvir etmeli ve yine meselâ bir tren yolculuğunda, bir kahve sohbetinde, bir otel, han arkadaşlığında konuşanlar yanlış ve zararlı şeyler söylerlerse dinleyenlerin hüsnü telâkki edeceği bir tarzda söze katılarak yanlışları tashih etmelidir. Her halde her fırkacının büyük fırka ideallerine zarar getirecek vaziyetlerde, mevcut şerait ne olursa olun cesaretle fikir mücadeleleri yapmaları ve bunun için teşebbüs almaları lâzımdır. Hatta böyle bir ihtiyaç halinde söz söylemek için ifade düzgünlüğüne bile ihtiyaç yoktur. Bu noktalar fırka mensuplarımıza hem bir vatan borcu, hem de bir şeref vazifesidir. Şunun gibi buna benzer yerlerde, vaziyetlerde, seyahatlerde, toplanma ve konuşmalarda, sohbetlerde aleyhte ve aksi telkinlerde bulunanlar olmasa bile her fırkacı kendiliğinden açarak ve maksatlara intikal ettirerek fırkamızın o zemin ve zamana uyan bir prensibini, bir kaidesini, icraatını ortaya sürmeli ve herkesi memnuniyetle mevzuu olarak tenvir ve ifade eylemelidir.” Ibid., 11-13.

<sup>2</sup> Sümevra A. Gurbuzel, “Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan: Preachers and the Rise of a Political Public Sphere in Early Modern Istanbul (1600-1675)” (Ph.D., Harvard University, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Arlette Farge, *Dire et mal dire, l’opinion publique au XVIIIe siècle* (Seuil: Paris, 1982); Sophie Wahnich, “La patrie en danger, rumeur et loi,” *Hypothèses* 4, no. 1 (2001).

heard,” but meaning “gossip” or “rumors.” The ‘gossipers’ were often from lower social strata, fishermen in Galata, a group of young and old women from Mersin, unemployed individuals talking at coffeehouses, but also Islamic preachers and mosque imams in various cities and towns figured in the Ministry’s archives.

The party leadership and the central government emphasized word of mouth due to their perception of the ordinary “people” as an uneducated herd easily manipulated by dangerous utterances. This concern over spoken communication is evident in the organization’s title and detailed directives (*talimat*). The directives highlight train trips, coffeehouse debates, and discussions in guesthouses as potential venues for voicing “wrong and harmful” (*yanlış ve zararlı*) words or “unfavorable and oppositional” (*aleyhte ve aksi*) suggestions.<sup>4</sup> Analyzing the state discourse on the spoken word helps us understand the motivations behind creating the People’s Preachers Organization.

The Ministry of the Interior identified specific social spaces as susceptible to the spread of dangerous words. Coffeehouses, in particular, were already significant sites of political opposition in the early seventeenth-century Ottoman Empire due to their organization in urban centers around important mosques and famous preachers.<sup>5</sup> Their role as hubs for voicing political dissent persisted through the nineteenth century as successive sultans developed mechanisms to monitor Islamic preachers and meeting places.<sup>6</sup>

The CHP General Secretary and the Ministry of the Interior frequently corresponded with their provincial sections about the political opposition expressed by Islamic preachers, members of opposition parties (when legal), other suspected oppositional political groups, professional associations not aligned with the party, and sometimes random city dwellers. These documents allow us to examine the role of Islamic preachers and coffeehouses as sources of dissident words in early republican Turkey. This chapter is based on keyword research in

---

<sup>4</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> Cengiz Kırılı, “Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” in *Public Islam and the Common Good*, ed. Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004); Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire : Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 124; Sümeýra A. Gurbuzel, “Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan.”

<sup>6</sup> For the state-driven control mechanisms on religion in the early modern period, see Derin Terziođlu, “Sunna-minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State: The Nasihatname of Hasan Addresses to Murad IV,” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 27 (2010); Sümeýra A. Gurbuzel, “Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan.”

the State Archives using the following terms: *hatip*, *vaiz* (preacher), *hutbe* (sermon), *halk hatibi* (people’s preacher), *söz* (word), *söylev*, *nutuk* (speech), *konuşma* (talk, discussion), *dedikodu* (gossip), and *propaganda*.

A recent study by Murat Metinsoy used similar documents to show how ordinary people expressed their opposition and dissent through informal channels (rumors, placards, word of mouth) or in spaces the state apparatus had difficulty penetrating (mosques, coffeehouses, homes).<sup>7</sup> This chapter draws on Metinsoy’s research but analyzes these documents not only as a sign of the political agency of the ordinary people but also as signs of state anxiety concerning the opposition stemming from the spoken word to provide context for the foundation of People’s Preachers Organization and People’s Houses.

## 2.1. Religious Opposition

---

Orator, “the man who fulfills himself in his character as an expert in eloquence.” The man who utters a solemn message, because, before meaning “to plead a cause,” *orare* remains a word of religious and legal language, “to pronounce a ritual formula, a prayer,” of the same family as *oraculum*, which would first mean “place where a request is addressed to the god, then ‘oracle.’” As for *dicendi*, the root of the verb *dicere*, \**deik/dik*, means “to show”: *bene dicere*, “to indicate the right path by words.”<sup>8</sup>

The very name of the People’s Preachers Organization (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı*) evokes Islamic opposition through the term “*hatip*,” which refers to Islamic preachers (*va’iz* or *hatip*) and also means “orator,” albeit with a largely forgotten religious connotation. Translating the word “*hatip*” from Modern Turkish into a secular English term is challenging since both “orator” and “preacher” carry religious and non-religious connotations. The closest secular translation might be “speaker,” but this fails to convey the selection, training, and authorization processes both religious preachers and the People’s Preachers underwent, thus not fully capturing the reality of the People’s Preachers Organization. The dichotomy between the

---

<sup>7</sup> Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey*, 1923-38.

<sup>8</sup> “Orateur, «l’homme qui s’accomplit dans son caractère d’expert en éloquence”. l’homme qui profère un message solennel, car, avant de signifier “plaider une cause”, *orare* reste un mot de la langue religieuse et juridique, “prononcer une formule rituelle, une prière”, de la même famille que *oraculum*, qui signifierait d’abord “lieu où est adressée une requête au dieu, puis “oracle”. Quant à *dicendi*, la racine du verbe *dicere*, \**deik/dik*, signifie “montrer” : *bene dicere*, “indiquer le bon chemin par la parole.”“Cicéron et al., *L’invention de l’orateur / Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin ; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler* (Paris : Gallimard, 2021), 16.



People's Preachers and the mosque preachers of the Republican People's Party is one of the first questions that arises when examining documents about the People's Preachers Organization.

The foundational document of the People's Preachers Organization, the directives, bear no explicit reference to Islamic preachers. However, I argue that the organization's genealogy reveals that the People's preachers were to work for the state and the party against their religious counterparts. Because "Islamic reaction" (*irtica*) was one of the main concerns of the CHP leadership since the beginning. One of the first pieces of government legislation concerned the control of the spoken word around mosques. In March 1924, only four months after the proclamation of the Republic, the Directorate of Religious Affairs was created to reinforce the existing control over Islamic authorities, including mosque preachers.<sup>9</sup> From that moment onwards, several attempts had been made to control the Islamic sermons, ranging from orders about the content of the religious sermons to measures taken against subversive preachers. In February 1928, the Direction of Religious Affairs sent a circular to the muftis of the country advising them to prompt the mosque preachers to donate to the Turkish Aeronautical Association and other party-aligned associations in place of *zakat*, the "obligatory payment by Muslims of a determinate portion of their lawful property" and or voluntary alms (*sadaqa*) given after the Ramadan Feast.<sup>10</sup> Some ready-made sermon books were also prepared and diffused to the provinces.<sup>11</sup> The Directorate of Religious Affairs first reorganized

---

<sup>9</sup> Nathalie Clayer, "Un laïkik imposé ou négocié? L'administration de l'enseignement de l'islam dans la Turquie du parti unique," in *L'art de l'État en Turquie*, ed. Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard (Paris: Karthala, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> "Türk tayyâre cem'iyeti riyâsetinin maqâm-ı necmiye vârid fi 20 Şubât 1928 târihli ve 334 numarolu tezkere de cem'iyetimizce verî edilerek tayyâre, hilâl-i ahmer ve cem'iyet-i eţfâl gibi memleketin refâhına milen hizmetler ifâ' eden üç cem'iyet arasında taksim olunañ zekât ve şadaqa-yi fiţr hakkında va'zlar ve haţibler vâsıtasıyla halka yayılacak terğîbât ve teşvikâtın [unreadable] vereceği zât-ı 'âlî riyâset heyetlerince de teslim bulunur. Cem'iyetimizde öteden beri âsârını gördüğümüz 'alâka hesabıyla bu luţfun esirgenmeyeceğini ümîd eder ve bu bâbda muktenâ tebliğâtın 'âcilen ve uzak mağallere telğrafla itâsına emr buyurulmasına terdifen ri'â eyleyin. İfade ve izhâr buyurulduğuna nazaran geçen senelerden daha ziyâde bu sene de tarifât-ı meşrûde ve diğér fetvâ dâiresinde terğîbât ve teşvikâti lâzîmede bulunulmasını ehemmiyetle tavsiye olunur efendim." BCA DIB 51-0-0/3-17-3, 25 February 1928. T.H. Weir and A. Zysow, "Şadaqa," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Brill, 2012); A. Zysow, "Zakât," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Brill, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> For this document, I relied on the following document summary: "Yeniden bastırılan Hutbeler adlı kitaptan gönderildiği, bunların hatiplere dağıtılması." Circular letter to the Muftis from the Direction of Religious Affairs, 3 October 1928, BCA DIB 51-0-0/3-15-24.

employment requirements for Islamic preachers. This led to the dismissal of some of them due to lack of authorization.

In 1925, the Directorate circulated directives about the responsibilities of Islamic preachers. Preachers were ordered to talk not only about “religion” and “society,” but also about industry, commerce, and agriculture” based on the generally accepted sources of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), namely “Qur’anic verses and hadith.”<sup>12</sup> They were, for example, encouraged to tell their public that donating to the Turkish Aeronautical Association (*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*) might count as *zakat* or *fitre*, an obligatory religious donation usually destined for the disadvantaged.<sup>13</sup> The republican government did not withdraw the state from the religious domain; on the contrary, it strived to reinforce its authority in this domain.

Despite such efforts, the spread of oppositional voices around religious meeting spaces or religious rhetoric created anxiety within the early republican government, and it did so even when trivial issues were at stake. In May 1928, for instance, the Direction of Religious Affairs reported on the “negative propaganda” (*menfi propaganda*) against the lottery organized by the Aeronautical Association and ordered to warn religious employees on the issue.<sup>14</sup> The general danger was the frequent spreading of information behind the regime’s back. The information being circulated was most likely regarding the participation in the lottery organized by the Aeronautical Society, suggesting that it was not aligned with Islamic norms *per se*.

The early republican government punished those critical individuals, but its approach towards Islamic institutions was relatively lenient. The Directorate of Religious Affairs was established to monitor and control oppositional voices, particularly from Islamic preachers, rather than to abolish them. This institution issued orders to expand the topics of Islamic

---

<sup>12</sup> Hadith means “the body of tradition regarding the sayings and acts of Muhammed and his companions, believed to have been initially transmitted orally and subsequently written down.” See “Hadith, n,” in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2023). “Dā’ ireniz dāhiline vā’ izīn faşlından me’ āş alan efendilerin cevāmī’ de vā’ z itmeleri ve mevzū’ ların dīnī, millī, ictimā’ ī, akhlākī, şinā’ ī, ticārī, zirā’ ī āyāt ve ahādīsten taḥkīkāt ve tettebbū’ āt-ı lāzimedede bulunarak bu sahalarda müslümānları tenvīre i’tinā itmeleri...” Circular from the Directorate of Religious Affairs to the muftis, 18 January 1925, BCA DIB 51-0-0/3-15-19.

<sup>13</sup> Circular from the Directorate of Religious Affairs to the Muftis, 25 February 1928, BCA DIB 51-0-0/3-18-3.

<sup>14</sup>“Tayyare cemiyetinin düzenlemiş olduğu piyango aleyhinde propaganda yapanların mahkemelere sevkedileceğinden ilçedeki din görevlilerinin uyarılması,” I refer to the archivists summary of the document because the referred document is illegible due to ink evaporation, 25 July 1928, BCA DIB 51-0/2-7-4.

sermons to include political issues. The state secularization of republican Turkey was still underway with measures such as abolishing Islamic education and tribunals. While increasing control over their sermons, the early republican state allowed Islamic preachers to comment on social life, as they had done for centuries.<sup>15</sup> Preachers were encouraged to address issues favorable to the state, aligning their sermons with ongoing political developments rather than prohibiting them altogether.

Still, those control mechanisms did not prevent Islamic preachers from opposing the early republican reforms. In May 1929, the Minister of the Interior corresponded with the Prime Minister about a mufti in a central Anatolian town. The mufti of Develi (Kayseri) contested the government's order, instructing him to advise the public to donate to the Aeronautical Association on a religious basis. He first encouraged his audience (*cemaat*) to tear down the banner (mis-)informing the Muslims that a donation to the Aeronautical Association could count as *fitre*. As if that was not enough, the banner was "written with the new" (Latin) characters instead of the Ottoman characters, a combination of Arabic and Persian letters that maintained the symbolic relationship with Islam before the "Alphabet Revolution." When the mosque preacher Numan Efendi's "suggestions" were "fruitless," he became "furious." He started to "talk nonsense," saying things like "it is better to die than live without sharia," which refers to the "rules and regulations governing the lives of Muslims."<sup>16</sup> Finally, he tore down the banner.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the heavy restructuring of the religious institutions under the Direction of Religious Affairs, reports about the non-conformity of Islamic preachers persisted throughout the single-party era. In November 1930, the CHP General Secretary corresponded with the party

---

<sup>15</sup> Sümeýra A. Gurbuzel, "Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan."

<sup>16</sup> N. Calder and Hooker, "Sharī'a," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> "Develi müftüsü Numan efendinin cami kapısında asılı ve yeni harflerle yazılı fitrenin tayyareye verilmesi hakkındaki resimli matbu ilan varakasını yırtmak için cemaata yaptığı telkin semeresiz kalınca tehevürle resimli kağıtlar cami kapısına yapıştırılmaz, şeriatsız yaşamaktan ise ölmek eyidir diye tahrikamız hezeyanlarda bulduktan sonra yırttığı ve mes'elenin ehemmiyetine binaen müftünün bekası inzibatça mahzurlu görüldüğünden memurin kanununun 48inci maddesi mucibince hemen işten el çektirilmesi ve tahtı nezarete alınarak tahkikatın tesrii ve mevcuden ciheti adliyeve tevdi hususlarının mahalline cevaben bildirildiği Kayseri vilâyetinden iş'âr kılınmıştır." Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 7 March 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0/102-668-13.

inspectors to take measures against harmful propaganda at the intersection of religious holidays and coffeehouses:

“During the winter, especially in the month of Ramadan, it has been observed that some unemployed individuals are being influenced by the propaganda and gossip of malicious people in coffeehouses and other gathering places, and they are contributing to the spread of this propaganda. Last year, in order to counteract this, counter-propaganda efforts were organized, and our party’s organization was very useful in this matter. I am confident that this year, our party’s organization will also provide maximum support and assistance to the ongoing guidance and counter-propaganda efforts. In this regard, I kindly request that the situation be communicated to the necessary parties once again from your esteemed side, and I express my respect on this occasion, sir.”<sup>18</sup>

The Party leadership was concerned about the Islamic opposition and reaction because they underlined the month of Ramadan, during which practicing Muslims fasted and concentrated more on their moral conformity to religious norms. Fasting is also known to make people more irritable and angrier due to low blood sugar levels. According to another report in the same file, the “Islamic preachers’ mouths opened up under the influence of fasting” (*oruç haliyle ağızları açılan vaizler*), which implies that they were less restrained in expressing their dissatisfaction.

Our experience has shown that the month of Ramadan is the time when negative and harmful propaganda is most prevalent. During this month, when preachers begin their sermons and religious provocations occur while people are fasting, it is clear that our organization must remain vigilant. Therefore, we must inform all our organizations to collaborate closely with government institutions to prevent such provocations. Additionally, care must be taken to avoid unnecessarily provoking those already irritable due to fasting. I kindly request that this be communicated to the necessary parties, and I express my respect on this occasion.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> “Kışın, bilhassa Ramazan ayında bazı işsizlerin kahvelerde ve sair toplantı yerlerinde kötü ruhlu insanların propaganda ve dedikodularına âlet oldukları ve bu propagandaların revacını temin ettikleri emsaliyle sabittir. Geçen sene buna karşı gelmek için mukabil propagandalar yaptırılmış ve bu hususta firkamız teşkilatından çok istifade edilmişti. Bu sene de aynı veçhile yaptırılmakta olan irşat ve mukabil propagandalara firkamız teşkilatının azâmî müzaheret ve muavenetinin ibzal edileceğine eminim. Bu münasebetle keyfiyetin bir kerre de tarafî âlilerinden icabedenlere tebliğ buyrulmasını rica ve bilvesile teyidi hürmet eylerim efendim.” Minister of the Interior Şükrü [Kaya] to the General Secretary of the CHF Saffet [Arıkan], 5 November 1930, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-13-19, Ankara.

<sup>19</sup> “Menfi ve muzır propagandaların en ziyade revaç bulduğu zamanın Ramazan ayı olduğu tecrübelerimizle sabittir. Vaizlerin ağızlarının açıldığı ve oruç halde dinî tahrikâtın yapıldığı bu ay zarfında teşkilâtımızın müteyakkaz olması luzumu aşikârdır. Bunun için hükûmet teşkilatıyla el ele vererek bu gibi tahrikâtın önüne geçilmesine bilimüm teşkilâtımızca himmet olunmasının icab edenlere tebliğini ve ancak oruç halile esasen asabileşenlerin lüzûmsuz yere tahrik edilmemelerine dikkat olunmasının da ilavesini rica ve bilvesile teyidi hürmet eylerim.” CHF’s General Secretary and party inspectors, 2 February 1930 – 5 November 1930, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-13-19, Ankara.

Interestingly, this exchange did not occur between the Directorate of Religious Affairs and the mufti but between the party general secretary and inspectors. Since public speeches were conducted even before the establishment of the People’s Preacher’s Corps and the People’s Houses, this correspondence highlights the measures taken to curb religious opposition during Ramadan, when individuals tend to be more sensitive to religious matters. While this correspondence did not specify the exact point at which the fasting preachers and audience criticized the government, the following documents from 1929 indicated two important points of opposition.

The first was the advancements in women’s rights. Since the adoption of the new civil code in 1926, Muslim men did not have the right to marry multiple women, and women obtained the same rights as men concerning divorce and heritage. The early republican years were also marked by women’s increased public visibility through eased access to legal and educational professions. In Trabzon on the Black Sea coast in northeastern Turkey, mosque preacher Hacı İsmail Hakkı Efendi argued for “men to beat women” and “women to be eradicated from public space.” The concerns around Hacı İsmail Hakkı’s claims were about the ongoing regime-driven social change that permitted women to become more visible in the public space in the republic’s early years. According to the report, his words utilized the “Qur’anic exegesis” to “spare women from the progress of civilization.”<sup>20</sup> Hacı İsmail Hakkı Efendi was first sentenced to one month of prison and, after repeating the same kind of “inappropriate” behavior the following year, was banned from preaching.<sup>21</sup>

The secularization of education was another point that was likely to be criticized by Islamic preachers. The Law of Unification of Education (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu*) adopted in March 1924, abolished Islamic schooling and secularized the curricula. Five years later, in Kemah (Erzincan), the preacher Hafız Sabri Efendi accused the teachers of “abolishing religion” (*dini*

---

<sup>20</sup> “Trabzon vilayeti merkez vaizi Hacı Hafız İsmail Hakkı efendinin bir Cuma günü Trabzonun Eksotia camiinde bir ayeti kuraniyeyi mevzubahis ederek erkeklerin kadınları dayak altında bulundurmaları ve terakkiyatı medeniyyeden menetmeleri lüzumunu beyan suretile tefsir ederek erkekleri kadınlara aleyhine tahrik ve teşvik yolunda vaazlarda bulunmasından dolayı mahkemeye verildiği ve bu adamın vaaza çıkmasına mümanaat olunmasının müftülüklerle polis müdürlüğüne tebliğ olduğu ve geçen sene de böyle münasebetsizlikliğinden dolayı bir ay hapsa mahkum olduğu cihetle vazifesinin üzerinden ref’i lüzumunun Diyanet İşleri Riyazetine yazıldığı vilayeti mezkureden bildirilmiştir.”Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Ministry, 28 February 1929, BCA MGM 30-0-0/102-668-9.

<sup>21</sup> Directorate of Religious Affairs to the Prime Ministry, 28 February 1929, BCA MGM 30-0-0/102-668-9.

*kaldırmak*), of forcing “students to break their fasting” and of denying the existence of “paradise and hell.” As a result, he was prohibited from preaching in mosques.<sup>22</sup> These examples show how religious claims intersected with complaints about the political pillars of the new regime.

Islamic preachers were not the only oppositional voices about the new relationship between Islam and state authorities. In May 1928, a rather peculiar exchange between the General Direction of Security (Ministry of the Interior) and the Prime Ministry addressed rumors circulating in the province of Mersin. Minister of the Interior Şükrü Kaya, reported that a public prosecutor and a doctor went to a graveyard to investigate a rumor according to which someone was wailing from the graveyard. The “living dead” in question was said to talk from some graveyard limbo about the recent social developments that caused his torture.

I am still alive. Why did you bury me? They are burning me in fires! Mothers and fathers do not take care of their children; women walk around naked, cut their hair, and wear a coat; they are burning me for this reason.<sup>23</sup>

This rumor was based on the Islamic belief in the “torment of the grave” (*adhāb al-qabr*) and the popular belief that a deceased person could turn in their grave in case of disturbing developments. The “torment of the grave” implied a continued consciousness for the dead until the resurrection.<sup>24</sup> The expression “turning in one’s grave” (*mezarında ters dönmek*) – not explicitly used but implied in this rumor – points to the moral high ground of the dead suffering

---

<sup>22</sup> “Kemah kasabasında ki camide vaiz hafız Sabri efendinin vaaz esnasında muallimlerin talebeye oruç yedirdiklerinden ve cennet ile cehennem olmadığını söylediklerinden bahsetmesi ve aynı şekilde mektepte muallimlerin müvacehesinde beyan eylemekle beraber maksadınız dini kaldırmaktır dediği anlaşılacak evrakıyla mahkemeye tevdi ve icrai vaizden menedildiği Erzincan vilâyetinden bildirilmiştir.” Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 7 March 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0/102-668-12.

<sup>23</sup> “Nisâniñ ilk haftası zarfında kabristanda bir mezar içerüsünde birisiniñ feryâd itmekte olduğunu müdde-i ‘umûmî ve bir tabib ile kabristana gidilerek mezar içinde bir şahsın oturmakta (Ben berhayâtım ne için beni defn itdiler, beni ateşlerde yakıyorlar.) zesine (Âna ve bâbâlar evlâdlarına şâhib olmuyorlar, kadınlar çıplak geziyor, saçlarını kesiyor, manço giyiyorlar, bunun için beni yakıyorlar) dediğine dâ‘ir şehir dahilinde bir şâyi‘a devrân itdiği istihbâr kılınmış ve yapılan tahkîkâtden mezkûr şâyi‘anın Mersin’in Mahmudiye mahallesinde mukîme Lazkıyeli Ahmed Bedevî matluğası Mahmud kızı Faţıma, Şâlih Şâfi kıızı ve İbrâhîm oğlu, ‘Alî Çehu zevcesi Semrâ, Mahmûd kerîmesi ve Hamâl Muştafâ zevcesi ‘Ayşe Bahre, Kalaycı Bilâl zevcesi Kâtibe hanımlar tarafından tedbir ve işâ‘â idildiği anlaşılacak bu babdaki evrâk-ı tahkîkiye ile müdde-i ‘umûmîliye tevdi‘ idildiği vilâyetinden bildirilmiş ‘arz-ı m‘lûmât ederim efendim.” Correspondence between the Minister of Interior, Şükrü Kaya and the Prime Ministry, 2 May 1928, BCA MGM 30-10-0/88-580-6. See also: Murat Metinsoy, “Everyday Resistance to Unveiling and Flexible Secularism in Early Republican Turkey,” in *Anti-Veiling Campains in the Muslim World. Gender Modernism and the Politics of Dress*, ed. Stephanie Cronin (London: Routledge, 2014), 226.

<sup>24</sup> A. S. Tritton, “Adhab al-Kabr,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Encyclopaedia of Islam (Brill).

from the recent ‘immoral’ developments caused by the CHP’s reforms. In this case, the developments pointed to general moral decay, which led parents to let go of “taking care of their children” (*şāhib olmıyorlar*), which also meant maintaining social control over the new generations. Women’s alleged nudity (*kadınlar çıplāk geziyor*) most probably referred to the European-style clothing introduced in the late nineteenth century but promoted under the early republican regime. The complaint about women’s haircuts suggests the local resistance towards new attitudes about traditional and Islamic veils in the provinces shortly before the “anti-veiling campaigns” in the provinces.<sup>25</sup> After all the women involved in this incident were identified by the police, the case was sent to the prosecutor’s office. In other words, criminal proceedings were initiated against the women spreading gossip.

The fear of Christianization – or Christian proselytism – also figured among the anxieties caused by the ongoing state secularization. In 1929, simultaneous reports from two distant provinces (Elazığ and Istanbul) mentioned rumors about crosses or church bells imported from Europe. Necip in Elazığ claimed that the government “will bring church bells from Ankara to decorate local mosques in villages within the Palo district.”<sup>26</sup> A mussel-vendor from Kasımpaşa (Istanbul) named Mehmed diffused the rumor that “three million crosses imported from Europe will be distributed to the local populations.”<sup>27</sup> While both rumors seem trivial, hence not worthy of correspondence between the Ministry of the Interior and the Prime Minister, both persons accused of spreading the rumor were handed to law enforcement. The mussel-vendor was arrested while Necip Bey was committed to the charge of the public prosecutor for “harmful propaganda” (*muzır propaganda*).

The most remarkable episode showing the tension between the state and religious opposition was arguably decisive for the establishment of the People’s Preachers. In December

---

<sup>25</sup> Sevgi Adak, “Anti-veiling Campaigns and Local Elites in Turkey of the 1930s: A View from the Periphery,” in *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in the Muslim World. Gender Modernism and the Politics of Dress*, ed. Stephanie Cronin (London: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>26</sup> “Palo kazası köylerinde camilere çan takılacağı ve Ankaradan çan geleceği gibi muzır propagandalar yapan Necip isminde birinin tutularak müddei umumiliğe tevdi olunduğu Elâziz vilayetinden bildirilmiştir.” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Primary Minister, 14 February 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0/102-668-7.

<sup>27</sup> “Kasımpaşada midyeci Mehmed namında birinin Avrupadan üç milyon haç getirilerek ehaliye dağıtılacağına dair söz sarfeylediği anlaşılması üzerine derdest edilerek tanzim kılınan evrakla birlikte müddei umumiliğe tevdi olduğu İstanbul vilayetinden bildirilmiştir.” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 28 February 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0/102-668-10.

1930, a rally was organized in the town of Menemen, near Manisa around a Naqshibendi sheikh called Mehmet. Sheikh Mehmet delivered a speech in a public square, declaring himself the messiah and Mustafa Kemal the *deccal*, “a malevolent creature in human form which appears at the end of the world.”<sup>28</sup> The sheikh also announced the forbidding of the western hat, a headgear made obligatory with the controversial “Hat Revolution” a couple of years before the event.<sup>29</sup> The disciples of Sheikh Mehmet murdered a teacher named Kubilay, who was doing his military service in Menemen.<sup>30</sup> Although the revolt was small in scale, it outraged the Party leadership.<sup>31</sup> The agitation was caused by the applause of the crowd who witnessed Sheikh Mehmet’s speech.<sup>32</sup>

The Menemen “Revolt” was a turning point for the CHP leadership. References to the “incident” were repeatedly used during the 1931 Congress. The incident epitomized the seriousness of the problem of Islamic “reaction” (*irtica*).<sup>33</sup> In his inaugural speech during the congress, Prime Minister İsmet Paşa [İnönü] characterized Menemen as an event illustrating the “medieval savagery and vengefulness of the reaction.”<sup>34</sup> The Menemen Revolt, for some CHP members, was also a reason to suspect Anatolian populations at large for being predisposed to “reaction” with a strong Islamic undertone.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Cook, “Dajjāl.”

<sup>29</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930,” §6.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., §7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., §30.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., §8-15.

<sup>33</sup> The term “irtica” was repeatedly used referring to Menemen Revolt. See: “Menemendeki irtica vakası dolayısıyla ne gibi tedabir alındığına...” 30 December 1930, BCA MGM 30-10-0/8-48-9; “İrtica Hareketi Bir Sene Evvel Başlamıştır,” *Vakit*, 30 December.

<sup>34</sup> “Bundan sonra zuhūra gelen Menemen hâdisesi, irticam Kurunu Vusta- daki kadar vahşi ve müntakim olduğunu gösterdiği gibi ahvalden ne kadar cür’et almış olduğunu da göstermek itibarile intibaha şayandır.” İsmet İnönü’s inaugural speech to the CHF’s third Congress, *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 5.

<sup>35</sup> For Alâeddin Bey, for instance, it showed the necessity of pre-selection based on internal recommendations (*namzet usûlü*) for the new party members. While the party needed to increase the number of its adherents, Alâeddin Bey wanted to avoid the risk of including people like Sheikh Mehmed within the party organization: “My friends, the Republican People’s Party, which had among its ranks a Kubilây, cannot take a Sheikh Mehmet in. I cannot imagine such a political party.” To back his argument that the Party should not accept the membership of every citizen, Alâeddin Bey added: “And we all know that the revolution is still behind. And we all know peasants still wear the *fez* on their heads.” According to Alâeddin Bey, the party was not ready to accept new members without recommendations partly because of the potentiality of the “reaction” that the Menemen Revolt epitomized. The Party would be ready when the revolution progressed by making the peasantry adopt, accept, and internalize each reform. Alâeddin Bey [Tiritioğlu], Deputy of Kütahya, “Arkadaşlar,sinesinde daha dün bir



The creation of the People's Preacher's Organization had to do with the Islamic opposition voiced through the Islamic preachers, sheiks, and ordinary people. The choice of a polysemic word with an Islamic connotation to name a secular and republican organization gathering local spokespeople, namely the People's Preachers Organization, alludes to its continuity with the Islamic preachers. Despite the lack of explicit reference in its founding document, the People's Preachers Organization was created to neutralize oppositional voices, including Islamic ones. The Islamic connotation of the vocabulary used in the directives somewhat maintained this continuity. The first line of the ordinance posited the superiority of oral communication for the party's goals. It also noted that the spoken word was one among many ways (*söz ile de*) the party used to counter political opposition.

Nevertheless, the framework of the Islamic opposition was not enough to explain such an endeavor. Limiting "reaction" to the opposition to the CHP's single-party rule to religious resistance against an allegedly secular "revolution" is presentist in the sense that it reduces the political oppositions in interwar Turkey to those between "Islamists" and "Kemalists." The interwar era was marked by the emergence of state socialism in bordering Russia and the emergence of different types of ultra-nationalist political movements in continental Europe that the Turkish press closely followed. The following section will reflect on the limits of the "religious opposition" framework that reduces each and every potential criticism of the CHP's single-party rule into an "Islamic" or "Islamist" reaction.

## 2.2. The Limits of "Religious Opposition" as a Frame of Analysis

---

The documentation about the Islamic reactionary "rumor" or "propaganda" reveals governmental anxieties about Islamic opposition rather than the scope of these anti-governmental forces. Shortly after adopting the Latin alphabet and prohibiting the public use of the Arabic script, Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya shared "information obtained from a private source" with Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, showing concerns about the increasing opposition

---

Kubilây yaşatan Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkası hukuku siyasiyesi vardır diye içinde bir Şeyh Mehmet yaşatamaz. Böyle bir fırka tasavvur etmiyorum. Vakîâ her vatandaşın Fırkaya girmek hakkı kendisinden nezedilmez. Bu çok doğru bir harekettir. Demokrasiye yakışan şey de budur. Fırkamızca şüphesiz ki her vatandaşa bir hak verilmek lâzımdır. Ve hepimiz biliyoruz ki inkılâp çok geridir. Ve hepimiz biliyoruz ki daha başlarında fesi taşıyan köylerimiz vardır." Ibid., 231.

against the new law.<sup>36</sup> Kaya told İnönü that the “movement” went beyond the “meeting spaces” such as mosques “where the old [Arabic] letters were prevalent” and was heard “even in the army.”<sup>37</sup> Kaya noted the “great anger” among the “Turkish people” (*Türk ahalisi*) caused by the “measures perceived as against the religion of Islam.”<sup>38</sup> Mentioning the decision to “rewrite the mosque plaques on which the name of the prophet and the four caliphs appeared” in the Latin script. Kaya informed the Prime Minister of the “fears” of the “Ankara leadership” of “heavier incidents.”<sup>39</sup>

Between January and February 1929, Şükrü Kaya and İsmet İnönü continued to correspond about the “rumors” (*dedikodu*) on the same affair. Kaya assured İnönü that he had heard no rumors from Bursa about the *Millet Mektepleri* (Nation’s Schools) established after the Alphabet to increase the literacy rate among Turkish citizens. Yet, he added that an eighty-five-year-old man named Kadir in Aydın claimed that “[the government] allowed theater plays in a mosque” and that people hanging around Zahid’s coffeehouse in Beşiktaş talked against the “republican government.”<sup>40</sup>

Still, “harmful propaganda” and potential “reaction” cannot be reduced to the history of state secularization in early republican Turkey.<sup>41</sup> Converting sacred spaces in the 1920s and 30s was not only a result of the secularization efforts. These fears among Turkish Muslims

---

<sup>36</sup> “Hususi bir menbadan aldığımız malumata göre Türkiye’de latin harflerine karşı vasi bir hareket baş göstermiştir” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 1 January 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/83-547-20.

<sup>37</sup> “Eski harfler mahafilinden mada orduda dahi büyük bir hoşnutsuzluk hükümdür.” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 1 January 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/83-547-20.

<sup>38</sup> “Dini islama karşı ittihaz edilen tedabire Türk ehali arasında büyük bir hiddet tevhit etmişlerdir.” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 1 January 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/83-547-20.

<sup>39</sup> ““Camilerde peygamberle halifelerin namlarını latin hurufatiyle yazmak hususundaki karar hakkında dahi büyük bir hoşnutsuzluk hükümdür. Ankara rüesası memaliki ecnebiyede halkı tahrik edenler mevcut olduğunu nazarı itibara alarak daha da vahim hadiselerden korkuyorlar.” Correspondence from the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, 1 January 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/83-547-20.

<sup>40</sup> “Bursadaki tevkifata ve millet mektepleri teşkilatına dair dedi kodu işitilmemiştir. Aydın da bir kaymakamın camide tiyatro oynattırıldığını söyleyen Kadir hakkındaki tahkikat ikmal edilmiştir. Merhumun bu beyanatını hikâye suretile nakleylediğini kanaat hasıl olmuş isede evrakı tahkikiyesi 21/1/1929 tarih ve 587 numero ile İstanbul müddedi umumiliğine verilmiştir. Beşiktaşta hafurun caddesinde Zahidin kahvehanesinde devam edenlerden bir kısmının hükümeti cumhuriyetimiz aleyhinde bazı mübahasalarda buldukları haber alınmış olduğundan bunlar hakkında da tahkikata başlanmıştır. (...)” Correspondence between the Interior Minister and the Primary Minister, 13 February 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0/102-668-6.

<sup>41</sup> Gavin D. Brockett, “Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923-1938: Secular Reform and Religious “Reaction”,” *History Compass* 4, no. 6 (1 November): 1062.

might well have partly arisen from the widespread knowledge about the fact that the Ottoman state used to convert religious spaces after conquests or, more likely, from the historical conscience of converting or demolishing religious monuments (churches, cathedrals) after the persecution of their owners during and after the First World War. In addition to that, it was well known, especially among Muslim immigrants (*muhacirs*), that Christian insurgents and state institutions in the Balkans also closed, destroyed, or converted mosques (back) into churches shortly after putting an end to Ottoman authority. On top of that, the same republican state had adopted a policy of intervention in public spaces following the destruction of Christians of Anatolia in previous years. In any case, the report pointing at the fear of Christianization from a dwelling in Eastern Anatolia (Palu, Elazığ), which had a considerable Armenian population prior to their destruction with the genocide, is interesting since it is more likely that the Armenian churches were transformed, sold, or demolished during that time.<sup>42</sup>

The rumor about the imported church bells can be interpreted in several distinct ways. These rumors reveal the popular anxieties induced by ongoing secularization efforts, manifested as fears of Christianization. Beyond reflecting popular anxieties, the mere act of closely following such frivolous rumors—which could arise in any locality regardless of a revolutionary context—may also indicate governmental concerns about public consent for the ongoing reforms. Since the rumors were circulating in a region with previously high missionary activity, the rumors also echoed the fears caused by missionary activities in the region, albeit largely limited in the republican era.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, this focus on rumors might serve to obscure other forms of resistance, such as those from Kurdish populations, particularly in a context of growing suspicion towards the inhabitants of this specific region. Finally, the fears of Christianization can be understood as a local echo of the memory of the genocide.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> See: Zeynep Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey: State, Space, and Ideology in the Early Republic* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015); “Reconstructing Armenian Village Life Manooğ Dzeron and Alevor: Unique Authors of the ‘Houshamadyan’ Genre,” Houshamadyan, 2014, accessed 11 July 2023, <https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottomanempire/vilayetdiyarbekir/palu/miscellaneous-articles.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 50.

<sup>44</sup> This document was also examined by Murat Metinsoy. Yet he did not interpret the document in the same manner. See: Murat Metinsoy, “Everyday Resistance to Unveiling and Flexible Secularism in Early Republican Turkey,” 226.

Rumors about imported church bells circulated in Palu, a district of Elazığ. Palu was on the deportation routes of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915-1916. Around fifteen thousand Armenians who lived in this region were decimated during the genocide.<sup>45</sup> The proclamation of the Republic and the destruction of the region's Armenians did not suffice to create "law and order" in the city. Palu was also an important center for the Sheikh Said Revolt (1925). Within the framework of the repression of the rebellion, the city was destroyed too and relocated further to the west.<sup>46</sup>

Given the complex history of the region and the city, the legal action against Necip Bey from Palu, because of a simple and contextually ridiculous rumor, might bear more meaning than the countering of "reaction" (*irtica*) reduced to religious motivations. The Palu district had strategic importance for the Unionists and the CHP leadership because it was a site of state-sponsored mass violence (forced population movements, massacres, or genocide) and of ongoing conflict with the local Kurdish populations due to efforts of centralization and Turkification. The city was later "Turkified" with the settlement of *muhacirs* and the deportation of Kurds for military, economic, and political reasons since 1916.<sup>47</sup> After the destruction of the Anatolian Armenians, Assyrians, and Rums, land distribution was closely linked with the issue of "abandoned property."<sup>48</sup> Whether it was voiced through Islamic rhetoric or not, land distribution to the peasantry figured among the critical reasons for political opposition and dissent.<sup>49</sup>

The link between anxieties about the spoken word and the aftermath of the genocide can also be traced back to the destruction of Greek Anatolian communities and their departure

---

<sup>45</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l'élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 222.

<sup>46</sup> Ümit Uğur Üngör, "Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950," 238.

<sup>47</sup> Üngör argues that the motives behind forced deportation of the Kurds during its first phase were threefold: military to prevent potential alliances with the enemy forces, economic to sedentarize the population to facilitate tax collection, and "political," to increase the proportion of non-Kurdish Muslims in the region of the region. *Ibid.*, 215-28.

<sup>48</sup> Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*; Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*.

<sup>49</sup> While he does not stress the post-genocidal aspect of land distribution, Murat Metinsoy counts land distribution among the problems faced by the Anatolian peasantry in the early republican era. Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38*, 44-47.

before and after the Treaty of Lausanne. In September 1929 for example, the Minister of the Interior reported about an Orthodox priest who came from Greece and delivered a speech in the neighborhood of Alsancak in Izmir during a “private dinner party.”<sup>50</sup> Yorgiyos Kilopedis talked about the “great responsibilities” for the Greek Orthodox residents of the city after the “last agreements” between the Greek and the Turkish governments. The first responsibility was to “end the enmity with the Turks.” The second was to repair the church given to the Orthodox populations in Izmir and to build a hospital, a school, and a city center to revive the community and “regain” their “force.” Kilopedis also mentioned inviting Turkish and Greek “preachers” (*hatip*) who will address both Turks and Greeks to “establish friendship instead of enmity.”<sup>51</sup> Şükrü Kaya interpreted this speech as “dangerous propaganda” (*muzur propaganda*) with the “aim of increasing the Greek element in Izmir.”<sup>52</sup> The tension between religion and state authorities related to more profound changes and continuities. Islam or state reforms were not the only bones of contention. Christianity continued to haunt both the common folk and the state: the former could accuse the latter of favoring the (re)Christianization of Turkey. In contrast, the latter feared that Christian preachers worked to reinstate their religious community as a minority in a nationalized state.

The nexus between religion and ethnicity in such anxiety on the side of the state is particularly striking in the case of the Kurds. Kurdish resistance movements, which often implied armed and organized resistance against the republican state, also figured among the

---

<sup>50</sup> Şükrü Kaya referred to the reunion as the “Greek Colony” (*Yunan kolonisi*) in Izmir. He was most probably talking about the non-exchangees (gayrimübadil) residing in the city See Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*, 219.

<sup>51</sup> “Hükümetimiz ile Türkiye arasında yapılan son muahede bize büyük vazifeler yüklemiştir. Bu vazife derece derece cümlemize terettüp etmektedir. Birincisi Türklerle olan adaveti izale etmek ve onun yerine uhuvvet ilka etmektir. Hükümetimiz delâletiyle İzmirde ortodokslara mezarlık ve kilise verilmiştir. Bu kilisenin tamirat ve inşaatına yakında başlanacaktır. Bilahara kilisenin yanına bir Metropolithane, hastane ve sonrada bir mektep inşa edilecektir. Şimdiden sonra tedrici surette Yunanlılardan birinci ve ikinci sınıf olmak üzere her hafta birkaç kişi gelecektir. Bu suretle bu mahalle etrafında elli bin Yunanlı iskan edilecektir. Eski kuvvetimizi iktisaba çalışacağız. Tamir edilecek olan kilisenin resmi küşadında Türk ve Yunan hatipleri tarafından iki millete hitaben nutuklar söylenecek eski düşmanlık yerine dostluk getirilerek refah ve saadet teminine uğraşılacaktır.” Correspondence between the Interior Minister and the Prime Ministry, 29 September 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/ 109 - 726 - 16.

<sup>52</sup> “İzmirdeki Yunan kolonisinin ruhani işleri için Yunanistandan gelen “Yorgiyos Kilopedis” ismindeki papazın İzmirde Yunan unsurunu çoğaltmak için mütemadiyen faaliyette bulunduğu anlaşılmıştır.” Correspondence between the Interior Minister and the Prime Ministry, 29 September 1929, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/ 109 - 726 - 16.

reports about the “harmful propaganda.” From the beginning of the “War of Independence,” the nationalists who later formed the CHP cadres faced armed resistance from Kurdish groups in Eastern Anatolian. In March 1921, a Kurdish tribe of Alevi tradition rebelled against the Ankara government. This revolt was repressed violently by coopting some local leaders, who forced a part of the local population into internal exile to western Anatolia.<sup>53</sup> The Kurdish resistance movements stemmed from religious sources. One of the most impactful Kurdish revolts of the 1920s, namely the Sheikh Said Revolt, was organized around a Naqshibendi sheikh. The state secularization brought by the abolition of the caliphate and the secularization of education with the famous law of the Unification of Education were among the causes of the Sheikh Said Revolt.<sup>54</sup> Beyond state secularization, early republican state-building fostered the taxation, territorialization, and centralization of mostly Kurdish populated provinces, which arguably caused a rise of resistance movements.<sup>55</sup>

Shortly after the Sheikh Said Revolts (February-April 1925), the state also tackled the issue of the spoken word and harmful propaganda. When a certain Seyyid Nuri uttered against the Hat Law and the President of the Republic, the police arrested him for being a “suspect” due to his previous utterances. All nine men who helped Nuri escape were handed to the Independence Courts.<sup>56</sup> The case of Seyyid Nuri illustrates how state documents concentrated on “dangerous words” (*tefevühât ve ifsadat*) that vaguely referred to early republican reforms and associated them to Europeanization or secularization of society (here, the Hat Reform) while the real, more complex issues related to the attempt toneutralize the potential for revolt among groups already considered with suspicion to be working against the regime.

The economic burden on the Anatolian peasants and the working classes also caused spoken expressions of dissent before the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization. Metinsoy

---

<sup>53</sup> Ümit Uğur Üngör, “Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950,” 238-55.

<sup>54</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, *L’histoire de la Turquie: de l’empire à nos jours*, 34.

<sup>55</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State : The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*, 268; Hamit Bozarslan, *L’histoire de la Turquie: de l’empire à nos jours*, 34.

<sup>56</sup> “Cizre’de şapka ve re’is-i cumhur hazretleri ‘aleyhinde tefevühât ve ifsadatda bulunmaqla maznun Seyyid Nuri ile merkûm zabitanın elindeñ alub kaçırmağa teşebbüs iden dokuz şahsın Şark İstiklâl mahkemesine tevdi’ idildiklerine dâ’ir Mardin vilayetinden alınan 24/5/926 tarihli ve 715 numarolu şifreli telegrafına şureti manzur dosyaları olmak üzere leffen taqdim kılınıd efendim.” From the Interior Minister to the Prime Minister, 27 May 1926, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0 /102 - 667 - 10.

examined the abusive taxation policies, economic problems stemming from the long-term war efforts that preceded the establishment of the republican regime, and the impact of the Great Depression.<sup>57</sup> These elements increased the opposition towards the republican government expressed through petitioning, riots, and other forms of milder resistance that Metinsoy perceived in the framework of the “weapons of the weak.”<sup>58</sup>

Concerns about corruption and bad governance were also present in the state archives. In June 1928, a “known informant” reported that “on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of May, a banner was pinned on a tree in front of Halil Bey’s coffeehouse around Yalı Mosque in Çanakkale.”<sup>59</sup> The fact that the informant in question was already known (*al-ma‘lūm muhbir*) by the Ministry of Interior shows that the government was using the same informant to monitor similar situations in which the political opposition towards the government was manifest in public space. The banner addressed the “treacherous Turkish government” and condemned it: “You ruined the nation, and your civil servants are worse than the *başıbozuk*.” The term used for the civil servants, *başıbozuk*, referred to their lawlessness and plundering. The banner accused the government of “robbing the country” and “filling the pockets of civil servants” without worrying about “what sort of shit civil servants would eat” (*Şöñra me’mūrlar ne boğ yiyecekler, onu hükümet düşünmüyor.*)<sup>60</sup> The suspect of this ‘crime’ was handed to the public prosecutor. He was identified as Hüseyin, yet he used the pseudonym, Ali Haydar. He owned a tobacco shop around the coffeehouse; he was not necessarily a religious employee of the state. These dissenting voices were concerned about the abusive taxation implemented during the early republican era.

---

<sup>57</sup> Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38*, 23-35.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> “Mayısın on dördüncü günü Çanakkalede Yalı Cāmi‘i civārında Halil Beyin kahvehānesi önündeki ağaca sureti, manzur devletlerin buyurulmak üzere leffen taqdim kılinan “Ey Hā’in Türk Hükümeti ser levhalı bir varakānıñ yapışdırıldıđı görilerek aldırılmış ve ‘indi-l tahkiķ fā‘ili olduđı anlaşılan Ali Haydar laķabla ma‘rūf tütün bāyi‘ dükkāncı Hüseyin olbābdaki āvraķ-i tahkiķiyesiyle taht-i ‘adliyyeye tevdi‘ idildiđi Çanakkale vilāyetinden bildirilmişdir. Arz eylerim efendim.” Ministry of Interior to Prime Ministry, 3 June 1928, BCA MGM 30-10-0/154-614-16.

<sup>60</sup> “Ey hā’in Türk hükümeti § Milleti mahv [ettiđiniz] me’mūrlar başı bozuķtan faızladır. Milleti şoy, me’mūrların kesesini doldur. Bir seneye kadar bütün milleti dilenci idecektiniz. Şonra me’mūrlar ne boğ yiyecekler, oñu hükümet düşünmüyor.” Appendix to the letter to Minister of Interior to Prime Ministry, 3 June 1928, BCA MGM 30-10-0/154-614-16.

Some documents pointed at individuals criticizing the authoritarian methods of the republican state. In 1925, shortly after implementing the Law of Maintenance of Order following the Sheikh Said Revolt, numerous documents pointed out urban and pauperized populations' opposition to the state at large. In March 1925, two drunk city dwellers in two different districts of Istanbul "talked against the government" and "yelled at policemen."<sup>61</sup> In June 1925, another city dweller named Suphi was walking drunkenly around the city. He only decided to "insult the government, the laws, and the Independence Courts" after the policemen tried to arrest him.<sup>62</sup> The following month, it was a group of fishermen, including Poyrazlı İhsan and his friends" in Beykoz who "said things against the republican government and insulted the working policemen."<sup>63</sup> All those who spoke against the government, whether drunk or not, were handed over to the Independence Courts. Nevertheless, the expression of political dissent through the "spoken words" was not limited to Islamic preachers and random city dwellers.

An apparent paradox emerges from the fact that, despite the creation of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses, the party inspectors complained in their 1935 reports about the indifference of the Anatolian population. Several party inspectors also complained about the lack of interest in the ongoing social change and the partisan events. If the "spoken word" was deemed so dangerous, how could the same means used for the opposite

---

<sup>61</sup> "Sarhoş olarak hükümet aleyhinde tefevühatta bulunan ve polis mevkiî karşısında bağırıp çağırın Galata Rıhtımında hamallar onbaşısı Pötürgeli Mustafa bin Yusuf'in hareketi vakıası, şehrin huzur ve sükûnunu ihlâl eder mahiyette görüldüğünden..." Kararnâme (Decree), 28 March 1925, BCA KDK 30-18-1-1/13 - 23 - 10. See also other documents produced in the same period in the exact same manner. Kararnâme, 25 March 1925, BCA KDK 30-18-1-1/13-18-3, 14 - 35 - 11. They all concern city dwellers insulting police officers.

<sup>62</sup> "Dahiliyye Vekâlet-i Celilesinden mevrûd 30 Mayıs 341 tarih ve Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyyeti 924 numaralı tezkirede, sarhoş olarak dolaşmakta iken desdeste teşebbüs eden polis memurlarını tahkir, kanunlara, mahkemelere ve İstiklal Mahkemesinin şahsiyyet-i maneviyesine seb ve şetm eyleyen Suphi nâm şahsın, harekâtı vakıası takrir-i sükûn Kanununun daire-i şümülüne dâhil bulunduğu cihetle İstiklal Mahkemesine tevdiî hakkında karar ittihâzı teklif olunmuş ve keyfiyet İcra Vekilleri Heyetinin 3.6.341 tarihli ictimânda lede-t-tezekkür merkûmun, ber-mucib-i teklif, İstiklal mahkemesine tevdiî takarrür etmiştir." Kararnâme (Decree), 3 June 1925, BCA KDK 30-18-1-1/14-35-1. This document was transliterated by the State Archives for a project on the Independence Courts.

<sup>63</sup> "Hükümet-i Cumhuriye aleyhinde tefevühatta bulunan ve ifa-yı vazife halinde memurîn-i zabıtayı tahkir eyleyen Beykoz balıkçılarından Poyrazlı İhsan ve rüfekasının, hareket-i vâkıaları memleketin huzur ve sükûnunu muhîl ve Takrîr-i Sükûn Kanununun daire-i şümülüne uygun görüldüğünden, İstiklal Mahkemesine tevdi'ileri, Dahiliye Vekâlet-i Celilesinin 8 Temmuz 341 tarih ve Emniyet-i Umumiye 1207 numaralı tezkiresi ile vuku' bulan teklifi üzerine icra Vekilleri Heyetinin 15 Temmuz 341 tarihli ictimânda tasvib ve kabul olunmuştur." Kararnâme (Decree), 15 July 1925, BCA KDK 30-18-1-1/15-45-10. This document was transliterated by the State Archives for a project on the Independence Courts.



end, reinforcing state authority, remain ineffective? State institutions framed this as a specificity of peasants. Sırrı İçöz reported that the “peasants could not get the news and, as a result, they do not know about the atmosphere in which they lived.”<sup>64</sup> The abusive practices of the party provincials played in the lack of trust, indifference, or resistance from the rural population. The single-party regime had difficulty governing its subjects, who did not care to declare births and deaths to the civil registry.<sup>65</sup> Some regions not only did not cooperate with the state so that the state could govern, but they also openly contested the state’s mere presence. An inspector from Lice district in Diyarbakır reported: “The local populations believe that the state does not even own a stone in Lice.”<sup>66</sup>

In reality, the state had to face the fact that managing the consequences of population displacements due to the late Ottoman wars and the early republican homogenization efforts went beyond the People’s Preachers’ power. A report on the already mentioned conflict between the “autochthones” (*yerliler*) and the “migrants” from the “Russian War” of 1877-1878 claimed that it made it impossible for “the Party and the People’s Houses as they are, to remove this duality (*ikilik*).”<sup>67</sup> Another report from the Aegean district of Ayvalık, less than 40 km from the island of Lesbos in Greece, complained about the “weak culture” of the *mübadil* (refugees or “exchangees”) who left Greece to settle in Anatolia following the population exchange agreement between Turkey and Greece.<sup>68</sup>

These fragmentary examples and alternative readings of documents, which can be interpreted as signs of Islamic opposition by scholars, illustrate the variety of threats faced by the early republican government. The power of the spoken word, which convinced the party

---

<sup>64</sup> “Köylü içinde yaşadığı havayı bilmemekte ve haber almamaktadır.” Sırrı İçöz, Emin Draman, Ömer Evcı, Report on Yozgat, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>65</sup> “Şimdiye kadar nüfusa kaydedilmeyenlerin kayd için müracatlarında zorluk görmektedirler. Ve bu kayıt dolayısıyla meydana çıkan nüfuslardan birikmiş yol parası istenmekte, bu kayda engel oluyor. Eski yol parasının alınmaması, kolaylık gösterilmesi.” Dr. Rıza Levent, Osman Dinçer, Report on Mardin, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>66</sup> “Halk Lice’de devletin bir dikili taşı olmadığını söyleyormuş.” Report on Lice (Diyarbakır), 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>67</sup> “Rus Harbi göçmenleriyle yerli arasındaki ikilik seçim zamanlarında bilhassa gözüküyor. Parti ve Halkevi bugünkü durumu ile bu ikiliği kaldıramaz.” Report of Selim Sırrı Tercan (Ordu), 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>68</sup> “Ayvalığa gelen mübadillerin kültürü zayıftır. Orta okul öğretmenlerinin seçkin atanarak bu işle uğraşmalarının sağlanması.” Hacim Kezer, Report on Bandırma (Balıkesir), 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

leadership to take extensive measures to organize its political communication, was not solely about addressing Islamic opposition. It involved more than persuading people to adopt a new secular and Westernized lifestyle. It was also about generating consent for a highly controlling state apparatus operating in a region marked by significant demographic changes due to the genocide, the population exchange, and ongoing conflicts with Kurdish insurgent movements.

While some party officials might well have believed that the increasing activity of institutions like the People's Preachers and the People's Houses could awaken this politically passive population, others were even more concerned by the activities of other institutionalized parties and their influence over the Republican citizenry.

### 2.3. Partisan Opposition

---

Shortly before the Municipal Elections of 1930, the governor of Eskişehir informed the Interior Ministry of the “secret and reactionary propaganda” of a new party in the province. The “secret propaganda” consisted of “oppositional and dangerous utterances” concerning the “return of the old script” and the “abolition of the taxes.” Moreover, the governor accused this party of “encouraging the workers to organize marches.”<sup>69</sup> This new political force was the Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), around which opposition to the CHP emerged. This is arguably an important element that explains the establishment of the People's Preachers Organization, created only a few months after the SCF. The new party was founded by Fethi Okyar in August 1930. Another founding member of the SCF, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, later mentioned in his memoirs that the party was created because Mustafa Kemal wanted to create “a little bit of freedom in the air.”<sup>70</sup> Only a few months after its foundation, the SCF won thirty-one municipalities in the November 1930 municipal elections. The actual popular support for the SCF was probably more significant than the election results revealed because the founders

---

<sup>69</sup> “Hadise ve vakadan ziyade Eskişehir’de yeni fırkanın gizli ve irticai propagandalarının neticesi olarak halk arasında taaddüdü zevcat yine kabul edilecekmiş. Eski harfler ihya edilecek, vergiler kamilen kalkacak gibi menfi ve muzır işaat sözler üzerine çok fena tesir yapmış ve bir taraftan amele üzerinde nümayişler tertibi için teşvikatta buldukları haber alınmıştır.” From the Governor of Eskişehir to the Assistant Secretary of the Interior Minister, Hilmi Bey, 24 September 1930, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/78-59-2.

<sup>70</sup> “Anlaşıyor ki tek fırkanın doğurmuş olduğu murakebesizlikten, idaresizlikten bıkmış! Bir taraftan mecliste birbirini murakebe edecek iki fırkanın mevcudiyetini ve diğer taraftan da memlekette biraz hürriyet havasının esmesini arzu ediyor.” Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Serbest Fırka Hatıraları*, 28.

of the Party raised several irregularities and the overreaching presence of law enforcement agents shortly after the elections.<sup>71</sup> Other than its electoral success, some political rallies organized by the SCF leadership attracted the masses who saw the Liberal Party as their savior from Kemalist authoritarianism.<sup>72</sup> Since the party attracted those feeling discontent with the CHP, the regime soon changed its attitude and realized the shortfalls of its strategy to “tame” a mild opposition party as if it were a sparring partner. Three months after its foundation, Fethi Okyar and Ahmet Ağaoğlu dissolved the party on Mustafa Kemal’s order.<sup>73</sup>

When the Third CHP Congress was organized in May 1931, the issue of “propaganda” concerning the Liberal Party and its discourse on taxes was repeatedly mentioned. The term “propaganda” was used derogatorily in this period to talk about how insidious political opponents fueled suspicion among the ‘ignorant folk’ concerning the measures implemented by the early republican regime. Yet, it was mostly avoided in the party correspondence to talk about the spoken communication of their own political ideas. In this sense, the Turkish case differs from other contemporary single-party regimes like Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Franco’s Spain, which had ministries or important institutions explicitly centered on “propaganda” and oftentimes blurred the boundaries with the concept of “popular culture.” Yet, the term was used to talk about written political communication, for instance, during the “War of Independence.” By consolidating its authority, especially from the late 1920s onwards, the CHP often employed “*telkin*,” meaning “communicating orally,” but also “inculcating, suggesting, and prompting” “*tenvir*” (enlightening), and “*irşad*” (guiding).<sup>74</sup> One speech by Alâaddin Bey [Tiritoğlu], deputy of Kütahya, perfectly illustrates this turn:

As you all know, since the Liberal Party was founded, a peculiar kind of propaganda has started. It is said all around the country that the taxes are too high. This propaganda had so many nefarious results that even I started to be suspicious despite feeling no burden concerning taxes until now. I thought about whether the taxes were really that high. Therefore, there was an essential instrument of inculcation (*telkin*). (...) Besides, my friends, there is a peculiar belief in our country. This belief penetrated even the villages. The taxes are high. The government does not work... These ideas penetrated the smallest villages and left their marks on people’s heads. We expect a lot from this government. Yet,

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 106-07; Ahmet Gülen, “1930 İstanbul Belediye Seçimleri,” *Journal of Atatürk Research Center* XXXIX, no. 107 (2023): 190-91.

<sup>72</sup> Hamit Bozarıslan, “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930,” §28.

<sup>73</sup> Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Serbest Firka Hatıraları*, 116-17.

<sup>74</sup> See Part I. “A Pedagogic State?”

we do not want to pay. I will request one thing. We all know we come from all around this country... We will all go back to our hometowns (*memleketlerimize*). I ask from all of you as a responsibility. Let's make propaganda in the name of the Party. Let's erase these opinions from the peasant's (*köylü*) and the people's (*halk*) heads. Let's tell them (*telkin*) that the taxes are patriotic duties and a way to participate in common affairs.<sup>75</sup>

Alâeddin Bey's speech showed the importance of orality, which meant guiding, enlightening, and suggesting the political message, hence building a hegemony to accompany the constraint mechanisms. Referring to the experience of the SCF, Alâeddin Bey urged his fellow party members to work more to convince the "peasantry and the folk" (*köylü ve halk*) of the benefits of the change brought by the new republican government. Alâeddin Bey reminded his fellow party members of the "susceptibility of Anatolia to demagoguery" to urge them to invest more in the party's propaganda efforts.<sup>76</sup> To emphasize his point, Alâeddin Bey claimed that even himself, a CHP member, questioned the government's taxation policies. Alâeddin Bey reiterated the state idiom emphasizing "gossip," "rumors," and "propaganda" (*şâyi'a, dedikodu, menfii propaganda*) to draw attention to spoken expressions of opposition, reaction, or dissent vis-à-vis the government. İsmet Paşa [İnönü] himself took the stage at the congress and referred to the determining role of the 1930 municipal elections and the subsequent Menemen Revolt in the political agenda of the Party. He explained that the "last

---

<sup>75</sup> Alâeddin Bey [Tiritöğlü], Deputy of Kütahya, "Mâlumu âliniz, Serbest Fırka çıktıktan sonra memlekette tuhaf bir propaganda başladı. Her tarafta vergiler ağırdır deniliyor. Bu propaganda o kadar fazla ve fena neticeler verdi ki vergi hakkında şimdiye kadar hiçbir ağırlık hissetmediğim halde bana da bir şüphe geldi. Acaba hakikaten vergiler ağır mıdır dedim. Binaenaleyh memlekette mühim bir telkin vesilesi oldu. (...) Çünkü bu psikolojik bir mesele olarak yüzde on yüzde yirmi nisbetinde tezayüt etmiştir. İstihsalat fazlaşmış ve ispirto vergileri üzerindeki hasılat daha da fazla artmıştır diyor, sonra arkadaşlar yine memleketimizde garip kanaat vardır, bu kanaat hatta köylere kadar sokulmuştur. Vergiler ağırdır. Hükümet bir iş yapmıyor, fikri en küçük köylere kadar gitmiş ve herkesin kafasında yer etmiştir. Biz bir taraftan hükümetten birçok işler bekliyoruz diğer taraftan para vermek istemiyoruz. (...) Bendenizin rica edeceğim nokta: biliyoruz hepimiz memleketin her tarafından geldik, tekrar memleketlerimize döneceğiz ve bir vazife olarak şunu rica ediyorum. Fırka namına propaganda yapalım, ve bu zihniyeti köylünün ve halkın kafasından silmeye çalışalım ve verginin vatanî bir borç olduğunu ve umumî işlere iştirak demek olduğunu telkin edelim." *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 124.

<sup>76</sup> Alâeddin Bey [Tiritöğlü], Deputy of Kütahya, "Namzet usulünü kaldırırsak, Anadoludan gelen arkadaşlarımız iyi bilirler. Anadoluda demagoji büyük rol oynar. Bu namzet usulünü kaldırdığımız gün inkılâbı benimsemiş tek bir genci namaz kılmıyor, oruç tutmuyor gibi propagandalar neticesi idare heyetine girememiş göreceğiz." *Ibid.*, 231.

municipal elections gave currency to hopes against” the Party and showed the necessity to act “for the enlightenment and warning of the nation.”<sup>77</sup>

These examples pointed out how the early republican government monitored and feared the opposition from ordinary people (*halk*) through the spoken word. The Party leadership produced reports and employed civil police to monitor coffee house discussions, fearing popular resistance and reaction to their reforms, creating an archive that spans before and after the establishment of the People’s Preachers.<sup>78</sup> At the same time, this led the party to acknowledge that only a disciplined and pervasive spoken word at its service could counter this danger. Just as the preachers would act as catalyzers to highlight special moments and special values of the party, they would lean on the People’s Houses as a material and persistent presence in the provinces, a presence meant to remind the population of the regime’s virtue as they passed by these buildings on a daily basis.<sup>79</sup> In a way, People’s Preachers were to gossip what People’s Houses were to coffee-houses: a strategy to regulate, discipline and dynamize provincial populations – their thoughts and daily activities – in the name of a new idea of state legitimacy.

Party reports around 1930 showed widespread anxieties regarding the revolution’s effects, whether it was opening new schools, adopting a new alphabet, or giving more space to women in the public sphere. However, they also anticipated the domains and topics on which the People’s Preachers would later intervene.

The authoritarian secularization under the single-party regime and the local reaction to secularization had been the most preferred frame of analysis concerning the history of early republican Turkey. This was, on the one hand, caused by the Eurocentric and somewhat Islamophobic reading of the late Ottoman and early republican developments through the sole

---

<sup>77</sup> “Son belediye intihabı mücadelesi, Büyük Millet Meclisinin idaresine tesir edecek bir vasıta addolunmasına kadar menfi ümitlerin revacına vesile oldu. (...) Vahim akıbetleri aşikâr olan bu müşahedeler karşısında Fırkamızın, bütün haklarını ve vasıtalarını ortaya koyarak mücadeleye ve milletimizin tenvir ve ikazı için faaliyete geçmesi zaruri oldu.” *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>78</sup> See Murat Metinsoy’s work on “informal media” and “word of mouth” in the 1930s and 1940s. Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38*, 222-34.

<sup>79</sup> Other works that notices the role of People’s Houses in propaganda: M. Asim Karaömerlioğlu, “The People’s Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998).

prism of “Modernization,” “Westernization” reduced to a linear narrative of “secularization.”<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, this was caused by the favorite stigma of the ruling parties (CUP, then the CHP) to talk about the oppositional movements: “*irtica*,” which literally meant all types of political “*reaction*” but is generally understood as a religiously motivated reaction.<sup>81</sup>

State secularization was one among many reasons for the rise of the opposition to the new rule. Economic hardships linked to the long-term war and, more recently, the Great Depression had different repercussions in Turkey’s urban and rural regions. The sharp price falls, coupled with the republican taxation policies that burdened the Anatolian peasantry, contributed to increased opposition to the CHP government right before the gathering of the CHP congress in May 1931, during which an increased investment in party propaganda was decided.<sup>82</sup> The foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization chronologically followed and was impacted by the experience of an unexpectedly successful opposition party and a local revolt around a religious leader. The ordinance referred to local elections and potential oppositional movements. The People’s Preachers directives mentioned local election days and oppositional rallies.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, the directives of the People’s Houses, founded shortly after the People’s Preachers Organization, referred to the Menemen Revolt and “similar events” as “oppositional movements” to “abandon to history.”<sup>84</sup>

The creation of the People’s Preachers Organization was thus one among many methods employed by the party to suppress oppositional voices. Investment in the People’s Preachers Organization was not only related to the content of political discourse but also stemmed from

---

<sup>80</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press), 128; Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*.

<sup>81</sup> Zürcher analyzed different types of political opposition to the Republican People’s Party in the early years of the republic and deconstructed, case by case, the claim of religious reaction. Erik Jan Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925* (Leiden: Brill), 114.

<sup>82</sup> For the impact of the Great Depression on Turkey’s economy, see: Cem Emrence, “Turkey in Economic Crisis (1927-1930): A Panoramic Vision,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 4 (2003): 68-69.

<sup>83</sup> “Fakat meselâ mahallî muhalif bir cereyan veyahut bir intihap günü birinci ve ikinci esaslardan maksadı tenvir için istifade edilmekle beraber asıl sözün müessir ve hararetli kısımları ve neticeleri o günün meseleleri üzerinde teksif olunur. Fırkamızı uzaktan yakından alâkadar eden cereyanlar mahsûs olunca, hatiplerimiz herhangi bir vesileden ve toplanmadan istifade ederek bu cereyanlara karşı Fırkamızın ana maksatlarını o yerdeki muhatapların anlayacağı lisan ile teşrih ederler.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>84</sup> “Menemen hadisesi ve emsali vakalardan çok uzakta olmadığımız gibi menfii cereyan safhalarını artık bir an evvel tarihe terketmek zarureti de aşîkârdır.” *C.H.F. Halkevleri Talimatnamesi*, (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1932), 4-5.

the party-state's technical difficulties in spreading its message. The circulation of local and national newspapers was extensive. Yet, the low literacy rates reduced their effectiveness.<sup>85</sup> Radio usage began to proliferate in the early republican era. Nevertheless, radio broadcast's reach remained restricted in remote provinces due to financial and technical difficulties.<sup>86</sup> During post-war economic hardships, the People's Preachers Organization, and the People's Houses were significant initiatives that required substantial human and financial resources.

The republican government's attitude did not differ from that of its predecessors, the Committee of Union and Progress or Abdülhamid II's regime, in controlling political discussions in public spaces. Keyword research in both imperial and republican archives shows the continuity of the issue regarding the terminology used for "dangerous talk" and the measures against the 'gossipers.' If early republican leadership differed from their predecessors, it was not about surveilling the 'coffee talk.' Besides considering coffeehouses and train stations as spaces of expression of political consent or dissent, the CHP did not limit itself to denouncing or suppressing voices considered dangerous by surveilling coffeehouses. Before creating the People's Preachers Organization and People's Houses, the CHP officials used coffeehouses to communicate the government's ideas and policies.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> See Chapter 7.

<sup>86</sup> Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting*.

<sup>87</sup> Serdar Öztürk, "The Struggle over Turkish Village Coffeehouses (1923–45)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, 3 (2008): 439.





### 3. The Pedagogy of the State

---

No matter how many enlightened (people) (*münevver*) there may be among the popular masses (*halk kütlesi*), if they do not keep their knowledge up to date through reading or listening, they will not only lose their enlightenment but will also become semi-ignorant (*yarı cahil*) since their knowledge and manners will be limited to what they have learned at school and will become more harmful in the life of wisdom than complete ignorants.

It is not only a humanitarian and moral duty for us to enlighten the ideas of the popular masses, who constitute the most fundamental capital and power of a nation, with up-to-date information, to increase their knowledge and manners, to strengthen their national conscience and consciousness with intellectual knowledge, in short, to make the people an active-minded cultural element who knows, wants and speaks, and to deepen and advance the high feelings of their humanity. It is an existential foundation crucial for the defense of the country and the nation's progress.<sup>1</sup>

These excerpts are taken from the preface of the CHP's lecture booklets, which were prepared for circulation in the provinces as examples of public lectures held by People's Preachers and People's House members. The party regularly checked the People's House libraries and sent books, brochures, and booklets as guideline publications. These guideline publications reminded the party members of the main objectives of the provincial organizations and the People's Houses. They also compiled examples of lectures or individual talks in booklet form. CHP General Secretary Şükrü Kaya is credited with the quotes above that embody the principles of what can be termed "Kemalist Pedagogy." This educational approach underscored the dichotomy between the "enlightened elites" or "intellectuals" (*münevver*) and the "popular masses" (*halk kütlesi*) or "ignorant" (*cahil*). This pedagogy esteemed knowledge and cautioned its bearers to utilize it in a prescribed manner. In so doing, it framed the education of the people as a matter of national defense and security.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Halk kütlesi arasında münevverler ne kadar çok olursa olsun eğer bilgisini okumak veya dinlemek yolu ile günün bilgisi ve seviyesinde tutmazsa hem münevverliğini kaybeder; hem de bilgisi ve görgüsü mektep sıralarında öğrendiklerine münhasır kalacağından yarı cahil olur ve irfan hayatında tam cahilden daha muzır bir hale gelir. § Bir milletin en esaslı sermayesini ve kudretini teşkil eden halk kütlesinin fikirlerini günün malûmatile tenvir etmek, bilgilerini ve görgülerini arttırmak, milli vicdan ve şuurlarını fikri malûmatla kuvvetlendirmek, hülâsa halkı bilen ve istemesini bilen ve söyleyen faal dimağlı kültürel bir eleman yapmak, onun insanlığının yüksek duygularını derinleştirerek ilerletmek bizim için yalnız insanî, ahlaki mücerret bir vazife değildir. Bu, memleketin müdafaasında ve milletin ilerlemesinde zarurî olan bir varlık temelidir." Preface by Recep Peker to Wilhelm Peters, *Sosyal Bakımdan Ruhî İnkişaf*, ed. Ankara Halkevi, Konferanslar, (Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayını, 1938); Nurettin Sevin, *Pedagojik Temsiller*, ed. Ankara Halkevi, Konferanslar, (Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayını, 30 May, 1938).

Historians and anthropologists have already investigated the nexus of state-building and education in Turkey. Benjamin Fortna showed the adaptations of Western educational models during the reign of Abdülhamid II.<sup>2</sup> Fortna compared late Ottoman developments in the domain of education with other countries and argued that it was a common aspect of the era to see “modern-style pedagogy as a panacea for a wide variety of ailments and shortcomings.”<sup>3</sup> Füsün Üstel studied state-led efforts to train “acceptable and desirable” (*makbul*) citizens from 1908 until today. Üstel focused on the school curricula and educational reforms, emphasizing the courses on the civic education of children.<sup>4</sup> Sam Kaplan led fieldwork in a small town in southern Anatolia after the 1980 military coup and showed the contradictory results of state pedagogy on children’s understanding of citizenship.<sup>5</sup> Zafer Toprak historicized “populism in Turkey,” showing the relationship between populism and conviction around the education of the masses.<sup>6</sup> Alexandros Lamprou conducted the most extensive study about popular education. In his study on the People’s Houses, Lamprou examined the concept of “People’s Education“ (*Halk Terbiyesi*), showing that the main tenets of the early republican pedagogy were civic education and a sort of “civilizing mission” conducted by the elites. Lamprou aptly noticed how a dichotomic understanding of society divided between “enlightened” elites (*münevver*) and “people” (*halk*) was key to “People’s Education.”<sup>7</sup>

Earlier works on early republican history, such as Niyazi Berkes’s *Development of Secularism in Turkey*, first published in 1964, underlined a shift in the educational policies in the late Ottoman Empire. While Berkes observed how “*maarif*,” which meant “instruction of sciences,” yielded to “*terbiye*,” which included moral education and the education of manners from 1908 on, he limited his discussion on adult education to a matter of “secularization.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>4</sup> Füsün Üstel, “*Makbul Vatandaş*”ın Peşinde : II. Meşrutiyet’ten Bugüne Türkiye’de Vatandaş Eğitimi (İstanbul: İletişim, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Sam Kaplan, *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in post-1980 Turkey*, 221.

<sup>6</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Popülizm 1908-1923* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 43-45.

<sup>8</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 401. See also: James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 1896.

According to this narrative, the place accorded to public speaking, arts, and sports between 1908 and 1950 was based on the idea of liberating people from old (Islamic) habits that had prompted them to “sit in silence.”<sup>9</sup>

Füsun Üstel also showed the educational role played by the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), founded in 1912 by a nationalist association (*Türk Derneği*).<sup>10</sup> The conviction regarding the necessity to train and educate the “people” (*halk*) was central to the initiatives of the Turkish Hearths. One of the Turkish Hearths’ main activities was organizing weekly lectures (*konferans*) to educate their members and broader segments of society.<sup>11</sup> This private nationalist endeavor aimed to provide education to the public, as its founders believed that fostering national consciousness depended on education. Despite having many Unionists among its founding and active members and facing pressure from the Unionist leadership who aimed to control all associative activities, the Turkish Hearths conserved relative autonomy from successive ruling parties (CUP and the CHP) until their closure in 1931, according to Üstel.<sup>12</sup>

The Turkish Hearths’ lectures are reminiscent of the People’s Preachers. Despite the formal opposition and distinction of the early republican leadership from their Unionist predecessors, the Turkish Hearths persisted and even expanded during the first seven years of the republic. The number of its provincial branches increased from 71 to 267 between 1924 and its closure in 1931.<sup>13</sup>

However, the political turmoil of the early 1930s brought by oppositional parties and insurrectional movements prompted the government to reconsider its use of these associations. The closure of the Turkish Hearths (April 1931), the convening of the 3rd CHP Congress (May 1931), and the circulation of the founding document of the People’s Preachers Organization (September 1931) occurred within the span of six months. When the press started to anticipate the closure of the Turkish Hearths, their inefficacy and malfunctioning were among the topics

---

<sup>9</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 400-10.

<sup>10</sup> Füsun Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*, 34.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 402.

<sup>13</sup> François Georgeon, “Les foyers turcs à l’époque kémaliste,” *Turcica* XVI (1982); Füsun Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*; Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 28.

raised.<sup>14</sup> After this closure, the press also expected it would be absorbed by the party and transformed into a “youth organization” similar to the “Fascist” organizations in Italy.<sup>15</sup>

The People’s Preachers Organization was the “immediate product of the regime’s concern to propagate its message.”<sup>16</sup> In this sense, the creation of the People’s Preachers Organization in September 1931 was the first attempt to control the political education of adult citizens more directly. The People’s Preachers’ main responsibility was to disseminate the regime’s key ideas wherever and whenever necessary, in the name of the party, but discreetly. The People’s Houses created only a few months later, in turn, became the main stage on which the preachers addressed their audiences. Still, beyond those human and infrastructural resources, what was the overarching principle of this strategy aimed at reinforcing state authority?

This chapter delves into the pedagogy of the single-party regime, focusing on the case study of the People’s Preachers and their lectures at the People’s Houses. It draws upon party archives and national press aligned with the party to examine the internal and external sources of the republican pedagogic mission, targeting adult citizens through lectures delivered by the People’s Preachers. Building on existing literature on state pedagogy, it also investigates the role of orality in shaping the Kemalist pedagogic mission. Furthermore, by examining the political concepts of education during the early republican era, the chapter aims to illustrate how the political agendas of the founding elite influenced social classifications that continue to be relevant today.

The term “pedagogy” etymologically refers to “the study of the practice of effective teaching” concerning the education of school children.<sup>17</sup> This understanding of “pedagogy” is also palpable in early republican sources. The lectures organized by the Republican People’s Party on the topic of “pedagogy” often limit their scope to children’s education.<sup>18</sup> An emic term with a similar meaning as “pedagogy” regarding the political education of adults is

---

<sup>14</sup> Mustafa Arıkan and Ahmet Deniz, “Türk Ocaklarının Kapatılışı, Borçları ve Emlâkinin Tasfiyesi,” *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 15 (December 2004): 409.

<sup>15</sup> “Diğer taraftan firkada faşist teşkilatını andırır bir gençlik teşkilatı yapılması, memleketin her tarafında şubeleri bulunması tesbit edilen yeni esaslar meyanındadır.” “Halk Fırkası Her Tarafda Gençlik Teşkilatı Yapacak,” *Vakit*, 19 March.

<sup>16</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 32.

<sup>17</sup> Bryan A. Garner, “pedagogy,” in *Garner’s Modern English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Nurettin Sevin, *Pedagojik Temsiller*; Wilhelm Peters, *Sosyal Bakımdan Ruhî İnkişaf*.

“*terbiye*,” which means training and education of good manners and correcting and chastising.<sup>19</sup>

“*Terbiye*” is a polysemic term that means different things in different contexts. Maurus Reinkowski showed that, in the nineteenth-century state grammar, “*terbiye*” was a means for “restoring public order” by using state violence against the rebels.<sup>20</sup> Alexandros Lamprou scrutinized the semantic networks of “education” and “manners” (*terbiye*) and their opposites in Modern Turkish in his work on the People’s Houses. According to Lamprou, someone who is considered “well educated” (*terbiyeli*) refers to their “good manners” and “civilized behavior” related to urban elites. At the same time, its mirror image (*terbiyesiz*) can be associated with specific social groups, namely the “peasants and provincials.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, “People’s Education” went beyond the institutional framework of schools (hence children and schooled youth) controlled by the Ministry of Education; it was concerned with the education of the broader Anatolian populations by the elites.

Scholarly and popular pedagogy in the early republican era should be distinguished for analytical reasons. They do not operate through the same institutions or use the same means. The educational policies regarding school children are under the control of the Ministry of Education, while the educational policies targeting adult citizens were dictated by the CHP General Secretary. The schools are distinct from public squares and the People’s Houses, where many People’s Preachers addressed their audiences. On the one hand this distinction implies a continuation of the strategies already implemented by the late Ottoman Empire to foster mandatory schooling for children. On the other hand, adult extracurricular education was perceived as a political prerogative. Still, considering the message embedded in this strategy, it was less about distinguishing between scopes – both aimed at constructing loyal and fervent citizens of the nation state – and more about adapting this scope to two different age categories and social classes. Yet, this resulted in a different perception of teachers versus preachers. Although in many cases one could be both, the degree of control by state institutions

---

<sup>19</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 528.

<sup>20</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, “The State’s Security and the Subjects’ Prosperity: Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century),” in *Legitimizing the Order : the Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, ed. Maurus Reinkowski and Hakan Karateke (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 203.

<sup>21</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 44.

and the modalities of work differed significantly. After all, the content of the speeches delivered by the People's Houses was not regulated as much as the content of the school curricula. The People's House members and Preachers, often civil servants, engaged in their work voluntarily, which prevented the type of control over their actions that might be possible in their workplaces.

Despite this separation, scholarly and popular pedagogy intersected on many levels during the single-party era. For example, the most important actors who formulated and implemented this pedagogy were often active on both sides. The following section will analyze the works and trajectories of İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu (1886-1978), Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949), Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), and Falih Rifkı Atay (1894-1971), who played important roles either with their legacy or in their active participation in the formation of institutions of popular pedagogy in the early republican era.

Given the overall vagueness of the regulatory documents sent by the party general secretary to the provincial administrative committees, the publications of these two mass educators and one of the most influential politicians of the era on the issue are valuable sources to understand the intellectual background of the Kemalist Pedagogy incorporated by the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses.

### 3.1. Mass Educators of the Republic

---

The first thing that these men introduced was the practice of freedom of speech in its sheer physical sense. They set an example and invited the people to talk and talk freely. They encouraged the discharge of thirty-three years of unspoken words, and unthought thoughts. These prolific talkers were not overtly concerned with the sense of what is said as long as it was said. They inspired the people to talk and talk aloud – an actively praised hitherto only by mosque preachers. Public oratory, which was unknown to the Islamic tradition, became a necessity in the new political education.<sup>22</sup>

Niyazi Berkes' work was notable for its emphasis on using speech and encouraging others to speak as a pedagogical tool. Nevertheless, Berkes's take on the interwar promotion of orality as a means of secularizing education was ill-founded because it neglects how the Islamic uses of orality informed how early republican mass educators formulated their pedagogic mission targeting larger parts of the population.<sup>23</sup> It is true that many pedagogues active during the republic's formative years had a critical stance towards traditional forms of education, starting from that of the schools training Islamic dignitaries. On the other hand, Berkes took his primary sources at face value in their opposition of old and new, tradition and modernity. On the other, he overlooked their evaluation and reinterpretation of the traditional forms of knowledge transmission. This allowed him to provide a linear narrative of the development of education and secularization.

Berkes mentioned the former Education Minister Rıza Tevfik [Bölükbaşı], the educator and founder of the National Olympic Committee in Turkey, Selim Sırrı [Tarcan], and pedagogy professor at Istanbul University (*Darülfünun*) İsmail Hakkı among the prominent “mass educators” on the history of Turkish secularization. He also underlined that many individuals who participated in the debates about educational policies had a remarkable political career during the interwar era.<sup>24</sup> Işıl Çakan mentioned the role of another important personality, the

---

<sup>22</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 401-02.

<sup>23</sup> See for instance: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Oral Transmission and the Book in the Islamic Education: The Spoken and the Written Word,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (1992); F. Betül Yavuz, “Orality in the Tekke and the Circulation of “High” and “Low” Cultures of Sufism in Seventeenth-Century İstanbul,” *History of Religions* 62, no. 1 (2022). On the transition from orality to textuality in educational practices, see, for instance, Matthew Melvin-Koushki, “Taḥqīq vs. Taqlīd in the Renaissances of Western Early Modernity,” *Philological Encounters*, no. 3 (2018): 231; Matthew Melvin-Koushki, “Better than Sufi Sex: Ibn Turka on the Superiority of Lettrism to etter than Sufi Sex: Ibn Turka on the Superiority of Lettrism to Sufism as Model of Occult Islamic Humanism,” *La Rosa di Paracelso*, no. 2 (2020): 62.

<sup>24</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 401.

archeologist and ethnographer Hamid Zübeyr [Koşay], who treated the issue of “People’s Education“ in the 1930s.<sup>25</sup>

All these cohorts of men worked actively in the domain of education. İsmail Hakkı was a prominent professor at Istanbul University (*Darülfünûn*). Following the encouragement of Ziya Gökalp, he started to teach “Education sociology” (*Terbiyevi İctimaiyat*) in 1917.<sup>26</sup> İsmail Hakkı’s 1913 lecture “Education of the Commoners” (*Terbiye-i Avam*) at the Istanbul Darülfünûn and the Turkish Hearths profoundly impacted how the early republican leadership talked about the education of the masses.<sup>27</sup> This lecture counted among the important references regarding “popular education” (*Halk Terbiyesi*) and was remembered twenty-five years after its publication.<sup>28</sup>

Being a significant figure in Kemalist education did not always equate to being a discerning member of the CHP. İsmail Hakkı was not active within CHP circles in the early 1930s, hence within the context of the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses. Despite being nominated as the director of the Istanbul Darülfünûn shortly after the proclamation of the republic, he was dismissed following the 1933 “University Reform,” which is also characterized as a “purge.”<sup>29</sup> This reform also resulted in the firing of most of the former professors of the Darülfünun. İsmail Hakkı was one among ninety-six professors who were purged in a single institution of higher education. The causes of his dismissal are not clear; given the traumatism of the experience of the Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*) in 1930 for the CHP leadership, it is plausible that his dismissal had to do

---

<sup>25</sup> Işıl Hacıbrahimoğlu Çakan mentions Hamit Zübeyr Koşay as one of the important pedagogical figures of the early republic. According to Çakan, Hamit Zübeyr introduced Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, a Danish scholar of pedagogy, to the Turkish context. [Koşay] Hamit Zübeyr, *Halk Terbiyesi: Ankara’da Ocak binasında verilen konferanstır*. (Ankara: Köy Hocası Matbaası, 1931), 8-9. Cited by: Işıl Hacıbrahimoğlu Çakan, *Konuşunuz Konuşturunuz: Tek Parti Döneminde Propagandanın Etkin Silahı: Söz*, 48.

<sup>26</sup> Cengiz Aslan and Engin Deniz Tanır, eds., *İctimâ’iyyât Nokta-i Nazarından Terbiye, İsmayıl Hakkı* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2020), 9.

<sup>27</sup> Education of the Flock was a “lecture” delivered at the nationalist cultural associations, the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), and Istanbul University. This lecture was published in 1914. İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*, Türk Ocağı konferansları, (Dersaadet [İstanbul]: İkdâm Matbaası, 1914).

<sup>28</sup> Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” in *Konuşmalar: Broşür 2* (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, 1940).

<sup>29</sup> Cem Özatalay, “Purge, Exile, and Resistance: Rethinking the Conflict of the Faculties through the Case of Academics for Peace in Turkey,” *Europen Journal of Turkish Studies* Numéro en lutte, no. 30 (2020): §2.



with his work for the Liberal Party organization in Istanbul.<sup>30</sup> İsmail Hakkı was removed from the center of intellectual controversies and political decision-making between 1933 and 1942. During this period, he published a weekly intellectual magazine called “*Yeni Adam*” (New Man), in which he continued to comment on pedagogy and people’s education.

Sidelined intellectual figures had other ways of participating in collective debates about how to educate the ‘masses.’ Despite his affiliation with an opposition party and dismissal from the university, İsmail Hakkı’s publications from the 1930s were generally positive about the CHP and its pedagogic project of educating the masses.<sup>31</sup> In February 1935, he dedicated the cover of the issue to the activities of the Balıkesir People’s House, where he was invited to attend the staging of a theater piece he wrote himself.<sup>32</sup> During his visit to the Balıkesir People’s House, İsmail Hakkı also delivered a lecture following their proposal.<sup>33</sup> In 1941, he was reinstated as a university professor of pedagogy, this time to the Language-History-Geography Faculty (*Dil-Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi*, DTCF) in Ankara. He also became a CHP deputy for eight years after the 1942 and 1946 legislative elections.<sup>34</sup>

Many prominent figures in early republican politics had a fluctuating relationship with the CHP during the single-party rule. The turn in İsmail Hakkı’s political career points to his progressive alignment with the party, or his ‘amnesty’ after the death of Mustafa Kemal under the İnönü regime. His example shows that different institutions and media partook in the making of Kemalist pedagogy. Problems and conflicts might arise concerning the public sector. Still, the press remained another channel where authors less bound to – and promoted by – the CHP could voice their opinion on education, provided they do not diverge significantly from the same principles adopted by the official party communication. Staying in the party’s line by divulging pedagogy could be a way to be reintegrated into public institutions.

---

<sup>30</sup> Nurşen Mazıcı, “Öncesi ve Sonrasıyla 1933 Üniversite Reformu,” *Birikim*, August 1995.

<sup>31</sup> For some examples: İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Hatip Nasıl Olursunuz?,” *Yeni Adam*, 19 December 1935; İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Halk Üniversitesi Toplu Tedris Üzerine Ders,” *Yeni Adam*, 14 February.

<sup>32</sup> İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Balıkesir Halkevinde,” *Yeni Adam*, 14 February 1935.

<sup>33</sup> “Halkevi temsilden önce benden bir konferans istemişti. Ben konferansı verdim. Konferansımın metnini yazacağım.” *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Aylın Özman, “İsmā‘īl Hakkī Baltadjioghlu,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Brill, 2012).

Talking about popular pedagogy often went hand in hand with talking about oratory arts. *Yeni Adam* published short articles about oratory art in which some techniques observed in the photographs published in the press were harshly criticized.<sup>35</sup> According to İsmail Hakkı, the difference between past forms of oral transmission past and present ones was that “oratory art” was to become a skill for everyone.<sup>36</sup> İsmail Hakkı based this claim on criticism concerning the present state of education, “Our children do not make an effort to speak well because, according to our old customs, having oratory skills was not a value but a flaw.”<sup>37</sup> Teaching “young students and professors” how to address larger crowds was important for educating the masses.<sup>38</sup> This point of view almost seemed to quote – most probably unaware – one of Karl Marx’s *Theses on Feuerbach*:

“The materialist doctrine of the transformation of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances are transformed by men and that the educator himself must be educated. It must hence split the society into two parts - of which one is lifted above it.”<sup>39</sup>

We will see throughout the chapter how popular pedagogy divided society into two unequal parts. By the 1940s, İsmail Hakkı had delivered speeches at the People’s Houses, but next to him, other important voices combined intervention in the press with activities of popular pedagogy.<sup>40</sup> During the republic’s formative years, Nafî Atuf [Kansu] (1890-1949) played a crucial role in educational policies targeting children and adult citizens. Nafî Atuf was a former teacher and scholar of education. A contributor to the nationalist “Turkish Hearth” magazine (*Türk Yurdu*) since his tenure as a teacher in Edirne, Nafî Atuf introduced many important

---

<sup>35</sup> “Nutuk verirken, konferans verirken... diye resimler görürsünüz. Ağır bir karış, kollar tam bir kulaç açmış, bütün gövdesi dehşetli bir hal almış!...” İ.H. [İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu], “Trajedi Aktörü mü Hatip mi?,” *Yeni Adam*, 17 Kanunsâni, 1935.

<sup>36</sup> “Bir çok insanlar vardır, hatipliği sadece hatiplere mahsus bir ar sanırlar. (...) Halbuki bu sayımızda göstereceğimiz ki: gerek hatiplik, gerekse güzel arların ressamlık, aktörlük, müzikçilik gibi bir kolu cinsi seçin insanlar için değil, belki bütün normal insanlar içindir. (...) Bu yazımda genç okulluya, genç öğretmene hatip olması için hatiplik eğitimi alması için ve neler yapması gerektiğini öğreteceğim.” İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Hatip Nasıl Olursunuz?,” 8.

<sup>37</sup> “Bizim çocuklar eyi söz söylemeye çabalamazlar, çünkü eski âdetlerimize göre bu bir deyim değil bir kusurdur.” Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Bu yazılarımda genç okulluya, genç öğretmene hatip olması ve hatiplik eğitimi alması için ne ve neler yapması gerektiğini göstereceğim. Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Karl Marx, *ad Feuerbach [Theses on Feuerbach]: German Text with Facing-Page English Translation*, ed. Carlos Beñdana-Pedroza (Bonn, 2019), 18-19.

<sup>40</sup> İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Biz Türkler Nereden Geliyoruz Nereye Gidiyoruz Biz Neyiz,” in *Konuşmalar: Broşür I* (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevi Neşriyatı, 1940); Nafî Kansu, “Halkevleri Hakkında Bir Konuşma,” in *Konuşmalar: Broşür III* (Ankara: C.H.P Halkevleri Neşriyatı, 1942).

works by Western authors, like Edmond Demolins and Friedrich Fröbel into Ottoman-Turkish in the 1910s.<sup>41</sup> The idea of creating a national holiday for children, which was concretized in the early republican era, was put forward by Nafi Atuf as early as 1914 because of its pedagogical potential.<sup>42</sup>

From the proclamation of the republic until the end of the single-party regime, Nafi Atuf shaped the Education Ministry's policies based on centralization, secularization, and the multiplication of schools.<sup>43</sup> Nafi Atuf was on the drafting committee of the Law on the Unification of Education (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu*), adopted in March 1924.<sup>44</sup> This law prepared the field for the closure of medreses, the creation of state schools for the training of mosque imams and Islamic preachers, and the control of schools led by missionaries and non-Muslim communitarian schools in Turkey. Between 1924 and 1927, Nafi Atuf worked as a counselor of National Education" (*Maarif Müsteşarı*). In 1926, he traveled to Russia with a diplomatic passport to examine the educational system implemented after the revolution.<sup>45</sup>

In 1936, Nafi Atuf contributed to publishing the French edition of a publicity booklet aimed at informing foreign observers about the People's House. This booklet is a fruitful source for analyzing translations of the key concepts in "People's Education." The preface of the French booklet, penned by Nafi Atuf, claimed that the main objective of the People's Houses was the "social and cultural development of people," reiterating the distinction between "enlightened citizens" (*citoyens éclairés*) and "popular masses" (*masses populaires*).<sup>46</sup> After many years as a party member and deputy, highly active in its educational endeavors, Nafi Atuf became General Secretary between 1945 and 1947.

---

<sup>41</sup> Masami Arai, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, Social, Economic, and Political Studies of the Middle East, (Leiden, New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 110; Filiz Meşeci Giorgetti, "New School of Mustafa Satı Bey in Istanbul (1915)," *Paedagogica Historica* 50, no. 1-2 (2014): 47.

<sup>42</sup> Füsün Üstel, "Makbul Vatandaş"ın Peşinde : II. Meşrutiyet'ten Bugüne Türkiye'de Vatandaş Eğitimi, 29.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

<sup>44</sup> Nafi Atuf [Kansu], "Rusya Maarifi Hakkında Rapor," *Maarif Vekaleti Mecmuası*, 1 September 1926, 1926. Transliterated in: Metin Atuf Kansu and Işık Kansu, eds., *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları* (Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Yayınları, 2011), 62.

<sup>45</sup> 20 May 1926, T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı Türk Diplomatik Arşivi (TDA), 571/35813- 141306 – 205.

<sup>46</sup> "Pour réaliser leur but qui est de servir au développement culturel et social du Peuple, les maisons du Peuple se sont appuyées partout sur l'intérêt que leur portent les citoyens éclairés et les masses populaires." Behçet Kemal Çağlar, *Les maisons du peuple du P.R.P., parti républicain du peuple*, ed. Şükrü Kaya and Nafi Atuf Kansu (Ankara: Ulus, 1936).

Nafi Atuf 's observations on the Russian education system were published in the Magazine of the Education Ministry (*Maarif Vekaleti Mecmuası*). The "Report on Education in Russia" (*Rusya Maarifi Hakkında Rapor*) did not limit itself to analyzing how schools functioned in the USSR. It also examined the initiatives for the "political education of the people according to the fundamentals of communism."<sup>47</sup> Nafi Atuf noticed, for instance, that evening schools opened next to factories to educate the workers and "train enlightened (*münevver*) workers."<sup>48</sup> In the introductory pages of his report, Nafi Atuf summarized "the most important responsibility from the viewpoint of the permanence of the new regime" as follows:

To bring new principles and ideas to the people; to complete the political and social education of the people; to take the necessary measures to raise a generation that will protect and defend the new form of state with faith, to organize education and training activities accordingly, to reorganize and operate the educational institutions according to the goals of the state...<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, "*terbiye*" became increasingly politicized, to the point of representing a form of political morality. The cultivation of a desired political morality through "*terbiye*" as "teaching moral values and manners" developed simultaneously with the advancement of pedagogy as the science of education. During the republican era, Nafi Atuf continued publishing on pedagogy and its history. In 1928, he published "History of the Science of Education" (*Fenn-i Terbiye Tarihi*).<sup>50</sup> In *History of the Science of Education*, he did not use "pedagogy" but talked about "*terbiye*," to which he gave a large definition beyond scholarly institutions. For

---

<sup>47</sup> "Halka komünizm esasına göre siyasi bir terbiye vermek." Metin Atuf Kansu and Işık Kansu, *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları*, 409.

<sup>48</sup> "Fabrikalara girdik ve becerikli ve münevver amale yetiştirmek maksadıyla fabrikaların yanında açılan mektepleri dolaştık." Nafi Atuf [Kansu], "Rusya Maarifi Hakkında Rapor." Transliterated in ; Metin Atuf Kansu and Işık Kansu, *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları*, 410-17.

<sup>49</sup> "Yeni rejimin beka ve devamı nokta-ı nazarından en mühim vazife şudur: Yeni prensip ve fikirleri halka indirmek; halkın siyasi ve içtimai terbiyesini ikmal eylemek; yeni devlet şeklini imanla muhafaza ve müdafaa edecek bir nesil yetiştirmek için icabeden tedbirleri ittihaz, talim ve terbiye faaliyetlerini buna göre tanzim, maarif müessesatını devletin gayelerine göre yeniden teşkil etmek ve işletmek..." Nafi Atuf [Kansu], "Rusya Maarifi Hakkında Rapor." Transliterated in; Metin Atuf Kansu and Işık Kansu, *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları*, 411.

<sup>50</sup> Nafi Atuf [Kansu], *Fenn-i Terbiye ve Tarih* (Istanbul: İktisad Matbaası, 1928).

him, “*terbiye*” was more than schools and teachers; it comprised “climate, race, nature, social conditions, political institutions, and religious beliefs.”<sup>51</sup>

The concept of “*terbiye*” like many others used to talk about “People’s Education” in the context of early republican secularization, had Islamicate connotations. Within the context of Sufism, it was used in the sense of “spiritual education” through “discussion and companionship” (*sohbet*).<sup>52</sup> In the early twentieth century, “*terbiye*” was the Ottoman Turkish equivalent of “pedagogy.”<sup>53</sup> After the Alphabet Reform of 1928, Nafi Atuf’s “History of Sciences of Education” was adapted and re-published with a new title - “History of Pedagogy” (*Pedagoji Tarihi*).<sup>54</sup>

### 3.2. History of Pedagogy with Nafî Atuf Kansu

Despite the ambiguity between the loanword “pedagogy” and “*terbiye*,” Nafi Atuf distinguished them in every introduction. In the updated introduction, Nafi Atuf argued that the former solely concerned educators and strictly defined educational institutions. In contrast, the latter encompassed education in various institutions, such as the family.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, “*terbiye*” encompassed larger aspects of social life. Nafi Atuf’s book emphasized “pedagogy” in the sense of children’s education. Still, it contained many interesting references to the political education of adults or “people” (*halk*) at large.

An overview of Nafi Atuf’s *History of Pedagogy* allows a reflection on the intellectual world in which the prominent pedagogues of the early republic evolved. *History of Pedagogy* began with examples from the “Eastern Nations” (*Şark Kavimleri*), which included the

---

<sup>51</sup>“Terbiye târihi ile fenn-i terbiye târihini birbirinden ayırmak lâzımdır. Terbiye târihi bütün memleketlerde bütün ‘aşırlarda fikrî ve ahlâkî terbiyeyi ve terâkkiyâtı ihâta eder. Kavimlerin fikrî ve ahlâkî hareketlerinde mü’esser yalnız mekteb ve mu’allim değildir. ‘Aynı derecede ve belki de daha ziyâde iklim, ‘ırk, tabâyi’, şerâ’i-i ictimâ’î, mü’essesât-ı siyâsiye, i’tikâdât-ı dînîye... denilen gizli ‘âmillerdir ki bilinmeksizin, istenmeksizin insanlar üzerinde icrâ-yı te’sîr iderler. Bir (terbiye târihi) işte bütün bu mü’essesâtın muhtelif devrelerde kavimler üzerindeki derece-yi te’sîrlerini izâh etmelidir.” Ibid., 4.

<sup>52</sup> Jean-Jacques Thibon, “Adab et éducation spirituelle (tarbiya) chez les maîtres de Nîshâpûr aux iiiie/ixe et ive/xe siècles,” in *Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi Adab*, ed. Francesco Chiabotti et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 126.

<sup>53</sup> See also: Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 405.

<sup>54</sup> Nafi Atuf [Kansu], *Fenn-i Terbiye ve Tarih*.

<sup>55</sup> “Bir terbiye tarihi işte bütün bu müessirleri, bu müessirlerin muhtelif devirlerde kavimler üzerindeki tesirlerini izah etmelidir.” Nafi Atuf [Kansu], *Pedagoji Tarihi*, Muallim Mektebi Kitapları, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1929), 1.

“Hindus,” “Israelites” (*Israilliler*), “Chinese,” “Turks,” and the “Iranians.”<sup>56</sup> These examples were followed by examples from Greek pedagogues (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) and Roman “pedagogues” (Quintilian and Marcus Aurelius). The medieval pedagogy was divided between “Islamic” and “Christian.” From the history of pedagogy in medieval times, Nafi Atuf started to include the education of adults in his narrative.

The Islamic references in the book showed how this education specialist compared and contrasted different models and adapted the non-Islamic ones to a supposedly Islamic context. In the section about “Education in Islam” (*İslamda Terbiye*), Nafi Atuf wrote in detail about the biography and ideas of al-Ghazali (c.1056-1011) and al-Farabi (c. 878-950). He notably underlined the role accorded by Al-Ghazali to teachers (*muallim*) and their role, which went beyond the transmission of scientific knowledge.<sup>57</sup> He praised al-Ghazali for considering all aspects of everyday life in his perception of “the education of religious rules of conduct and behavior” (*dini adap ile terbiye etmek*), from “going to sleep, eating, drinking, and going to public baths to the cemetery.”<sup>58</sup> Teachers should communicate simply and understandably, avoiding explaining complex topics students cannot grasp to prevent confusion and dislike.<sup>59</sup>

The treatment of the “Christian” pedagogy was longer and more effectively historicized. In the section about “Christian Pedagogy,” he only referred to the educational reforms of Charlemagne. In a half-page section, he touched upon scholastic pedagogy, referring to the work of Akçuraoğlu Yusuf. Starting in the sixteenth century, each section was organized according to the centuries since then. The book’s coverage of the education of adults was limited. Nafi Atuf mentioned Martin Luther and praised his expansion of “instruction” (*tahsil*) beyond the “religious point of view” (*dini cihet*) to “learn how to govern one’s country” or “how to raise one’s children”<sup>60</sup> He criticized the Jesuits for limiting their educational project

---

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 3-7.

<sup>57</sup> Nafi Atuf counts among the scientific disciplines logic, natural sciences, algebra, and theology (*mantık, tabiiyat, riyaziyet, ilahiyat*). Ibid., 28.

<sup>58</sup> “Bu eserde insanın bütün işleri en nazik teferruatlarına kadar tayin edilmiştir. Yatağa girerken, çıkarken, yerken, içerken, hamama giderken, velhâsıl ta mezara girinceye kadar insan Gazalının gözünden kaçmamış ve onu dini adap ile terbiye etmek istemiştir.” Ibid., 30.

<sup>59</sup> “Muallim talebenin anlayabileceği miktar ile kifayet etmeli, fazlasından sakınmalıdır. Çünkü idrakinden âciz olduğu şey insanı ya tenfir eder veya aklını karıştırır.” Ibid., 29.

<sup>60</sup> “Luther; tahsilde yalnız dini ciheti takip etmemiştir, yani tahsili yalnız din cihetinden lüzumlu görmemiştir. Fikirince insanlar kendi memleketlerini güzel idare etmek, kadınlar çocuklarını iyi yetiştirmek ve evlerini iyi idare etmek için de tahsile mecburdurlar.” Ibid., 40.

to a select elite instead of “people” at large (*halk*) and overemphasizing “rhetoric” (*beyan ilmi*) and “logic” (*mantık*).<sup>61</sup> Nafi Atuf claimed:

To want to educate the people and love doing so, it is necessary to have a conscience, reason, and accept equality. However, the Jesuits distrusted popular opinion; they were only concerned with the aristocratic upbringing of the ruling class. They wanted to raise charming gentlemen, not to raise human beings. The intellectual upbringing was not a good and beautiful thing for the priests anyway; it was a privilege reserved only for some classes of the nation: in some hands, it could even be a dangerous weapon and a wicked thing. It was the best way to keep the people ignorant and save and restore the faith.<sup>62</sup>

Nafi Atuf’s take on Jesuit education was already following the direction of what he would later call popular education. Nafi Atuf’s framing of the history of pedagogy undeniably echoed his personal views on children’s education and the early republican educational policies. This is also why modern pedagogy took considerably more space than the earlier forms. The antiquity and the medieval age were covered in a few pages for each region. In contrast, the modern history of pedagogy has been studied over the centuries. The earlier periods included Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Hindus. In contrast, later periods were limited to the Western philosophy of education, starting with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and continuing to John Dewey (1869-1952). Nafi Atuf praised and celebrated the Enlightenment thinkers for secularizing education and opening education to broader segments of the population. For Nafi Atuf, the twist in the history of education brought by the Enlightenment was its secularization and nationalization.

The eighteenth century not only liberated education from the hands of pedagogical priests. It completely changed the method of education and upbringing; it revolutionized education; education took a popular/national (*milli*) shape. Preparation for life replaced

---

<sup>61</sup> “Cezvitler beyan ilmine çok ehemmiyet verirler ve zekâyı mantık ve beyan ilimleri münakaşaları içinde boğarlar.” Ibid., 41.

<sup>62</sup> “Bunun yegâne sebebi cezvitlerin halkın tahsil etmesini istememeleri ve sevmemeleridir. Halkın tenevvürünü istemek ve bununla uğraşmayı sevmek için vicdana, akla malik olmak, ve müsavâtı kabul etmek lazımdır. Halbuki, Cezvitler beşerin fikrine itimatsızlık gösterirler; yalnız müdir sınıfının aristokratik terbiyesiyle meşgul olurlardı. Onlar sevimli centilmenler yetiştirmek isterlerdi, yoksa insanları yetiştirmek değil. Fikir terbiyesi papazlarca zaten eyi ve güzel bir şey değildi; yalnız milletin bazı sınıflarına mahsus bir süstü: hatta bazı ellerde mühlik bir silah ve fena bir şey olabilirdi. Halkın cahil kalması ve imanı kurtarmak ve yatatmak için en eyi bir vasıta idi.” Ibid., 49.

preparation for death. From now on, education and training became a general and national goal to raise citizens who would work and think for the motherland and real life.<sup>63</sup>

Starting from the Enlightenment, Nafi Atuf spared more and more space for the issue of adult education. While writing about Rochow, he mentioned peasants' education.<sup>64</sup> While writing about the impact of the French Revolution on education, he used the expression "popular education" (*halk terbiyesi*) and distinguished "education" (*terbiye*) from "instruction" (*tedris*). "Education" (*terbiye*) was not a matter of teaching "conclusive and absolute facts" but about transmitting "political and religious beliefs and opinions."<sup>65</sup> Within this context, Nafi Atuf celebrated Condorcet's plan to continue educating people "when they got out of schools" through "weekly lectures" of "public lectures" organized by teachers.<sup>66</sup>

In his perspective, the nineteenth century stood out as a watershed moment since "instruction" ceased to be the exclusive preserve of the "privileged classes" (*mümtaz sınıflar*). Instead, it came to be regarded as a "need and right" for "all classes of people," including both the "enlightened" (*münevver*) and "non-enlightened" (*gayrimünevver*).<sup>67</sup> Nafi Atuf enthusiastically celebrated the emancipation of pedagogy from the confines of traditional school buildings, citing the dissemination of knowledge through the press and public lectures to the nation as key factors contributing to the liberation of education.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, the civilizing mission embedded in this debate on education was part of a deeper "civilizational mission": Nuri Atuf read history as made by enlightened civilizations, among which figured

---

<sup>63</sup> "On sekizinci asır yalnız pedagoji rahiplerinin ellerinden kurtarmakla kalmadı. Terbiyeyi, talim usulünü baştanbaşa değiştirdi; terbiyede bir inkılap yaptı; terbiye milli şekil aldı. Hayat için hazırlanmak ölüm için hazırlanmak yerine kaim oldu. Artık terbiye ve talim, vatan ve hakiki hayat için çalışır, düşünür vatandaşlar yetiştirecek umumi ve milli bir gaye oldu." Ibid., 76.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>65</sup> "Terbiyeyi tedristen ayırmak lazımdır; yani dini ve siyasi itikat ve kanaatlerden hesap ve vakaları, müspet ve kati malumatı da ayırmak icap eyler." Ibid., 120.

<sup>66</sup> "Condorcet mektepten çıktıkran sonra dahi köylünün, amelenin tahsilde devam edebilmelerini pek ziyade iltizam ediyor ve bu sebeple gençler için dersler haftalık konferanslar tavsiye ediyor: her Pazar günü muallim umumi konferans verece, ve bu konferansta her yaşta vatandaşlar hazır bulunacaklar." Ibid., 121.

<sup>67</sup> "Evvelce mümtaz sınıflara mahsus telakki olunan tahsil artık bütün halk sınıfları için bir ihtiyaç ve hakkolmuştur. Cemiyetin bütün sınıfları bunu istiyor. Feyizli bir gayret halkın münevver ve gayrimünevver bütün sınıflarına sirayet etmiştir." Ibid., 127.

<sup>68</sup> "Pedagoji artık mektep duvarlarından harice de çıkıyor ailelere, yevmî ve terbiyevî ve matbuata, millete verilen konferanslara ve nasihatlere giriyor." Ibid., 128.



his own. However, modern Turkish civilization had to merge its original spirit with contemporary innovation to keep pace with more developed ones.

Nafi Atuf prioritized children as the aim of this educational vision, but he did not limit the reflection on the history of pedagogy to children only. Instead, he analyzed the education of people in general, including adults, mothers and fathers, professors, and peasants. His history of pedagogy went beyond scholarly institutions, encompassing extracurricular activities and political education. Contrary to Niyazi Berkes' evolutionist bias, Nafi Atuf recognized the central role of religion in the history of pedagogy. He did not dismiss religious or religiously inspired pedagogical teachings but highlighted their strengths and weaknesses. His analysis spanned from medieval Islamic philosophers to contemporary Western thinkers of education, demonstrating his rich but Eurocentric vision. His chapters about the European thinkers were remarkably more detailed than the others. Nafi Atuf applauded and heralded the secularization of education. He believed religious education should come last but did not favor abolishing it altogether.

Furthermore, Nafi Atuf was inspired by "traditional" and religious forms of knowledge transmission in his conception of People's Education. He mentioned storytellers (*meddah*), improvisational theater, troubadour poets (*saz şairleri*), and poet-minstrels (*aşiks*) as people who impacted people "profoundly" as exemplary cases for the party-state-led efforts of "People's Education."<sup>69</sup> Most of these 'traditional' means of knowledge transmission and entertainment were often rooted in Islamic practice. Storytellers (*meddah*) were linked to the "popular storytellers or preachers" (*kuşşa*) who originally transmitted Qur'anic narratives.<sup>70</sup> Both troubadour poets and poet-minstrels were tightly embedded in Sufi traditions. Their songs were not limited to spiritual content. They were sometimes about other issues exploitable by

---

<sup>69</sup> "Kezalik tuluatçular, meddahlar, köy köy dolaşan saz sairleri, aşıklar, karagöz, halkın duyuş ve görüş seviyelerine tesir yapmaktadır. Terbiye içinde aktif ve meş'ur tesirin yeri büyüktür. İçtimai mukavemet hesaba katılarak ona tesir yapmak terbiyenin işidir."Nafi Atuf Kansu, "Halk Terbiyesine Dair," 15.

<sup>70</sup> P.N. Boratav, "Maddāh," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Brill, 2012); Ch. Pellat, "Kāşş," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Brill, 2012).

the nationalists, such as heroism. Nevertheless, their artistic production did not separate their Islamicate worldview from other allegedly “secular” issues.<sup>71</sup>

Nafi Atuf’s broad definition of “education” (*terbiye*) was also reflected in his political activity within the party. Next to his role as the counselor of the Education Ministry, he was very active in the “People’s Education“ efforts led by the party general secretary and its provincial branches, including the People’s Houses.<sup>72</sup> In January 1933, he became the Ankara People’s House director. In July 1933, he became part of the organizing commission of the republic’s decennial celebrations.<sup>73</sup> He participated in publishing its magazine *Ülkü* (Ideal) between 1934 and 1946.<sup>74</sup>

Nafi Atuf’s *History of Pedagogy*, published in 1928, was directed towards the West. Most examples were from French, German, Italian, American, or Swiss education scholars; the sections about Turkish, Arabic, or Persian-speaking scholars did not go beyond a few pages. He did not mention any efforts to create or reform educational methods or institutions that occurred in the Ottoman Empire in his history of pedagogy. This issue was treated in a later publication, *An Essay on the History of Education in Turkey*, published in 1931.<sup>75</sup>

The History of Pedagogy was an important source because it provided insights into Nafi Atuf’s views on education, which were crucial in defining “People’s Education“ during the early republican era. The People’s Preachers and the People’s Houses were responsible for educating the people. Their primary mission was framed as participating in the “People’s Education.” Understanding what lies behind the People’s Education is crucial to understanding the People’s Preachers Corps and the People’s Houses. Concerning the issue of “People’s Education,” Nafi Atuf prepared a sample speech to be published in *Speeches (Konuşmalar)*, a book in three volumes containing exemplary “lectures” (*konferans*) delivered by prominent

---

<sup>71</sup> F. Betül Yavuz, “Orality in the Tekke and the Circulation of “High” and “Low” Cultures of Sufism in Seventeenth-Century İstanbul.” My master’s thesis and the chapter on reinventing Sufi literature as national literature. Zeynep Ertugrul, “L’histoire littéraire en train de se faire. La littérature comme thématique dans les Fêtes de la langue (1934-1948)” (MA, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2019), 87-93.

<sup>72</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 200.

<sup>73</sup> Metin Atuf Kansu and Işık Kansu, *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları*, 453.

<sup>74</sup> “Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949),” Atatürk Ansiklopedisi, accessed 3 May 2024, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/nafi-atuf-kansu-1890-1949/>.

<sup>75</sup> Nafi Atuf [Kansu], *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi Hakkında Bir Deneme* (Ankara: Mualim Ahmet Halit Kütüphanesi, 1930).

intellectuals of the period, to be distributed at the People's Houses. Nafi Atuf's lecture published eleven years later, discussed the efforts to educate ordinary people in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>76</sup>

The nineteenth century was the turning point in Nafi Atuf's history of Ottoman education. Nafi Atuf segmented this history of People's Education into two parts: before and after the nineteenth century. Before the nineteenth century, religious actors (Sufi sheiks, Islamic preachers) and institutions (convents, medreses, charitable foundations) controlled educational institutions and channels. The period after the nineteenth century was characterized by the emergence of nationalist movements, which aimed for a secular education of children and adult populations.

These references showed that People's Education did not emerge in the republican era but was grounded in reflections and debates from the earlier periods. Nafi Atuf referred to earlier publications and lectures in his undated speech published in 1940. He presented, for instance, a definition based on a magazine article from 1933. His understanding of the concept was based on a long history of the "Turkishness." According to this definition, the ultimate intent of "People's Education" was to bring the Turkish population to the level of Central Asians who had a deep respect for their ancestors, held their elders in high regard, fulfilled their responsibilities, and passed on national traditions such as bravery and heroism from generation to generation.<sup>77</sup> Apparently, little is left of a "scholarly" education in this project firmly anchored in the domain of the past.

"Islam" played an important role in how Nafi Atuf talked about People's Education. In Ottoman times, Turkish "customs and morality" were "violently penetrated" by "Islamic civilization," which was the result of the amalgamation of the "Arabic and Persian civilizations since the eighth century."<sup>78</sup> Within this context, Islamic preachers, religious chants, and

---

<sup>76</sup> Nafi Atuf Kansu, "Halk Terbiyesine Dair."

<sup>77</sup> "Bütün medeniyetlerin beşiği olan orta Asyada Türkler, harpler ve muhaceretler gibi bin bir türlü fırtınalar arasında fitratlarındaki irsi kabiliyetleriyle sıkı bir ahlâki ve içtimai inzibat içinde yaşıyorlardı. Onlarda ataların sözlerine itaat ve büyüklerine karşı saygı, vazifeye bağlılık, kahramanlık gibi millî hasletler sarsılmaz bir akide halinde nesilden nesle intikal edip gidiyordu. (...) Esasen her terbiyenin gayesi fertlerin vicdanında bu ahlâki ve içtimai akideleri tereddütsüz ve sarsılmaz bir şekilde yaşatmaktır." Ibid., 9.

<sup>78</sup> "Milâdın VIII inci asrından itibaren Arap ve Acem medeniyetinin karışmasından meydana gelen islâmi medeniyet Türk ahlâk ve an'anelerine şiddetle nazif olmaya başladı." Ibid.

prayers were instrumental in preparing the people for the afterlife, and various religious institutions such as convents, tarikats, and artisan associations helped spread religious education.<sup>79</sup> Minstrels and troubadours, in turn, were important figures as they transmitted genuine Turkish values to the commoners.<sup>80</sup> Interestingly, there was no distinct difference between religious and secular schools in those times, with both *mektep* (quranic schools) and *medrese* (theological colleges) playing an essential role in educating the population.<sup>81</sup> Finally, wealthy individuals and notables invested in religious institutions to promote the education of the people instead of the secular ones.<sup>82</sup>

The opposition between the Muslim and “non-Muslim elements” (*unsur*) in the Ottoman Empire was also a marked his reflection on “People’s Education.” When discussing the nineteenth century, Nafi Atuf introduced the notion of “enlightened” (*münevver*) individuals. Those “considered *münevver*” opened “people’s schools” (*halk mektepleri*) in Istanbul, specifically targeting the apprentices of artisans and shopkeepers.<sup>83</sup> Hence, the first recognized attempt to educate the people at large started with younger individuals.

Aims at reforming the education of Muslim elites under the Ottoman Empire informed the way Nafi Atuf thought about the education of the masses. According to Nafi Atuf the creation of these schools was linked to the foundation of *Mekteb-i Sultani* (Galatasaray High School,1868) for the training of Muslim elites according to Western standards.<sup>84</sup> Nafi Atuf also

---

<sup>79</sup> “Halk arasında yayılan ilahiler ve mevlüt duaları, medreselerde camilerde hocaların vaizleri halkı uhrevi hayata hazırlamakta ve mütemadi dini telkine tabi tutulmakta idi.” Ibid., 10.

<sup>80</sup> “Halk Oguzname, Hamzaname, Battalgazi gibi hikayelerle ruhunda yerleşmiş hamasiyeti tatmin ediyor, Aşık Garip, Aşık Kerem, Köroğlu destanı gibi destanlarda eski ozanlarını hatırlıyordu. Nasreddin hoca gibi halk feylesofları da hayat felsefesini temsil ediyordu.” Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> “Medrese, halkı köylerde dahi takip ediyordu. Köylerde ve şehirlerde açılan mektepler, mektepten ziyade bir medrese yavrusu idiler.” Ibid. For the translations of the terms “mektep” and “medrese,” see François Geogon, “La formation des élites à la fin de l’empire ottoman : le cas de Galatasaray,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* Année 1994, no. 72 (1994): 16.

<sup>82</sup> “Halk arasında yetişen bazı zenginler ve beyler dini bir vazife yapmak için şurada burada camiler, imarethaneler, tekkeler inşa ederek vakfediyorlar veyahut halka din bilgilerini talim için cami ve medrese köşelerinde halka mahsus dersler açıyorlardı” Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” 10.

<sup>83</sup> “O devirde münevver sayılan ve hayır işlemlerini seven birkaç kişi İstanbul’da Örtülü-Çarşıdaki esnaf çıraklarının sabahları çarşı açılıncaya kadar kahvelerde, sokaklarda ve şurada burada dolaştıklarını görüyorlar. Ve bu insanların boş geçen vakitlerini kıymetli bir şeyle doldurmak için bu civarda bir halk mektebi açmayı düşünüyorlar.” Ibid., 11.

<sup>84</sup> François Geogon, *Aux origines du nationalisme turc: Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935)* (Paris: Editions ADFP, 1980), 18-19.

mentions that the same “enlightened” individuals were also concerned about the situation of “Muslim orphans” and explained the opening of Darüşşafaka (1873) in the same vein.<sup>85</sup>

The turning point of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, namely the Balkan Wars was also presented as a turning point in the history of the People’s Education.<sup>86</sup> Most historians recognize them as a radicalizing event for Unionism and Turkish nationalism. After the Balkan Wars, Nafi Atuf referred to the emergence of the “Towards the People” (*Halka Doğru*), inspired by Armenian revolutionary organizations and, even more, Russian Narodniks.<sup>87</sup> Around this point of the narrative, “People’s Education” took the meaning of “national education” and “scientific, social, and economic progress” with the aim of “maturing and perfecting Turkish race (*ırk*) and language.”<sup>88</sup>

Nafi Atuf recognized the secularly educated intellectual elites’ role in forming this social movement. “The students and graduates of the School of Medicine (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye*), School of Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), veterinarians, officers, engineers, and some youth” founded the first institution for the sake of people’s education, the Turkish Hearths.<sup>89</sup> And their biggest enemy was the “califate and sultanate,” who did not want to “save the empire from separatist movements” and “preserve its unity.” This is the ambivalence of the semantic nexus involving “people,” “education,” and “revolution.” Most of the Narodniki aimed at using this nexus not simply to abolish the tyranny of the Tsar but also to carry out a social revolution in which property relations and the existence of the state itself would be at stake.<sup>90</sup> For the project discussed by Nuri Atuf, on the contrary, the state had to be saved and, in so doing, transformed into a modern national polity.

---

<sup>85</sup> “Fakat bir müddet sonra Galatasaray lisesine mütenazır olarak İstanbul tarafında kimsesiz Müslüman çocuklarına mahsus bir lise açmak temayülü galip geliyor. Gayretler böyle bir mektebin açılmasına tevcih ediliyor. Ve Darüşşafaka açılıyor.” Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” 11.

<sup>86</sup> “II inci meşrutiyeti müteakip ve hele 1912 Balkan harbini takip eden milli hareketler devrinde halkla meşgul olmak münevverlerin bir kısmı için bir mesele haline geliyor.” Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Popülizm 1908-1923*; M. Asım Karaömerlioğlu, *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta: Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Köycü Söylem* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006), 25.

<sup>88</sup> “İslam kavimlerinin başlıca mühimi olan türklerin milli terbiye ve ilmi, içtimai, iktisadi seviyelerinin terakkisi ve itilasile Türk İrk ve dilinin kemaline çalışmaktır.” Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” 13.

<sup>89</sup> “Tıbbiyeli, Mülkiyeli, baytar, zabıt, mühendis bazı gençlerin kurduğu bu müessesenin en büyük düşmanları hilâfet ve saltanat oldu.” ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Franco Venturi, Isaiah Berlin, and Francis Haskell, *Roots of Revolution* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), ix.

To elucidate the concept of “going towards the people” (*Halka doğru gitmek*), Nafi Atuf referred to Ziya Gökalp’s “Foundations of Turkism,” published in 1923. This work introduced the dichotomy between the “elites” (*güzideler*) and “*halk*.” Gökalp defined the “elites” as the “*münevvers* (intellectuals) and thinkers of a nation, who distinguish themselves from the rest of the population by their high education.” As such, the “elites” were tasked with “going towards the people.”<sup>91</sup> Gökalp further distinguished “culture” (*hars*) from “civilization” (*medeniyet*), with the “elites” being the custodians of civilization, while the “people” embodied the authentic national culture (*hars*).<sup>92</sup>

Gökalp allowed Nafi Atuf to introduce another scholar of education, İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], who played an important role in the shaping of the education system as well as the party-led efforts to educate the masses in the early republican era. İsmail Hakkı impacted these developments from the margins because he was removed from the centers of norm-making and decision-making despite the influence of his ideas and writings. His support for the first opposition party cost him his job at Istanbul University in 1933. The following section will examine İsmail Hakkı’s lectures and publications on people’s education before the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses to emphasize the evolution of one of the key political concepts of the period: “people.”

### 3.3. From “Commoners” of the Empire to the Republican “People”

---

These references to Ziya Gökalp and İsmail Hakkı indicated that “People’s Education” originated from other ideas developed by nationalist movements in the early twentieth century. Following Gökalp, Nafi Atuf referred to a specific lecture delivered by İsmail Hakkı titled “Education of the Commoners” (*Terbiye-i Avam*) in 1913. The stage for this lecture was the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), the predecessor of the People’s Houses. Like many other

---

<sup>91</sup> “Bir milletin münevverlerine, mütefekkirlerine o milletin güzideleri adı verilir. Güzideler, yüksek bir tahsil ve terbiye görmüş olmakla halktan ayrılmış olanlardır. İşte halka doğru gitmesi lazım gelenler bunlardır.” Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” 12.

<sup>92</sup> “Bu müttefikirlerimize göre hars halktadır, medeniyet güzidelerde medeniyete halka götürmeli ve halktan hars almalıdır.” Ibid.

lectures delivered at the People's Houses in the 1930s, the lecture was published.<sup>93</sup> Hence, there was a continuity between the Unionist and Kemalist practices regarding political communication and education.

The date of the lecture was also significant since it corresponded to the turn of 1913 in Nafi Atuk's history of People's Education: 1913, hence the defeat of the Balkan Wars. This military defeat was the occasion to reconsider educational policies in continuity with late Ottoman educational reformism.<sup>94</sup> The early republican emphasis on "People's Education" had much in common with earlier attempts at educating broader segments of the population. Still, they used a different term: *avam*. "*Avam*" was a key sociopolitical category that can be translated as "commoners" or the "masses."

Education was very important in determining the *avam*. In this lecture, Hakkı defined *avam* as the "stratum of population deprived of fundamental education and upbringing."<sup>95</sup> What he meant by education was not limited to schooling. Nafi Atuf highlighted this aspect of İsmail Hakkı's 1913 lecture. İsmail Hakkı was right in remarking the insufficiency of "teaching people the alphabet, reading, and some basic algebra" to "raise the level of ignorant people." It was necessary to "save their decaying lungs, weak legs, to open their eyes, to make their frozen hearts work, to revive their determination and enterprise."<sup>96</sup>

İsmail Hakkı contended that the emergence and sustainability of "progress" (*terakki*) depended on the education and upbringing of the uneducated commoners.<sup>97</sup> His views on

---

<sup>93</sup> İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*. "Avam" can be translated as "the common class of the mankind, the vulgar (converse of havas). "Avampesend = admired by the vulgar." See: James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 1326.

<sup>94</sup> Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 43-50.

<sup>95</sup> "Avam demekle, halk tabakasını, esaslı bir talim ve terbiyeden mahrum olan ahali tabakasını kastediyorum." İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*. Transliterated in: Serap Ayhan, "İsmayil Hakkı Baltacıoğlu ve Halk Eğitimi ile İlgili Görüşleri," *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi* 23, no. 1 (1990): 297.

<sup>96</sup> "Baltacıoğlu avam terbiyesinin şartlarını ve muhitlerini birer birer saymakla ve izah etmektedir. Cahil halka biraz alfabe, kıraat ve hesap öğretmekle onların seviyesinin yükseltilemeyeceğini ileri sürerken onların "çürüten ciğerlerini, kuvvetsiz bacaklarını kurtarmak, gözlerini açmak, donmuş kalbini işletmek, azmini, teşebbüsünü canlandırmak" lüzumunu ifade etmektedir." Nafi Atuf Kansu, "Halk Terbiyesine Dair," 12.

<sup>97</sup> "Bir memleketin avam terbiyesi teessüs etmedikçe yalnız bir kaç mütefekkir ve müctehidin arzusu ile ve kanaatle doğacak ve yaşayabilecek hiç bir terakki yoktur." Ibid. "Progress" became a fundamental sociopolitical concept of "historical time" in the second half of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire. See: Daniel Kolland, "Making and Universalizing New Time," 81-117.

popular education emphasized the importance of the transmission of knowledge and ideas through oral channels.<sup>98</sup>

The education of the commoners is being corrupted by ignorant preachers. The education of the commoners is being corrupted in coffeehouses. The education of the commoners is being corrupted in dervish lodges. The education of the commoners is being corrupted in our homes. The education of the commoners is being corrupted in the streets. The education of the commoners is being corrupted in cemeteries. The education of the commoners is being corrupted by beggars. The education of the commoners is being corrupted by the sight of the disabled, the cretin, and the blind.<sup>99</sup>

This range of targets might appear confusing, although it echoes a late Ottoman discourse on moral and intellectual decay that had implications for politics and an economically healthy, productive society.<sup>100</sup> In fact, for someone who saw popular education interwoven with a broader project of state and nation-building, it made perfect sense to criticize at once rivaling religious institutions, the “unproductive” and “idle” as well as the spaces in which state and moral authority struggled to impose themselves. The speech also echoed the eugenicist social philosophy of late Ottoman nationalists.<sup>101</sup> The disabled, those of inferior intelligence, and economically disadvantaged people were perceived as all the more dangerous to the development of the commoners.

In this context, educating the “commoners” meant reducing the time spent around corrupted religious institutions, which was also a common trope among the early Republican learned elite, who, after having some sort of experience at dervish lodges, became vocal about their bad influence on society.<sup>102</sup> It was about teaching manners and making citizens aware of the

---

<sup>98</sup> Cicéron et al., *L'invention de l'orateur / Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin ; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler*, 33.

<sup>99</sup> “Avamın terbiyesi cahil vaizlerin elinde bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesi kahvehanelerde bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesi tekkelerde bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesi evlerimizde bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesi sokaklarda bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesi kabristanlarda bozuluyor. Avamın terbiyesini dilenciler bozuyor. Avamın terbiyesi sakatların, aptalların, körlerin müşahadesi ile bozuluyor.” İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*. Cited by : Serap Ayhan, “İsmayil Hakkı Baltacıoğlu ve Halk Eğitimi ile İlgili Görüşleri,” 295.

<sup>100</sup> Melis Hafez, *Inventing Laziness: The Culture of Productivity in Late Ottoman Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 56.

<sup>101</sup> Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, “(Social) Darwinism for Families,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 16 (2013): §5-7.

<sup>102</sup> Yakup Kadri's novel *Nur Baba*, first published in a newspaper before being published in a book format in 1922 was a remarkable example of this tendency. See Yakup Kadri, *Yaban* (Istanbul: Muallim Ahmet Halit Kütüphanesi, 1932). I used the new edition of the novel: Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban*, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu Bütün Eserler Dizisi, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2023).



core political values of nationalism, such as love for the homeland and a readiness to sacrifice oneself to save the “nation” and the “flag.”

I don't mean to say that we should practice the way of life of the aristocratic classes. Emotional upbringing means to instill in them a sense of honor, dignity, interest, a sense of nation, homeland, society, and flag, to endure burdens for the sake of the nation, to make them feel goodness, cleanliness, and beauty; in short, to make them men in their hearts and souls.<sup>103</sup>

İsmail Hakkı's understanding of the “Education of Commoners” influenced the People's Preachers and the People's Houses. İsmail Hakkı promoted penetrating coffeehouses, where they read newspapers, often aloud, or told stories with religious content. He acknowledged that a form of political education occurs in these forms of knowledge transmission, including religious ones. Still, it was time to reorient and discipline the scope of this education. Accordingly, writing popular poetry and reciting it in coffeehouses was important to bolster national identity. This is a different declination of the trope identifying coffeehouses with danger. However, it rhymed with the one focused on gossip described in [Chapter 3](#). İsmail Hakkı contended that, if this intervention were done properly, results would follow since “no heart in the world cannot be ensorcelled by composition and oratory.”<sup>104</sup> “Composition” refers to the style of letters, documents, and state papers, which is “rhymed and rhetorical.”<sup>105</sup> In this sense, it has commonalities with poetry.<sup>106</sup>

İsmail Hakkı's mention of “composition and rhetorics” was reminiscent of another strategy used for “education” (*terbiye*), understood as the transmission of political ideas through poetry. This was also the road taken by the famous ideologue of the CUP, Ziya Gökalp, who played an important role in İsmail Hakkı's career at İstanbul University. Gökalp promoted the writing of poetry in “people's language” by adopting popular literary forms such as the syllabic meter

---

<sup>103</sup> “Zadegan sınıfların yaşam biçimini tatbik edelim demek istemiyorum. Hissi terbiye, izzet-i nefis, haysiyet, menfaat hissini; milletini, vatanını, toplumunu, bayrağını, millet için külfete katlanmayı, ittihat, teavün ve tekalüfü, iyiliği, temizliği, güzelliği özünde duyurmak, hülâsa onu hissen ve kalben de bir adam yapmaktır.” İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*. Cited by: Serap Ayhan, “İsmayil Hakkı Baltacıoğlu ve Halk Eğitimi ile İlgili Görüşleri,” 294.

<sup>104</sup> “Dünyada inşaat ile, hitabet ile teshir edilmeyecek kalp yoktur.” İsmail Hakkı [Baltacıoğlu], *Terbiye-i Avam*; Cited by: Serap Ayhan, “İsmayil Hakkı Baltacıoğlu ve Halk Eğitimi ile İlgili Görüşleri,” 295.

<sup>105</sup> Christine Woodhead, “The Ottoman Art of Word-Painting: Rhyme and Reason in Seventeenth-Century Turkish Literary Letters,” *The Seventeenth Century* 38, no. 5 (3 September 2023): 886.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 890.

instead of Arabic prosody and translating his political ideas explored elsewhere into easily palatable politicized poetry. By doing so, Gökâlp qualified himself as an “amateur poet” (*müteşair*) working for the people’s education. In other words, he prioritized the didactic role of his poetry, especially those published after the end of the First World War, over its artistic quality.<sup>107</sup>

Gökâlp’s *New Life* (*Yeni Hayat*) was remarkable in this regard since he outlined his political ideas clearly in a kind of distasteful poetry in the immediate aftermath of the First World War.<sup>108</sup> Since Gökâlp was an astute observer of the events that marked the end of the Ottoman Empire, his poems also created the figure of the internal enemy, strikingly emerging from the Balkan Wars. Gökâlp opposed “*halk*” to the elites and other enemy peoples/races.

Cross-reading İsmail Hakkı’s 1913 lecture with the publications of the interwar era on the same issue is fruitful because it allows us to trace the evolution of a fundamental political concept of the time. The dichotomy between the “commoners” (*avam*) and the “distinguished ones” (*havas*) was crucial for Islamic political thought.<sup>109</sup> It was also somewhat mirrored in another dichotomy opposing the “servants of the state” (*askeri*) to the “protected flock” (*reaya*).<sup>110</sup> This dichotomy, which was crucial to Ottoman intellectual circles, was reinterpreted by Ziya Gökâlp as the separation between “elites” and “the people” based on “internal” and “external” influences.<sup>111</sup>

The difference between the terms “people” (*halk*) and “commoners” (*avam*) was that the latter was more explicitly condescending. Ziya Gökâlp’s *Foundations of Turkism* (*Türkçülüğün Esasları*), published the same year as the foundation of the Turkish Republic, used the term synonymously with the lower echelons of society, contrasting with the “elite” (*güzideler*) or the “distinguished ones” (*havas*). However, while advocating for cultural nationalism, Gökâlp asserts that the true “genius” (*deha*) lies within the “people” (*halk*), a

---

<sup>107</sup> Erol Köroğlu, *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918)*, (Istanbul: İletişim, 2016), 264-65.

<sup>108</sup> Ziya Gökâlp, *Yeni Hayat* (Istanbul: Evkâf-ı İslâmiye Matba’ası, 1918).

<sup>109</sup> Sufi philosophers reinterpreted this dichotomy, which took on new spiritual meanings over time. I thank Paul Ballanfat for clarifying this point. See also Lloyd V. J. Ridgeon et al., *Jawanmardi : A Sufi Code of Honour* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

<sup>110</sup> M. Ursinus, “Reaya,” in *Dictionnaire de l’Empire ottoman*, ed. François Georgeon et al. (Paris: Fayard, 2015), 1010-11.

<sup>111</sup> Alp Eren Topal, “Against Influence: Ziya Gökâlp in Context and Tradition,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 28, no. 3 (2017).

group historically marginalized as “peasants” or “provincials” (*taşralı*).<sup>112</sup> Cultural nationalism and early republican “populism” (*halkçılık*) allowed a semantic change that filled the concept of “people” with positive connotations.

### 3.4. Mass Oratory as Mass Education

---

Republican nationalism tried hard to craft its identity by linking it to the *genius loci* of Anatolia and its people. However, its proponents were aware that other regimes outside Turkey faced a similar challenge and could, therefore, serve as models or at least as strategies up for discussion. Falih Rıfkı [Atay] (1893-1971), a prominent columnist and politician of the period (CHP deputy between 1923 and 1950) who was also a close friend of Mustafa Kemal, visited the Soviet Union and published an essay titled *New Russia (Yeni Rusya)* exposing his observations in 1931.<sup>113</sup>

A CHP deputy and close associate of Mustafa Kemal, Rıfkı published his insights on Soviet Russia a month before drafting the People’s Preachers directives. *New Russia* emphasized the necessity of educating the “big crowds” (*büyük kalabalıklar*) through visual mediums such as theater and cinema, as well as auditory channels like radio and public lectures.<sup>114</sup> *New Russia* dedicated considerable space to the issues of popular education and propaganda after a regime change. This education could be both “in favor of” and “against” the “nation and revolution.”<sup>115</sup> In other words, it was a force that had to be steered properly to become virtuous. Falih Rıfkı considered the “experiences of our Red neighbor” insightful despite the ideological differences that, in fact, offered a frame to define Turkey’s own political identity. The “New Russia” was establishing “communism,” while the Turkish Revolution was “Westernism.”

---

<sup>112</sup> “Bizde şimdiye kadar halk bediiyatına kim kıymet verdi? Eski Osmanlı güzideleri, köylüleri (eşek Türk) diye tahkir ederdi. Anadolu şehirlileri de (taşralı) tabiriyle tezyif olunurdu, umum halka verilen unvan (avam) kelimesinden ibaretti.” Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları* (Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayınevi, [1921] 2019), 45.

<sup>113</sup> [Atay] Falih Rıfkı, *Yeni Rusya* (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1931). Before Falih Rıfkı, Nafi Atuf had also traveled to Russia in 1926 to examine the Russian education system after the revolution underlining the same aspects.

<sup>114</sup> “Büyük kalabalık gözünden ve kulağından terbiye edilebilir.” *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>115</sup> “Biz bir ihtilâl ve bir milletin leh ve aleyhinde propaganda ne demek olduğunu Ruslardan fazla tecrübe etmişizdir.” *Ibid.*, 14.

Still, there was a commonality and lessons to be taken reciprocally since both revolutionary elites had to deal with similar “oriental popular masses.”<sup>116</sup>

Falih Rıfki was particularly impressed by the Russian revolutionaries’ use of cinema and radio for popular education.<sup>117</sup> Falih Rıfki praised the Soviet example and argued that cinema and radio should be used so that they “teach more than they entertain.”<sup>118</sup> These media were nonetheless double-edged since they could expose the masses to dangerous influences. He thought that limiting the accessibility of foreign radio broadcasts was important because if there was a “people to educate” (*terbiye edilecek bir halk*), it was necessary for the “revolution” (*ihtilâl*) to control all means ranging from “newspapers, pens, books.” Artistic freedom was a “point of view,” yet the “truth” was the “liberation of a backward people.”<sup>119</sup>

Beyond radio and cinema, Falih Rıfki was impressed by other institutions, such as the Red Army, which also contributed to the “People’s Education” (*halk terbiyesi*) in the USSR.<sup>120</sup> In each section about his observations of Soviet Russia, he pointed out something positive about its efficacy in forming new citizens. Furthermore, he opened a separate section titled “Education of the Masses” (*Yığın Maarifi*), detailing the education of children and adults. The term “inculcation” (*telkin*) appeared again in a sequence where he wrote about the difference between education at schools and education of the masses.

The mass, the great mass, it must digest the feeling of revolution. Today, it requires a different education system; nothing will come out of teaching the masses the alphabet. Revolution must be taught to the masses. It is this mass that has been the best-treated raw material in Russia: Mass propaganda is a Russian craft in itself. Mass education is different from the education we know. When our experts traveled around Russia looking for examples of high schools, they were mistaken: Better examples can be found in Germany. If these experts could have learned two lessons from Russia, it would have been enough:

---

<sup>116</sup> “Fakat en büyük benzerlik şudur: Ruslar büyük halk yığını içine komünizm gibi yepyeni bir müesseseyi yetleştirmeye çalışıyorlar; Türk inkılabı da tıpkı onun gibi şarklı bir halk yığınının içine garpcılık müessesini sokuyor. Geniş bir kalabalığı az zamanda yetiştirmek, terbiye etmek, yeni müesseseye alıştırmak için her iki inkılabında metotlarında ve tecrübelerinde birbiri için dersler bulunabilir.” Ibid., 16.

<sup>117</sup> “Rusya’yı yetiştirmek için ve terbiye etmek için üniversiteyi, tiyatroyu, sinemayı ve radyoyu, insanın ve kollektifin ruhu üzerinde iz bırakacak bütün organları seferber etti...” ibid., 73.

<sup>118</sup> “Eğlendirdiğinden fazla öğretecektir. Her ikisinin de eğlenti hassası, ancak öğrenmeye yarım ettiği kadar hoş gidebilir.” Ibid., 73-74.

<sup>119</sup> “Terbiye edilecek bir halkın üzerindeki bütün vasıtalar, gazete, kalem, kitap, hepsi ihtilâller tarafından kontrol edilir. Sanatın serbestliği bir nazariyedir: hakikat geri bir halkın kurtuluş kavgasıdır. Bu halka sanat süs diye değil, ihtiyaç ve terbiyeci diye verilecektir.” Ibid., 76.

<sup>120</sup> “Yalnız askerlik ocağı değil, halk terbiyesi ocağı: Okuma yazma, umumi bilgiler, kulüpler, kütüphaneler, Kızıl Ordu evi, Lenin köşesi...” ibid., 85.

One lesson is not to train high school students haphazardly, but to train specific people for a specific cadre; the other is to inculcate (*telkin*) the masses.<sup>121</sup>

The way Falih Rıfki talked about mass education echoed what İsmail Hakkı had called the “education of the commoners (*terbiye-i avam*)” in his 1913 lecture. Starting from İsmail Hakkı’s intervention, there was a consensus about the meaning of education for the ‘popular masses.’ It was not about instruction. It was not scholarly. It was about the transmission of the political values of the ruling elites to the common people. The choice to travel to Soviet Russia was far from arbitrary. It was in this country that state authority could for the first time lead and coordinate from above initiatives to politically educate workers and peasants that socialist, communists, and anarchist activists had launched – with mixed results – from below in all continents before the 1917 Revolution. When Falih Rıfki used the expression “digest the feeling of revolution,” he underscored that a regime change also implied a change in habits and values. To accomplish this change while keeping the support, or at least the control, of the masses, it required more than instruction and repetition of the facts. The party leadership explained the fact that the party used all means to inculcate principles, prevented the audience from examining and choosing between different political options, by the lack of education of the people. The “people” were not “educated” enough to be ready to have a democratic system like in other countries.

As a result of another trip, Falih Rıfki published another essay titled *Fascist Roma, Kemalist Tirana, and Lost Macedonia* in the same year. In a section discussing the issue of “democracy,” he used the French example to argue that French democracy was possible because the regime was stable, and no force “neither from the left nor from the right” could destabilize the “republic” in 1931.<sup>122</sup> Falih Rıfki recognized that the ideal of the Turkish Republic was to

---

<sup>121</sup> “Yığın, büyük yığın, ihtilâl hissini ona sindirmek lazımdır. Bugün için ayrı bir terbiye sistemi ister; yığına alfabe öğretmekten bir şey çıkmaz: Yığına ihtilâli öğretmelidir. Rusya’da en iyi işlenen ham madde işte bu yığın olmuştur: Yığın propagandası başlı başına bir Rus zanaatıdır. Yığın maarifi, bildiğimiz maariften farklıdır. Bizim mütehassıslarımız Rusya’yı dolaştıkları zaman, liseler için örnek aramışlarsa yanılmışlardır: Bu örneklerin daha iyileri Almanya’da bulunabilir. Bu mütehassıslar Rusya’dan iki ders alabilmiş olsalardı, kâfi idi: Dersin biri gelişmiş güzel lise genci yetiştirmek değil; muayyen bir kadro için muayyen insan yetiştirmek; öteki ders, yığını telkin etmektir.” Ibid., 90.

<sup>122</sup> “Fakat hiç şüphe etmeyiniz ki Fransız demokrasisinin bu normal ne sağ, ne sol koldan cumhuriyeti yıkabilecek bir tehlike olmadığındandır. Fransız cumhuriyetçisi, krallık edebiyatına, ancak kırallık tacının Versailles sarayından uzaklaşıp Versailles müzesine mal olduğuna emin olduğu zaman izin vermiştir.” [Atay] Falih Rıfki, *Faşist Roma, Kemalist Tiran ve Kaybolmuş Makidonya* (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1931).

reach the level of “French democracy.” Still, he considered it “suicidal” to attempt to liberate people to that point because “the great crowds” should have been “trained” and “brought up” first to be able to “measure” and defend their own interests and understand deliberations and debate. It was necessary to “educate” people and reform “institutions” accordingly after the destruction of the institutions of the former regime. Because of the recent turmoil, the “majority” of Turkey was not “at the level of assessing the value of the new principles.” Hence, they could not vote for it.<sup>123</sup>

Analyzing the writings and speeches of Nafi Atuf, İsmail Hakkı, and Falih Rıfkı on People’s Education reveals a consensus on the insufficiency of schooling that is limited to teaching reading, writing, and the rudimentary elements of scientific disciplines such as physics, biology, and mathematics. These late Ottoman and early republican political and intellectual elites believed that educational development was crucial to resolving political issues. However, their vision of education extended beyond formal schooling. Institutions like the Turkish Hearths and the People’s Houses complemented school education by shaping adult citizens and providing a broader educational experience.

The concept of “People’s Education” originated in the nineteenth century and evolved during the Second Constitutional Monarchy. During this period, there was a move away from the “Ottomanism” project of creating a more inclusive national empire. Many individuals involved in early republican educational projects had already been active during the Second Constitutional Era, working in key educational institutions, intellectual circles, and associative networks. The dichotomy between the (vulgar) “commoners” (*avam*) and the “distinguished ones” (*havas*) was reinterpreted and adapted to fit populist ultra-nationalism.

The persistence of publications on People’s Education from 1913 until the 1940s highlights the importance of adult citizens’ political education for the CHP’s political projects during its single-party rule. The following section will analyze the regulatory documents produced by

---

<sup>123</sup> “Her hangi bir rejimin, bütün kayıt ve bağları çözebilmesi için, bir milletin büyük kalabalığının yalnız okuyup yazması değil, kendi menfaatlerini ölçecek, bütün muhakeme ve münakaşaları anlayabilecek kadar seviye terbiyesi görmüş olması lazımdır. Genç yaşında bir inkılâp, ideali bugünkü Fransız demokrasisi olsa da, halkı ve müesseselerini ona göre yetiştirmeden, demokrasi normalini araması, intihar demektir: çünkü iytihatları bozulan, müesseseleri yıkılan, öldürülmüş menfaatlerin cesedi henüz soğumamış olan, ve büyük bir kısmı yeni prensiplerin kıymetini ölçecek seviyede bulunmayan ekseriyet, ona rey veremez.” Ibid., 40-41.

the CHP General Secretary on the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses to show how early republican pedagogues influenced the party's strategy in this domain. It will also focus on the founding document of the People's Preachers and the People's Houses to trace the impact of these educational ideas on common people in 1930s Turkey. These documents will be examined with attention to the terms used to formulate the early Republican pedagogic mission and sometimes cross-read with press articles on eloquence, propaganda, and pedagogy.





## 4. Rhetoric and Political Education

---

“The Organization of People’s Preachers will be created to tell the people (*halk*) the principles of the Republican People’s Party, our great ideals, our ideas, and objectives depending on everyday political circumstances also with the [spoken] word (*söz*), one of the most effective ways of suggestion and inculcation (*telkin*).<sup>1</sup> The objective of this organization is to prevent our fundamental communications from being made by unprepared random individuals and to have this task done by our friends qualified to speak efficaciously and prepare [them] with the fundamentals and knowledge in every circumstance.”<sup>2</sup>

The People’s Preachers Organization was a steppingstone of the Kemalist popular pedagogy. Their work was based on a fifteen-page-long directive divided into six chapters: objective, themes of the preaching, “qualities of the preachers to be chosen and formed,” “the classes of the preachers depending on their responsibilities,” “how preachers should fulfill their obligations,” and a final section on the numbers of preachers to be recruited for each province, district, and sub-district. The directives were circulated four months after the 1931 CHP congress, during which concerns about people’s education were raised.

The People’s Preachers’ founding document echoed these concerns about knowledge transmission and emphasized orality. The focus on spoken communication underscored concerns about the difficulty of conveying the party’s “principles, ideas, and ideals” through writing alone. The party was apprehensive about dissenting voices gaining traction through the spoken word ([Chapter 2](#)), thus aiming to mitigate the risk of ‘dangerous speech.’ Operating on the assumption that the party’s core beliefs were not easily grasped by everyone, it was deemed crucial to educate individuals with a certain level of understanding, distinguishing them from the commoners. Consequently, the People’s Preachers were to be selected from a pool of knowledgeable individuals capable of accessing the party’s ideological reservoir.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Action d’inspirer, de suggérer. Actiom d’initier. Initiation à la religion, surtout à la religion musulmane.(...) *Fesâdkâr telkinât*. Suggestions séditieuses.” Sami, “münevver,” 399.

<sup>2</sup> “Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkasının prensiplerini ve büyük ideallerimizi ve günlük politika vaziyetine göre fikir ve maksatlarımızı en müessir telkin vasıtalarından olan söz ile de halka anlatmak için Fırkanın hatipler teşkilatı yapılacaktır. Teşkilattan maksat, esaslı telkinlerimizin gelişi güzel ve hazırlıksız olarak herhangi zevat tarafından yapılmasına meydan bırakılmayarak bu mühim işi itinalı bir surette yetiştirilecek, müessir söz söylemeye liyakatlı arkadaşlarımıza yaptırmak ve bu arkadaşları her zaman söz söyleyecek esaslar ve malûmat ile her hale karşı evvelden hazır bulundurmaktır.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

The porosity between the party and the state institutions impacted the People's Preachers Organization and the very content of its founding documents. The directives did not distinguish between the political communication of the state and that of the party. The People's Preachers were both the spokespeople of the Republican People's Party and the broadly defined values of the Turkish Republic established in 1923.

The directives outlined "three principles" for organizing People's Preacher's activities, each revolving around more precise subjects. The first objective concerned the communication on topics such as the "fundamentals of the revolution," "the program and the principles of the party," and the "benefits of the republic and the love for the nation." The second stressed the pedagogic mission as it mentioned "Turkish civilization, history, bravery, and culture" in general terms but distinct from the "detailed instruction in schools." The third one was more related to specific events as it urged to take the stage during national celebrations and electoral campaigns.<sup>3</sup> To sum up, explaining the early republican reforms, celebrating national holidays, participating in election campaigns, and training adult citizens were the main objectives of the People's Preachers.

The tension between the written word and orality played a key role in the rationale of the People's Preachers. On multiple occasions, the directives emphasized the importance of oral communication. Still, this oral transmission of knowledge was always linked to written productions. The "party program" drafted during the last party congress was first written on the basis of the People's Preachers. The source of information on the "program and principles" was a corpus of texts regularly communicated to the party's provincial sections by the general

---

<sup>3</sup> "Hatıplerimizin telkinatı üç esas dahilinde olacaktır. Birinci esas: Hatıplerimiz inkılâbın esaslarını Fırkamızın program ve prensiplerini, Cümhuriyetin faziletlerini ve verdiği, vereceği feyizli neticeleri, milliyetperverliği, esas meseleler olarak her söz vesilesinde münasebet getirerek söyleyeceklerdir. İkinci esas: Türk medeniyeti Türk tarihi Türk kahramanlıkları ve kısa tarifile Türk kültürünün mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedris şekline benzemiyen ve her zaman arzu ve hevesle dinlenebilecek olan bir mahiyette telkinine ehemmiyet verilecektir. Üçüncü esas: Fırkanın herhangi günde memleket dahilindeki vaziyete göre halkı tenvir için izah etmesi lâzım gelen ve günün icabına göre değişen mevzulardır. Meselâ, zafer bayramı, cümhuriyet bayramı gibi muayyen günlerde birinci ve ikinci esaslara dair söz söylenip, nutuk maksadın icabına uyan bir netice ve temenni ifadesi ile bitirilebilir. Fakat meselâ mahalli muhalif bir cereyan veyahut bir intihap günü birinci ve ikinci esaslardan maksadı tenvir için istifade edilmekle beraber asıl sözün müessir ve hararetili kısımları ve neticeleri o günün meseleleri üzerinde teksif olunur. Fırkamızı uzaktan, yakından alâkadar eden cereyanlar mahsus olunca, hatıplerimiz herhangi bir vesileden ve toplanmadan istifade ederek bu cereyanlara karşı fıkramızın ana maksatlarını o yerdeki muhatapların anlayacağı lisan ile teşrih ederler." Ibid., 6-7.

secretary. Furthermore, the preachers were encouraged to script their speeches to ensure the structure and control of the content by the CHP General Secretary. The scripts were often based on written recommendations such as sample speeches, booklets, books, and press sent from the party general secretary to the provinces.<sup>4</sup> Despite the script, the directives recommended that speeches be delivered conversationally, as speaking was more impactful than simply reading aloud.

The emphasis on the spoken word was also rooted in the pedagogic tendencies popular among the CHP leadership. *École nouvelle*, a notion introduced by Nafi Atuf, encouraged students' active participation in pedagogical activities based on the conviction that participation allowed more effective learning.<sup>5</sup> Nafi Atuf's summary of Edmond Demolins' work on pedagogy also underlined the importance of "recitals, theater, lectures, and projections" organized as afterschool activities to prepare "men" for the world and (high) society.<sup>6</sup>

The People's Houses followed the logic of the *École nouvelle*. The active participation of their members in acting, reciting poetry, teaching, or delivering lectures played a didactic role. The original booklet of the People's Houses, published in 1935, developed on the institution's pedagogy. More than one hundred People's Houses throughout the country had prepared more than one thousand five hundred lectures (*konferans*) in 1935. These lectures "not only enlightened the spirits of their listeners but also opened and brightened the minds of the lecturers."<sup>7</sup> The French brochure of the People's Houses published in 1936 also underlined the educational role of speaking for their members.

The People's Houses work to develop the art of eloquence, to erase the belief that it is unseemly to speak and implant instead the conviction that it is a quality to speak, which

---

<sup>4</sup> Circular from the CHP General Secretary to the People's Houses, 21 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-48.

<sup>5</sup> Nathalie Duval, "Le self-help transposé en milieu français : l'École des Roches et ses élèves (1899-2009)," *Histoire, économie & société* 28e année, no. 4 (2009).

<sup>6</sup> "Bunlardan maksat talebeyi dünya ve cemiyet adamı yetiştirmek ve onları bizim kasvetli kollej hayatından kurtarmaktır. (...) Bu geceler birbirini müteakip, müntehap parçalar okunmasına, hikâyelere, küçük tiyatrolara, ağaçtan heykeller yapmaya, dansa ve projeksiyon ile konferanslara tahsis olunmuştur." Nafi Atuf [Kansu], *Pedagoji Tarihi*, 236.

<sup>7</sup> "103 Halkevinde geçen yıl 1500den fazla konferans verilmiştir. Halkevlerinde ve halk kürsülerindeki konuşmalar yalnız dinleyenlerin ruhlarını aydınlatmakla kalmıyor söyleyenlerin de dimağını açıyor ve parlatıyordu." *Halkevleri Broşürü*, (1935), 27.

constitutes a means of propaganda of the first order, but also talks about it being part of national education.<sup>8</sup>

The directives encompassed remarks on the broader role of the People's Preachers, extending beyond simply preparing speeches for political ceremonies, regular lectures, or electoral rallies. The educational role of the People's Preachers also contained monitoring oppositional voices to prevent and counter them. They stressed the significance of verbal communication due to the perceived threat of the party's opponents. They advised preachers to actively "intervene" in conversations "wherever and whenever" they heard statements that contradicted the "party's principles." By engaging in such interventions during everyday interactions, the People's Preachers were tasked with elucidating realities, rectifying misconceptions, and dissuading erroneous beliefs among their audience.<sup>9</sup>

The directives of the People's Preachers echoed the conception of People's Education highlighted by Nafi Atuk, Ziya Gökalp, İsmail Hakkı, and Falih Rıfkı explored in the previous chapter. The People's Preachers had to complement national education by transmitting the key political ideas to their audiences outside schools. Spaces of social interaction, such as trains, coffeehouses, and hotels, were highlighted as venues where the People's Preachers were expected to participate in conversations. Furthermore, these verbal interventions aimed to rectify false and dangerous claims and statements, fostering a positive reception and garnering the listeners' consent (*hüsnü telâkki*).<sup>10</sup> However, the People's Preachers' archival trail does not include or mention such interventions. The educational role of the People's Preachers through celebration speeches and regular lectures organized by the party's provincial organization was more palpable in the archives.

---

<sup>8</sup> "Les Maisons du Peuple travaillent à développer l'art de la parole, à effacer la croyance qu'il est malséant de parler et implanter par contre la conviction que c'est une qualité, constitue un moyen de propagande de tout premier ordre, mais aussi parle qu'il fait partie de l'éducation nationale." Behçet Kemal Çağlar, *Les maisons du peuple du P.R.P., parti républicain du peuple*.

<sup>9</sup> "Her firkacı nerede ve ne vaziyette olursa olsun, firka prensiplerine ve esaslarına uymıyan bir sohbeta şahit olur, böyle bir fikir ve bir söz işitirse derhal zeminin ve vaziyetin icabına göre ve yine vaziyetin gösterdiği bir eda ile, yani icabında sert ve lüzumunda yumuşak olarak hakikatleri izah, hataları tashih ve samilerde yanlış kanaat husulünü menetmeğe mecburdur." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 11-12.

<sup>10</sup> "Yine mesela, bir tren yolcuğunda, bir kahve sohbetinde, bir otel, han arkadaşlığında konuşanlar yanlış ve zararlı şeyler söylerlerse dinleyenlerin hüsnü telâkki edeceği bir tarzda söze katılarak yanlışları tashih etmelidir." *Ibid.*, 12.

#### 4.1. Political Education and “Ideology”

---

“Ideology” is a recurrent concept used in the scholarship about the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses. Sefa Şimşek qualified the intense efforts to increase the number and liveliness of the People’s Houses as an “ideological mobilization.”<sup>11</sup> In *Creating a Citizen (Bir Yurttaş Yaratmak)* Zafer Toprak wrote about the “official ideology” of the republic.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, “ideology” as an analytical framework was progressively abandoned in the study of early republican history. This abandonment was also rooted in an increased critique based on the claim that the single-party regime did not have an ideology, that Mustafa Kemal “never accepted this appellation as a term that would describe some *sui generis* ideology proper to Turkey.”<sup>13</sup> This section will argue that “ideology” is a fruitful category analyzing the Kemalist pedagogic mission and was, in fact, present in the grammar of the early republican leadership through other terms.

The debate about whether the single-party regime’s CHP had an “ideology” is dominated by two key assumptions about ideologies: texts and consensus about the meaning of texts. The People’s Preachers Organization did not have a curriculum similar to the one determined for schools under the control of the Education Ministry. The directives did not provide a detailed outline of the specific topics to be covered by the People’s Preachers. Instead, they vaguely defined their subjects as the “foundations of the revolution,” which encompassed elaborating on the party’s program and principles and praising the “virtues of the republic.”<sup>14</sup>

Their speeches had to align with the foundational principles and values of the revolution advocated by its leaders. The focus on culture, history, and military achievements represented common elements of nationalist political rhetoric.<sup>15</sup> Since those who proclaimed the republic were also the leaders of the party, the virtues of the republic and the party’s program were

---

<sup>11</sup> Sefa Şimşek, *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi: Halkevleri, 1932-1951*.

<sup>12</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Bir Yurttaş Yaratmak: Muâsır Bir Medeniyet İçin Seferberlik Bilgileri, 1923-1950* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Ahmet Kuyaş, “On “Post-Kemalism” or How to Stop Worrying about Politics and Love History,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 35 (2022): §2.

<sup>14</sup> “Birinci esas: Hatiplerimiz inkılâbın esaslarını, Fırkamızın program ve prensiplerini, Cümhuriyetin faziletlerini ve verdiği vereceği feyizli neticeleri, milliyetperverliği esas meseleler olarak her söz vesilesinde münasebet getirerek söyleyeceklerdir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>15</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).

essentially synonymous. This particular section of the People’s Preachers directives showed the party’s intent to produce and spread a “dominant ideological discourse.” According to Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski, an “ideology” is a “social philosophy” capable of generating “thought patterns” and orienting people’s actions. Places of gathering where people sharing similar political convictions gather to talk to each other are crucial for “producing a dominant ideology.”<sup>16</sup>

The “production of a dominant ideology” is a fruitful conceptual framework to understand the logic behind creating the People’s Preachers Organization. The Kemalist pedagogical mission aimed to educate the People’s Preachers, those individuals who had already won to the cause, and the broader sections of the population. Educating party members was, in turn, a way to consolidate the party’s provincial institutions. The party members’ lack of understanding of this program and principles was an issue raised during the last CHP congress before the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization. One of their primary functions was also a “preaching to the converted” of sorts.<sup>17</sup> Those selected as the People’s Preachers arguably addressed those already won by the cause.

Employing the term “production of a dominant ideology” to analyze early republican history warrants further exploration due to the contentious nature of “ideology” in the Turkish context. İlker Aytürk, for example, contends that “political culture” and “styles of government” should be differentiated from “ideology.”<sup>18</sup> Aytürk’s conception of “ideology” is primarily negative; he suggests that a political ideology comprises a coherent and rigid set of values or “dogma” guiding the political decisions of its adherents in a uniform and predictable manner. Consequently, Aytürk argues that the term “ideology” does not apply to the period from 1908 to 1945, asserting that most party members maintained a flexible stance towards their fundamental principles and held divergent views on significant issues during this era. He

---

<sup>16</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski, “La production de l’idéologie dominante,” *Actes de Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 2, 2, no. 3 (1976).

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, 6.

<sup>18</sup> İlker Aytürk, “Bir Defa Daha Post-post-Kemalizm: Eleştiriler, Cevaplar, Düşünceler,” *Birikim*, Haziran-Temmuz, 2020, 110.

further notes that Mustafa Kemal did not advocate for the term “Kemalism,” instead opting to disseminate the “six arrows” symbolizing the party’s ideological foundation nationwide.<sup>19</sup>

This strict definition of ideology overlooks its connection to practical application and the institutions enabling its enactment. Aytürk refers to “ideology” to talk about coherent doctrines and dogmas shaping political actions uniformly. However, from Karl Marx to Bourdieu and Boltanski, passing through Louis Althusser and Theodor Adorno, “ideology” never meant a coherent set of ideas or dogma. I use the definition proposed by Bourdieu and Boltanski when referring to ideology.

The dominant discourse owes its purely symbolic effectiveness (of misrecognition) to excluding neither divergence nor discordance. The combined effects of spontaneous orchestration and methodical concertation mean that political opinions can vary ad infinitum from one faction to another, and even from one individual to another, depending on the particular privileges they need to justify and the specific skills they commit, but that, being the product of homologous generative schemes and subordinated to essentially identical functions, they refer indefinitely to one another according to simple laws of transformation.<sup>20</sup>

Bourdieu and Boltanski proposed a more nuanced view, suggesting that ideology emerges from “neutral spaces,” fostering shared understandings or “common grounds” (*lieux communs*).<sup>21</sup> These commonalities, encompassing beliefs, worldviews, and cognitive patterns, galvanized CHP members to unite in “saving the empire from collapse” or “awakening national consciousness” amidst opposition. For Bourdieu and Boltanski, these shared grounds did not mean a lack of opposition and disagreement. Instead, they shaped internal dissent within ideologically aligned groups.<sup>22</sup>

Political scientist Roger Griffin had a similar take on “ideology” without sharing the same conceptual framework as Bourdieu and Boltanski. In his work on “generic fascism,” as he defined it based on core ideas, Griffin defined “ideology” as a “set of beliefs, values, and goals

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>20</sup> “Le discours dominant doit son efficacité proprement symbolique (de méconnaissance) au fait qu’il n’exclut ni les divergences ni les discordances. Les effets conjugués de l’orchestration spontanée et de la concertation méthodique font que les opinions politiques peuvent varier à l’infini d’une fraction à une autre et même d’un individu à l’autre selon les privilèges particuliers qu’elles ont à justifier et les compétences spécifiques qu’elles engagent, mais que, étant le produit de schèmes générateurs homologues et subordonnés à des fonctions pour l’essentiel identiques, elles renvoient indéfiniment les unes aux autres selon des lois simples de transformation.” Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski, “La production de l’idéologie dominante,” 4.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

considered in terms of their implications for the maintenance of the sociopolitical status quo.”<sup>23</sup> For Griffin, “ideologies are lived out as truths,” hence perceived as “ideologies only when observed with critical detachment from the outside.”<sup>24</sup> Understood in this manner, one cannot possibly expect ideologies to be “homogeneous at a lived level.”<sup>25</sup>

An analysis of “ideology,” or the process of making it dominant informed by these approaches, allows us to move beyond the historiographic debate initiated by Aytürk’s 2015 article and reopen the history of the single-party rule to examination. Aytürk’s perspective, highlighting internal party conflicts, challenges the notion of a cohesive ideology and deters from working on the history of the CHP in the early republican era as a political formation. Assigning each party member to a super-agency undermines the unity that brought together thousands of teachers and civil servants who worked for the party.

The concept of “ideology” was also used by CHP members during their important reunions, such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Congress convened in May 1931. Alâaddin [Tiritioğlu] (1903-1969), the twenty-eight-year-old CHP member and deputy of Kütahya, was the most vocal participant of the congress concerning the necessity of “making propaganda” and educating people. For Alâaddin, the party’s program adopted during the 1931 congress was the party’s “ideology” put into writing.<sup>26</sup> While debating the party regulations (*nizamnâme*) after the vote of the party program, Alâaddin claimed that in the province where he was elected, the party had 30.000 members but insinuated that less than the third of the party’s local members “grasped the ideology of the party.”<sup>27</sup>

Before the 1930s, writers, journalists, and politicians affiliated with the party discussed “*mefkûre*,” often translated as “ideal” in contemporary Turkish. The concept of “*mefkûre*” was often used to discuss an unclearly defined set of objectives that brought together late Ottoman and early republican nationalists. The writer who wrote the most about the “*mefkûre*” to the point of making it a key concept of the late Ottoman and early republican political grammar

---

<sup>23</sup> Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1991), 17.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Alâeddin Bey [Tiritioğlu], “Bundan başka programımız şimdiye kadar yazılı olmayan türk inkılabının ideolojisini ifade eder mahiyettedir.” *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 229.

<sup>27</sup> Alâeddin Bey [Tiritioğlu], “Yalnız ufak bir misal arzedeğim. Kütahya vilâyeti dahilinde otuz bin azamımız vardır. Arkadaşlar, üç biri azâmımız ihtilalin ideolojisini kavramışsa mesele yoktur. *Ibid.*, 236.



was Ziya Gökalp. Many works on Ziya Gökalp consider him the “ideologist” of the Committee of Union and Progress, and his legacy played an important role in the formation of the political vision of the early republican politicians.<sup>28</sup> In this case, one can also argue that before the adoption of the neologism “*ideology*” in the 1930s, “*mefkûre*“ was often used synonymously with “ideology.” And the early republican political leaders from the center to the provinces never claimed a lack of “*mefkûre*” among themselves.

“Ideology” or the “Ideology of Revolution” caused heated controversies in 1931. Şevket Süreyya [Aydemir], a former member of the Turkish Communist Party who dedicated himself to the “revolution” after 1927, delivered a lecture on “Revolution and Cadre” (*İnkılap ve Kadro*) at the Turkish Hearths general secretary in Ankara 15 December 1931. According to his own narrative, this lecture attracted considerable controversy and criticism, prompting the Turkish Hearths to publish the lecture. Following these controversies, Şevket Süreyya started to publish a column titled “The Ideology of our Revolution” (*İnkılabımızın İdeolojisi*) on *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (Sovereignty of the Nation). Şevket Süreyya decided to get away from these controversies (*münakaşalardan içtinap etmek*) and dedicate himself to writing a book titled *Revolution and Cadre* (*İnkılap ve Kadro*). The book was published in 1932.

According to Şevket Süreyya, the “revolution” had “principles” and “viewpoints” but lacked “ideology.” For Şevket Süreyya, a coherent ideology required organizing those core values in a book format (*terkip ve tedvin etmek*). The organization and gathering of core values of the revolution was the responsibility of the “*münevver*” (enlightened elite, intellectual).

As these advanced ideas and theoretical elements inherent in our revolution are explained following the requirements of the revolution, these principles will become the “criteria” for the advanced cadre that keeps the revolution alive and the young generation that will adopt it, and a new and “standardized revolutionary type” will be born. This type will measure the same events it encounters, wherever and under whatever circumstances, with the same criteria and come to the same conclusions; this is how the revolution’s unique “way of understanding the world,” which distinguishes it from other revolutions in terms of its nature, will come into being.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Alp Eren Topal, “Against Influence: Ziya Gökalp in Context and Tradition.”

<sup>29</sup> “İnkılabımızın zatında mündemiç bu ileri fikir ve nazariye unsurları inkılâbın icaplarına uygun bir şekilde izah edildikçe bu esaslar, inkılâbı yaşatan ileri kadro ve onun istihlaf edecek genç nesil için “kriteriyum”lar olacak, yeni ve “standartlaşmış inkılâpçı tip” böyle doğacaktır. Bu tip her nerede ve ne şerait altında olursa olsun karşılaştığı aynı hadiseleri, aynı kriteriyumlarla ölçecek, aynı neticelere varacak, inkılâbın kendine hâs ve onu

In the final analysis, İlker Aytürk's understanding of "ideology" bore a striking resemblance to that articulated by Şevket Süreyya in 1931-32. Despite receiving education at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, Şevket Süreyya did not espouse a Marxist interpretation of ideology. This apparent contradiction can be resolved if one sees in it a shift in his trajectory from communism to Turkish nationalism after the closure of the Turkish Communist Party (*Türkiye Komünist Partisi*) he founded. His aspirations regarding the "formation and composition" (*tedvin* and *terkib*) of ideology, however, echoed the outcomes associated with the emergence of a "dominant ideological discourse," as outlined by Bourdieu and Boltanski. Like his peers engaged in educational endeavors, Şevket Süreyya aimed to cultivate citizens with a worldview that could guide and influence their behaviour across various circumstances, rooted in the values ushered in by the revolution.

#### 4.2. Concepts of Eloquence for the People's Preachers Organization

---

The People's Preachers Organization directives articulated their mission using a set of concepts. These concepts warrant closer examination as they shed light on the Kemalist pedagogical mission, revealing the interplay between educational principles and the persistent endeavor to institutionalize propaganda across European countries. They are also part of the convictions and thought patterns central to CHP's ideology. While the directives did not explicitly embrace terms such as "People's Education" or "Education of the Commoners," they nonetheless demonstrated a deep-seated commitment to the ethos of "Towards People" (*Halka Doğru*) through other concepts. Furthermore, the reports about the People's Preachers and the People's Houses regularly confirmed their role in educating people.

In the directives, a lexical field appears in relation to political education. "*Tenvir*," meaning to enlighten, is mentioned three times.<sup>30</sup> "*Telkin*," which means suggesting or inculcating, is mentioned three times.<sup>31</sup> Another word that appears three times is "*izah*," which means to "explain, elucidate, or make things clearly visible."<sup>32</sup> "*Tedris*," meaning to give lessons or

---

diğer inkılâplardan mahiyet itibarile ayırt eden "âlemi telâkki tarzı" böyle vücut bulacaktır." Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İnkılâp ve Kadro: İnkılâbın İdeolojisi*, Kadro Serisinden: 1, (Ankara: İstanbul Milliyet Matbaası, 1932), 8.

<sup>30</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6,12,13.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 5,6,13.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 5,7,12; James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 299.

educate, is mentioned twice.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, “*şerh*” refers to providing “a complete running commentary on every word in any uninspired human literary work, containing the whole text as well,” or, to phrase it more concisely, providing an exegesis.<sup>34</sup> Lastly, “*tashih*,” meaning “to correct or rectify,” appears only once.<sup>35</sup> All these concepts refer to reason, knowledge, information, and their transmission, hence education. The knowledge, reason, or information that the People’s Preachers were supposed to transfer always referred to the values, principles, and program of the party.

Most concepts that characterized the People’s Preachers, beginning with “preacher” (*hatip*), inherently carried religious connotations. For instance, “*tenvir*” was understood as the “enlightenment of the heart with religious light.”<sup>36</sup> Similarly, “*şerh*” and “*izah*” denoted commentary on religious sources, notably the Quran. However, placing excessive emphasis on their religious connotations and interpreting their usage as a form of “sacrality transfer” would be overly simplistic in 1930s Turkey.<sup>37</sup> The party employed these terms primarily to expound upon its foundational texts, such as its latest program. “Enlightening” (*tenvir*), for instance, was utilized to elucidate something during the third CHP Congress.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, “*hatip*” was repeatedly used to refer to any speaker during the lecture. While the meanings associated with these concepts were undoubtedly influenced by Islamic traditions, interpreting them solely through a religious lens risks oversimplification.

Therefore, overly emphasizing the religious elements within these polysemic concepts could perpetuate a flawed culturalism that consists of explaining all social and political

---

<sup>33</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6,14.

<sup>34</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 1121.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 552.

<sup>36</sup> “*kalbiñ nur-u imān ile tenviri*,” Muallim Naci, in Muallim Naci, *Lûgat-ı Naci* (Istanbul: Asır Matbaası, 1906), 292. It should be noted that the term *tenvir*, despite the historiographic charge of its English translation, the “Enlightenment,” does not appear in relation to the intellectual and philosophical movement, the *Lumières*, or the *Aufklärung*, in the Ottoman-Turkish sources consulted for this research.

<sup>37</sup> Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*, (Baden-Baden: Ergon Verlag, 2015), 38. Demiriz refers to Mona Ozouf’s work on the French national holidays. Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire, 1789-1799*, Bibliothèque des histoires, (Paris: Gallimard, 1976).

<sup>38</sup> “Bunu Emin Beyden bir iki defa daha işittiğim gibi bu defa söz alan hatiplerden bu noktaya birkaç defa temas edenler bulunduğu için bu meselenin ayrıca tenvir edilmesini lüzumlu addettim.” *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 209.

phenomena with religion in a supposedly Muslim context.<sup>39</sup> Islamicate traditions of knowledge transmission surely impacted the way early republican leaders organized their pedagogical mission. Still, it was not more than any other non-Muslim context. Moreover, political philosophy in Islamic contexts, especially philosophical considerations regarding the “science of eloquence” (*hitabet, al-khaṭāba*), was informed by earlier concepts, especially those used in Ancient Greece.<sup>40</sup> The concepts and recommendations used in the People’s Preachers Organization, therefore, also resonate with three means of persuasion according to Aristotle’s Rhetoric, namely *logos* (rational appeal), *ethos* (ethical appeal), and *pathos* (the audience’s psychology).<sup>41</sup> Connect more directly to “word in action” used by Cicero, namely “*docere*,” “*delactare*,” and “*movere*.”<sup>42</sup> As mentioned earlier, Nafi Atuf’s pedagogy referred to important names in the history of public speaking, such as Quintilian, as pedagogues. The following sections will analyze how rhetoric informed the people’s education in the People’s Preachers Organization directives.

#### 4.2.1. Rational Appeal

---

Logos, in the realm of rhetoric, embodies the logical and rational appeal to persuade an audience. Whether through the impassioned addresses of People’s Preachers, known as “*nutuk*,” or the more instructional tone of “*konferans*” or lectures, the objective remains the same: educating their audience. “*Nutuk*” from Arabic etymology refers to a “speech” or a “discourse,” which can be more directly linked to oratory arts perceived as separated from the acquisition and production of knowledge. Whereas “*konferans*” a borrowed word from French was used to talk about “a speech, a didactic presentation aimed at a cultured audience, usually

---

<sup>39</sup> Philippe Rozin, “Le concept de culturalisme dans les sciences anthropologiques : de Tylor à Lowie,” *Le Philosophe* 27, no. 2 (2006): §24.

<sup>40</sup> Philip Halldén, “What Is Arab Islamic Rhetoric? Rethinking the History of Muslim Oratory Art and Homiletics,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (2005): 21.

<sup>41</sup> Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George Alexander Kennedy (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Sara Rubinelli, “Logos and Pathos in Aristotle’s Rhetoric. A Journey into the Role of Emotions in Rational Persuasion in Rhetoric,” *Revue internationale de philosophie* 286, no. 4 (2018): 361–62.

<sup>42</sup> Ciceron et al., *L’invention de l’orateur / Ciceron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler*.

on a subject on the speaker's area of expertise.”<sup>43</sup> These two concepts were often interchangeably used to talk about the activities of the People's Preachers. Because the early republican sources did not distinguish rhetoric from pedagogy. Patrice Soler elucidates this by highlighting the dichotomy between the Greek and Roman perspectives on rhetoric. Aristotle delineated a clear boundary between the acquisition of knowledge and the techniques of persuasion. In contrast, figures like Cicero, Quintilian, and Augustine blurred these lines, viewing effective communication as integral to obtaining or communicating knowledge and wisdom.<sup>44</sup> The People's Preachers Organization directives were overwhelmed with notions reminiscent of *logos* understood as “argument” or “reason.”<sup>45</sup>

Third principle: These are the issues that the organization should *explain* on any given day to *enlighten* the public according to the situation in the country and that change according to the day's needs.<sup>46</sup>

In this educational structure, two essential ideas were developed: “enlightening” or “clarifying” (*tenvir*) and “explaining” (*izah*). When combined with “people” (*halkı tenvir etmek*), *tenvir* meant enlightening the people with the light of knowledge and wisdom that was supposedly shared by the party's elite. It meant “clarifying” when it came to how the People's Preachers should intervene when they heard “an expression or a movement that does not conform to the identity, honor, and principles of the party.”<sup>47</sup> They had to “bring up the issue” of the precepts or operations of the party whenever it was possible to “clarify and express the truths as a subject of conversation in a manner that pleases everyone.”<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> “Discours, exposé didactique qui s'adresse à un public cultivé et traite en principe d'un sujet de la spécialité de l'orateur.” *L'invention de l'orateur / Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin ; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler.*

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, 317.

<sup>46</sup> “Üçüncü esas: Fırkanın herhangi bir günde memleket dahilindeki vaziyete göre halkı tenvir için izah etmesi lazım gelen ve günün icabına göre değişen mevzulardır.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>47</sup> “Herhangi bir maksatla yapılmış bir içtimada veya başkalarının verdikleri bir konferanslarda fırkamızın hüviyetine, şerefine ve prensibine uymayan bir ifade veya cereyan gören fırkacı, kim olursa olsun, derhal söz alarak, bildiği, gördüğü kadar mevcut halkı tenvir etmeli ve yine meselâ bir tren yolculuğunda, bir kahve sohbetinde, bir otel, han arkadaşlığında konuşanlar yanlış ve zararlı şeyler söylerlerse dinleyenlerin hüsnü telakki edeceği bir tarzda söze katılarak yanlışları tashih etmelidir.” Ibid., 12.

<sup>48</sup> “Bunun gibi buna benzer yerlerde, vaziyetlerde, seyahatlerde, toplanma ve sohbetlerde aleyhte ve aksi telkinlerde bulunanlar olmasa bile her sözü açarak ve maksadara intikal ettirerek o zemin ve zamana uyan bir prensipini, bir kaidesini, ortaya sürmeli ve herkesi memnuniyetle tarzda hakikatleri muhabbet mevzuu olarak

We will prepare and send some concepts to be used as a basis for orators by the center, and we will also prepare and send brochures for the *exegesis* and *explanation* of our Party's program.<sup>49</sup>

Concerning the subject matter intended for enlightenment and elucidation, the directives centered around the term "concept" (*mefhum*), related to the verb "to understand" in Arabic, which the party's general secretary would outline. This emphasis on "concepts" was also rooted in the "science of eloquence" (*belagat*), which comprised the science of "meanings" (*mana*), "clarity" (*beyan*), and "ornamentation" (*badī*).<sup>50</sup> The People's Preachers were tasked with conveying a set of foundational concepts essential for communicating the principles of the party and the newly established regime. These concepts were often left unnamed, except for a notable series of lectures in 1935-1936, organized under the direction of the general secretary. During this period, the highlighted concepts were "independence" or "sovereignty" (*istiklal*) and "revolution" or "reform" (*inkılap*).

However, the directives presupposed that other unspecified concepts were understood and shared by the People's Preachers, who were considered to possess a deeper understanding than their audience, the general populace. The early republican leadership, including those who drafted the directives for the People's Preachers Organization, emphasized the importance of these foundational concepts in educating their audience.

In addition to the emphasis on "concepts," the directives also referenced the "party program" and the creation of "brochures" by the party leadership, which aimed to render the party program more accessible to a broader audience. The Kemalist popular pedagogy entailed at least two distinct levels of adaptation. Firstly, the party program was adjusted to suit a broader readership, achieved by creating simplified "brochures" that distilled the essence of the party program. Secondly, the People's Preachers further adapted these "brochures" for oral delivery, ensuring the message could resonate effectively through spoken communication.

---

tenvir ve ifade eylemelidir." *Cumhuriyet'in İlanı Yıl Dönümünde İstifade Edilecek Halk Kürsüleri Talimatı*, (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1937), 13.

<sup>49</sup> "Merkezce hatiplere esas olacak bazı mefhumlar tanzim edip göndereceğimiz gibi Fırka programımızın şerh ve izahı için de broşürler yapıp bunları da göndereceğiz." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 10; James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 1121; *ibid.*, 299.

<sup>50</sup> I think Halldén's translations are transposable to the Turkish-speaking context because each and every term exists in the early republican sources as loanwords from Arabic (*belagat*, *beyan*, *mana*, etc.) Philip Halldén, "What Is Arab Islamic Rhetoric? Rethinking the History of Muslim Oratory Art and Homiletics," 21.

These documents necessitated a process of “commentary” or “exegesis” (*şerh*) as well as “explanation” (*izah*) to elucidate their content. All these concepts presupposed that People’s Preachers had access to a realm of “concepts” or a ‘world of letters’ that enabled them to have a deeper understanding of the “party program and principles” compared to their audience. Consequently, they were tasked with “enlightening” (*tenvir*) their audience on what they had learned.

As per the directives, the People’s Preachers were considered intellectually superior to their audience. They had access to a world of concepts and letters that allowed them to understand the party program and principles better. Their job was to *enlighten* their audience on what they learned. The term “*tenvir*” was commonly used in party correspondence to refer to this process of enlightening the less educated by the already enlightened or illuminated, also known as the “*münevver*” or the enlightened elites.

#### 4.2.2. Ethical and Emotional Appeal

---

In the Aristotelian understanding of rhetoric, “ethos” refers to the moral character of the speaker, which increases their persuasion as well as their capacity to adapt their speech to their audience.<sup>51</sup> The People’s Preachers Organization directives strongly emphasized adapting and effectively communicating their “principles” to wider audiences. This entailed instilling specific thought patterns and ensuring that speeches were finely tuned to the “requirements of current events.” Broadening their reach necessitated a twofold approach: tailoring the language register to suit their listeners while also carefully selecting preachers based on the demographics of their audience.

First, the directives advised the Party’s provincial sections to select its preachers, who “wholeheartedly” believed in the party’s “ideal” and were able to express the party’s message “in fervent or calm ways” depending on the context.<sup>52</sup> Second, the directives were clear that the preachers should have been selected among those “enthusiastic” about playing this role.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, 148.

<sup>52</sup> “Bu vazifeyi yapacak arkadaşlarımızın idealimize candan inanmış olacakları tabii olmakla beraber fikirlerini zemin ve zamanın o günkü maksadın icabına göre sakin veya hararetli söyleyebilmelidirler. *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 7.

<sup>53</sup> “Kendisine fırkanın hatipliği vazifesi verilecekler bizzat buna hevesli olmalıdırlar.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 7.

The party's provincial and district administrative committees selected preachers among people already known to them. While the ordinance did not stress the party membership, several excerpts implied that the preachers were selected among party members. One of the concluding remarks of the directives was, for instance, that "this responsibility was given by the party to our friends within the party, among ourselves."<sup>54</sup>

Besides the party membership, the selection criteria were based on rhetorical qualities. The first point of the selection criteria was "being well-liked figures in their vicinities."<sup>55</sup> The second distinguished preachers according to the locality where they addressed their audience, assuming that "cities and villages, for instance," required different "persuasive qualities."<sup>56</sup> The rest of the directives used concepts such as "likability," "natural talent or inclination," "eloquence," "dexterity," and "qualification to speak efficiently."<sup>57</sup> It specified that the Organization of preachers was created to prevent "unprepared and random individuals" from taking charge of political communication.<sup>58</sup>

The audience was divided into three groups: the "münevvers," which can be roughly translated as "intellectuals," and the "popular masses" in urban settings. In rural areas, the audience was qualified as "ordinary-looking citizens."<sup>59</sup> Preachers were distinct from other münevvers of the cities by their commitment to the Party.<sup>60</sup> They were also superior to the "popular masses" and the rural populations by their assumed knowledge and education. Still, the ordinance separated them from "leaders and deputies of the party" and the "people sent

---

<sup>54</sup> "Bu, sadece Fırkaca Fırka arkadaşlarımıza ve kendi aramızda verilmiş bir vazife demektir." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 10.

<sup>55</sup> "Buldukları mahalde şahısları itibariyle sevilen zatlar olmaları" *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

<sup>56</sup> "Aşağıda hatiplerin sınıfları kısmında yazılacak vazifelere uyacak tarzda söz söylemeğe tabiaten istidatlı bulunmalı. Mesela bir şehirde münevverlere nutuk söyleyecek bir arkadaştan başka kabiliyet aranır; bir köyde maksatlarını izah edecek bir arkadaştan da muhattaplarını ikna kabiliyeti noktasından başka bir konuşma liyakatı aranır." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 7.

<sup>57</sup> "Söz söylemeğe tabiaten istidatlı bulunmak, ikna kabiliyeti, liyakat, fikirlerini zemin ve zamanın ve o günkü maksadın icabına göre sakın ve hararetle söyleyebilmeli, hevesli..." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

<sup>58</sup> I translate "partimizin esaslı telkinlerini" as "political communication" since one of the translations of the word *telkin* is "to explain, to communicate *viva voce*." See: James W. Redhouse, in *Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman - English Dictionary* (Istanbul: Sev, [1890] 2000), 503.

<sup>59</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 8.

<sup>60</sup> "Bu vazifeyi yapacak arkadaşlarımızın idealimize candan inanmış olacakları tabii olmakla beraber fikirlerini zemin ve zamanın ve o günkü maksadın icabına göre sakın veya hararetle söyleyebilmelidirler." *Ibid.*, 7.



from the center for different kinds of speeches.”<sup>61</sup> The directives did not explicitly qualify the Preachers as “*münevvers*.” But it implicitly included them among the “class” of the “*münevvers*” while talking about their audience.

The People’s Preachers differed from the “popular masses,” the “ordinary-looking citizens” living in rural areas, and the more high-ranking members of the Party, such as the deputies and party leaders. They were below the prominent party members but above the “common folk.” On the other hand, the social traits required by the Preachers included “likability,” “eloquence,” “dexterity,” and “capacity to speak efficaciously.” pointed to a higher “social capital.” The “social capital,” as defined by Pierre Bourdieu, is an effective analytical tool, here, to objectify the selection criteria exposed in the People’s Preachers Organization directives. “Social capital” corresponds to the combination of economic, cultural, and social resources and networks of an individual, which increases their credibility and persuasiveness in social situations. Although social capital depends on genealogical (descending from a respected family) and biographic factors (graduating from an elite institution), its maintenance and reproduction require decisions.<sup>62</sup> The People’s Preachers had social capital in that the party provincials selected them among those known and appreciated by the local communities in which they lived and worked. Preachers had to be well-spoken and convincing.

In the Aristotelian understanding of rhetoric, a combination of reasonable argumentation (*logos*) is in accordance with the audience’s beliefs, values, or “common sense” that appeals to their emotions (*pathos*), and the credibility of the speaker that stems from their “respectability, influence, and likeability” tied to their social position (*ethos*) plays an essential role in the orators’ power of persuasion.<sup>63</sup> The ordinance used similar characteristics to talk about the requirements to become a preacher. The People’s Preachers were chosen among the well-integrated and well-respected members of local societies as opposed to outcasts. The preachers were supposed to “intuitively understand the psychology of the people,” “create an

---

<sup>61</sup> “Bu talimatta yazılı teşkilât Fırkanın Halk Hatipleri Teşkilâtıdır. Fırka liderlerinin her yerde, Fırka mebuslarının mecliste söz söylemeleri ve Fırka merkezinden ayrı vazifelerle gönderilecek olanların lüzumuna göre verecekleri nutuklar bu talimattaki esaslara tâbi değillerdir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Le capital social,” *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 31 (1980): 2.

<sup>63</sup> Patrick Charaudeau and Dominique Maingueneau, eds., *Dictionnaire de l’analyse de discours* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).

attachment in the hearts of their interlocutors,” and “leave a good impression of the party and its ideal.”<sup>64</sup>

Pierre Bourdieu, who reviewed John L. Austin’s notion of performativity or illocutionary force of speech acts, underlined the importance of the social position, hence the “social capital” of the speaker in the efficacy of their public addresses.<sup>65</sup> According to Bourdieu, the efficacy of someone’s utterances depended either on the institutional authorization, like that of the clergy from the Church, or the party spokespeople from the party, or the symbolic power of the speaker that stems from their social position or class. In sum, the terms the CHP leadership used to talk about the selection criteria of the preachers, other than their commitment to the Party’s ideals and principles, were a combination of social and socially constructed attributes linked to a prominent position in local social hierarchies.

Moreover, the directives given to the Preacher on how to address their public assumed that they could address two opposed social groups: “*münevvers*” (enlightened elites or intellectuals) and the “*halk*” (people). Among the list of “qualifications and predispositions” (*liyakat ve kabiliyet*), in other words, social assets required from the Preachers, a certain “eloquent quick-wittedness” (*talâkatlı bir cerbeze ile*)<sup>66</sup> and a capacity to “intuitively understand the psychology of the people” appeared.<sup>67</sup> The preachers had to recognize the “*münevver*” as well as the “common people” mainly associated with the Anatolian peasantry and urban popular classes. They also had to switch between different language registers and modify their arguments depending on their audience.

---

<sup>64</sup> “Her iki sınıf hatip, sözünü söylerken halkın psikolojisini sezecek, muhatapların kalplerinde Fırkamız ve idealimiz lehine muhabbet ve iyi tesir bırakmak gayesini takip edecektir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 8.

<sup>65</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Le langage autorisé. Note sur les conditions sociales de l’efficacité du discours rituel,” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 1, 5, no. 6 (1975).

<sup>66</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

<sup>67</sup> “(...) sözünü söylerken halk psikolojisini sezecek, muhatapların kalplerinde Fırkamız ve idealimiz lehine muhabbet ve iyi tesir bırakmak gayesini takip edecektir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 8.

Especially for preachers who often address peasants, it is advantageous that they are from their (the peasants') class, and that they are like them in terms of clothing, manners, and even their way of speaking.<sup>68</sup>

The directives advised the preachers who spoke to the peasants to lower their register of language because it assumed that they were also able to express themselves in higher registers. Although the audience was categorized in a way reminiscent of the Ottoman dichotomy of *avâm* (the commoners) and *havas* (the distinguished ones),<sup>69</sup> being a preacher was not limited to belonging to the "distinguished ones" thanks to social attributes such as eloquence, knowledge, and refinement. It also implied transcending the social distinction between the preachers and the collective other, the "people" (*halk*), and "creating sincere bonds" with them. The preachers needed to have certain flexibility to address and persuade both the "*münevver*" and the "popular mass" not only by embodying the common ground necessary to establish communication with their clothes and appearance but also the capability to switch between several registers of language (administrative, scholarly, or 'high and low') or the much-debated Ottoman diglossia.<sup>70</sup>

Other social attributes related to refinement, knowledge, and level of education, such as *irfan* and *tahsil*, were broadly used in the People's Preachers' paper trail.<sup>71</sup> The CHP provincial administrative committees selected preachers from among the educated, respected, knowledgeable, or, in other words, socially distinguished individuals in local communities.

In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, *pathos* refers to the emotions, temporary states of feelings awakened by the circumstances.<sup>72</sup> The distinction between the three aspects of rhetoric was not so clear

---

<sup>68</sup> "Bilhassa köylülere sık sık söyleyecek hatiplerin kendi sınıflarından, kıyafet ve halce hatta söylemek tarzı itibarile mümkün mertebe kendilerine benzer olması faydalıdır." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 10.

<sup>69</sup> Marc Aymes, "The Voice-Over of Administration: Reading Ottoman Archives at the Risk of Ill-literacy," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 6 (2007).

<sup>70</sup> Johann Strauss, "Diglossie dans le domaine ottoman. Évolution et péripéties d'une situation linguistique," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 75-76 (1995): 75-76.

<sup>71</sup> "*Tahsil*" means "an acquirement of learning or science" and used for formal education while "*irfan*" denotes "knowledge" and "refinement" with a spiritual connotation that is not necessarily linked to formal education. "An obtaining, acquiring [...]; especially an acquirement of learning or science, study," James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 507. "a knowing intimately, polish of mind and manners, refinement, mystical, spiritual knowledge, occult science." *Ibid.*, 1294.

<sup>72</sup> Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, 317.

to all thinkers of the persuasive arts.<sup>73</sup> Sara Rubinelli argued that *pathos* and *ethos* are intimately linked since emotions generated by a speech can difficultly be separated from the speaker's "ethical appeal."<sup>74</sup> The People's Preacher's Organization directives were written to underscore the importance of understanding the role of emotions in persuasion. Changing the language register, for instance, was seen as a way to heighten the "desire and enthusiasm" of the listeners.<sup>75</sup> The directives also stressed the need for the preachers to intuitively understand the "psychology of the people" and "leave feelings of love and good impressions on the hearts of their interlocutors."<sup>76</sup> Talking instead of reading written-down speeches was also presented to enhance the emotional impact of the speeches delivered by the People's Preachers.<sup>77</sup> While the directives emphasized evoking emotions among their listeners, the only caution was about the "fanatics." The People's Preachers had to "caress people's hearts" with their words. Still, using religious rhetoric and "bribing" the "fanatics" was to be avoided.<sup>78</sup>

Another concept commonly used to refer to the emotional connection between the People's Preachers and their audience was "*hasbihal*," which meant a "friendly chat, an exchange of confidence" but also "asking for advice."<sup>79</sup> This term was rarer than the others in the CHP correspondence but appeared in some reports. Sometimes, it was used for a "short conversation" instead of a long speech, which does not include a conversational aspect.<sup>80</sup> In August 1936, during the Language Day celebrations in Konya, a preacher recited two poems

---

<sup>73</sup> Cicéron et al., *L'invention de l'orateur / Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin ; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler*.

<sup>74</sup> Sara Rubinelli, "Logos and Pathos in Aristotle's Rhetoric. A Journey into the Role of Emotions in Rational Persuasion in Rhetoric," 362.

<sup>75</sup> "Mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedris şekline benzemiyen ve her zaman arzu ve hevelse dinlenilebilecek olan bir mahiyette telkinine ehemmiyet verilecektir." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>76</sup> "Her iki sınıf hatip söz söylerken halk psikolojisini sezecek, muhatapların kalplerinde Fırkamız ve İdealimiz lehine muhabbet ve iyi tesir bırakmak gayesini takip edecektir." *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>77</sup> "Fakat halkın hisleri üzerinde tesir yapılmak istenen mevzuların okumaktan ziyade söylemek tarzında telkini muvafıktır." *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>78</sup> "Muhattapların kalbini okşamak maksadı mühim olmakla beraber bu gayeyi kazanmak için bile olsa reddettiğimiz his ve kanaatlere ve prensiplerimizin hududu dışında bıraktığımız eski tesislere mülayim gelecek sözlerden ve bilhassa mutaassıplara rüşvet verecek mahiyette söz söylemekten kat'iyen sakınılacaktır." *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>79</sup> "A friendly chat, to exchange confidences," Sami, "münevver," 506; James W. Redhouse, *Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman - English Dictionary*.

<sup>80</sup> "İlçebay Celal Ertükün kıymet ve ehemmiyetini tebarüz ettirdiği dil bayramımızı doğuran inkılabın tarihi durumuna dair kısa bir hashibal yaparak bu inkılabın sebepleri millî amillerini yurtdaşlarımıza izah etmek isterim." Report of the Language Day, From the provincial governor of Yozgat to the CHP General Secretary, Maden (Yozgat), 9 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-111-2.

in different styles and asked for the audience's opinion. A report described this as "a reciprocal conversation" (*muhavereli bir hasbihal*). The audience preferred the poems written in plain Turkish and did not like the ones with complicated language. According to the report, "people really enjoyed this activity," which also included reciting minstrel poetry, considered a more popular form of literary expression.<sup>81</sup>

*Hasbihal* often referred to giving a conversational, egalitarian, and friendly aspect to the speeches the People's Preachers delivered. However, the analysis of the speech transcriptions indicates that using *pathos* as a rhetorical technique did not only mean creating a friendly atmosphere. The directives of the People's Preachers Organizations mentioned that it was necessary to intervene harshly in some situations.

Wherever and in any situation, if a member of the party witnesses a conversation that is incompatible with the principles and fundamentals of the party, if he/she hears such an idea or utterance, he/she is obliged to immediately explain the facts, correct mistakes and prevent the formation of false opinions among the sincere, according to the needs of the occasion and the situation, and with an attitude indicated by the situation, as well as being harsh when necessary and soft when necessary.<sup>82</sup>

Regarding soft interventions, the reports often emphasized the speakers and the audience's emotions, such as enthusiasm (*heyecan*).<sup>83</sup> These references to the enthusiastic audience applauding or crying were almost automated in the reports, leading to thinking that it was more a question of confirming conformity to the expectations of the General Secretary rather than reporting what the reporter observed.<sup>84</sup> The 1935 brochure of the People's Houses echoed the

---

<sup>81</sup> "Ben de burada kısa bir başlangıç yaptım. Atı methedene bu iki manzumeyi karşılaştırdık. Biri anlaşılmadığı için beğenilmedi. Diğeri Türkçe olduğu ve anlaşıldığı için çok beğenildi. Bu toplantıda yine saz şairleri tarafından öz Türkçe ile karşılaşmalar halkın çok hoşuna gidiyordu." Report of the Language Day, From CHP Konya Provincial Administrative Board to the CHP General Secretary, 25 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-105-03.

<sup>82</sup> "Her fırkacı nerede ve herhangi vaziyette olursa olsun, fırka prensiplerine ve esaslarına uymıyan bir sohbe şahit olur, böyle bir fikir ve bir söz işitirse derhal zeminin ve vaziyetin icabına göre ve yine vaziyetin gösterdiği bir eda ile, yanı icabında sert ve lüzumunda yumuşak olarak hakikatleri izah, hataları tashih ve samilerde yanlış kanaat husulünü menetmeğe mecburdur." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatıpları Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 11-12.

<sup>83</sup> "Bundan sonra, aynı zamanda faziletli bir Türk annesi olan Kadınlar Birliğinden İffet H. Oruz on binlerce kadınla dolan Taksim meydanında şu heyecanlı hitabesini irad etti." "Kadınlığın Kutlu Sesi," *Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul), 8 December.

<sup>84</sup> Nicolas Mariot, "Qu'est-ce qu'un « enthousiasme civique » ? Sur l'historiographie des fêtes politiques en France après 1789," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 63e année, no. 1 (2008): 117.

same idea. The speakers were to generate interest by showing how they enjoyed speaking about the cause.

The youth of the People's Houses explain that the enthusiasm of a man who explains a great cause to a crowd is so great that no other pleasure can match it, and they show a great interest in lecturing. Even People's Houses hosted lectures in cinemas on historic days (like the Beyoğlu People's House.) People's Houses succeeded in being the voice of every national cause. Many issues, such as domestic goods and the Ergani loan, were the main causes that mobilized the People's Houses.<sup>85</sup>

The speakers' and participants' pleasure, excitement, and enthusiasm was sometimes equated with "national enthusiasm" (*milli heyecan*). In 1934, Bursa's local newspaper published an article about Turkey's lack of "national enthusiasm." According to the author, people seemed bored while attending the national celebrations but should have been enthusiastic about the developments.<sup>86</sup> To generate enthusiasm, People's Preachers talked about their own enthusiasm with hyperboles.

At the end of August, in the presence of the supreme president, the second language congress was held with the participation of many Turkish and foreign language scholars. I returned from this congress, in which I had participated as a small linguist and as the ambassador of the lovely Sinop People's House, with a sense of gushing conviction (*inan duygularım fıskırarak döndüm*).<sup>87</sup>

Intervening harshly would generate fear among the audience. One main method of doing this was threatening potential dissidents or enemies within the audience, emphasizing the necessary treatment of these individuals. These threats were delivered through performative

---

<sup>85</sup> "Halkevi gençleri güttüğü büyük bir maksadı kalabalığa anlatan bir adamın duyduğu ve duyurduğu heyecandaki zevkin başka hiçbir zevkle ölçüşmeyecek kadar büyük olduğunu anlatmakta ve konferansçılığa rağbet göstermektedirler. Tarihi günlerde sinemalarda konferans veren halkevleri bile olmuştur. (Beyoğlu Halkevi gibi.) Halkevleri her milli davanın sesi olmasını başarmışlardır. Yerli malı, Ergani istikrazı gibi bir çok mevzular Halkevlerini harekete getiren esaslı davalardan sayılmışlardır." *Halkevleri Broşürü*, 26-27.

<sup>86</sup> Musa [Ataş], "Milli Heyecan," *Hakkın Sesi* (Bursa), 3 September 1934.

<sup>87</sup> "Ağustosun sonlarında, yüce başkanın önünde, bir çok Türk ve yabancı dil bilginlerinin topluluğu ile ikinci dil kurultayı toplandı. Küçük bir dilci ve sevimli Sinobun halkevi elçisi olarak karıştığım bu kurultaydan inan duygularım fıskırarak döndüm." Language Day Report, Avni Bey, Turkish teacher at a middle school, 16 September 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-109-2.

enunciations such as “we will strangle and kill” or “we will blind” those who threatened the republic.<sup>88</sup> The People’s Preachers’ use of threats will be examined in more detail in Part IV.

In summary, the directives for how members of the People’s Preachers and the People’s Houses should communicate with their audience showed an understanding of the principles of the “science of eloquence” (*belagat ilmi*), rather than an *ad hoc* adaptation of Islamicate practice to fit a non-religious political system. Therefore, the “sacrality transfer” framework is not helpful because it muddles understanding of the context rather than clarifying it.<sup>89</sup> The following section will reflect on the pertinence of “propaganda” as an analytical tool to study the People’s Preachers.

### 4.3. Eloquence and “Propaganda”

---

During the republic’s early years, certain concepts were frequently used by the party officials while others were avoided. The party officials frequently used the terms examined in the previous section while avoiding “propaganda.” Although the creation of the People’s Preachers and the People’s Houses happened in an era in the immediate aftermath of the “Age of Mass Politics,” which also can be characterized as the “Age of Propaganda,” this term was rare in the CHP archives.<sup>90</sup>

“Propaganda,” despite being the first common concept that comes to mind when reading the People’s Preachers’ directives, was generally avoided in the CHP correspondence. The CHP did not employ “propaganda” to discuss People’s Houses and People’s Preachers, founded between 1931 and 1932. Still, the party archives referred to “propaganda” as “opposition propaganda” (*muhaliif propagandalar*).<sup>91</sup> Yet, it limited the use of the term to the

---

<sup>88</sup> “Fakat bugün milletin dik dilekte ve işte birbirini kıran ve onun milli bütünlüğünü parçalayıp bütün çocuklarını birbirine Karşı koyan onu bütün tehlikelere ve kara afiyetlere sürükleyen kimseler çıkarsa sınıf kavgası olursa onun yaşamasına gökleşmesine [kökleşmesine] meydan vermeden bugünün gençliği yarının ve bizler onu hemen boğacağız ve öldüreceğiz.” Speech by Hasene Ilgaz on “Independence and Revolution,” 1935, KEKBMV\_10002-003-182. “İsmet İnönünün çevresinde kenetlenmiş kırılmaz bir halka teşkil ettikçe hiç bir yabancıya bize yan bakmasına imkan yoktur bakacaklar olursa kahraman Türk ordusu bu gözleri gör etmeye her zamandan ziyade hazır ve uyanık olarak vazife başındadır.” Speech by İhsan Onan, Republic Day, 23 October 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/132-534-1.

<sup>89</sup> Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*, 312.

<sup>90</sup> John M. Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 646-47.

<sup>91</sup> Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatıpları Teşkilatı Talimatı, 12.

printing and publication of ideological material by the Republican People's Party using state resources, such as civil servants.<sup>92</sup>

The deflection from the term can be explained by its negative connotations in press articles about the Nazi Propaganda Ministry. "Propaganda" along with "rumors" (*dedikodu ve propaganda*) was one of the main ways in which party leadership referred to the challenges they faced. "Propaganda and rumors" or "gossip" were often used together. "Propaganda" alone often connoted foreign interference or foreign enemies. The conceptual couple "propaganda and gossip" referred to demeaned segments of Anatolian society. For this reason, the reports produced by CHP deputies checked the "people's faith and loyalty towards the party," sometimes "despite certain gossip."<sup>93</sup> The solution to the problem of "dark propaganda" and "dangerous utterances" was to educate the people by "increasing their intellectual level" and providing them with necessary "tools."<sup>94</sup> These terminological choices were based on the party's perception of its role and how it differentiated itself from competitors and enemies.

Avoiding the term by the top-down correspondence (regulatory documents, circulars, directives) did not mean that the receptors did not perceive their role as some form of "propaganda." The reports sent by the provincial sections and the People's Houses occasionally used the term. In August 1936, for instance, the governor of Konya and the director of the party's provincial executive committee sent a report to the General Secretary, claiming that the Language Day was celebrated in "propagandistic ceremonies" attended by "all people, including men and women." The report added that the city was illuminated for this

---

<sup>92</sup> "Ücretleri umumî muvazene kanununun 5 inci maddesi mucibince 936 senesi bütçesinin (E) cetveline dahil 378 inci faslın I inci maddesine konulan tahsisattan verilmek üzere senenin muhtelif aylarında ve iş icap ettiği zamanlarda çalışdırılmak kaydıyla propağanda ve neşriyat işlerinde kullanılacak memurlara ait ilişik kadronun tatbiki..." Governmental decree, 15 June 1936, BCA Kararlar Daire Başkanlığı 30-18-1-2/66-51-7. "12.12.1937 de başlayacak olan sekizinci tasarruf ve yerli mallar haftası için geçen yıllarda olduğu gibi sıkı yardımınızı diler ve gazete ve mecmua ve radyo vasıtasile münasip surette propagandalar yapılmasını rica eylerim." Correspondence from the Interior Minister Münir Akkaya to People's Houses, 9 November 1937, BCA CHP 490-01/3-15-41.

<sup>93</sup> "Memleketin siyasi durumu bilhassa Antalya şehrindeki parti faaliyeti ve halkın partiye olan bağlılığı ve güveni bazı dedikodulara rağmen hiç fena görünmemektedir." Türkan Başbuğ's report, Antalya, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-884-1.

<sup>94</sup> "Köylülerde fena fikirlere karşı karakol ödevini gören birer kuruldur. Bunların fikrî seviyesini yükseltmek ve cihazlandırmak ihtiyacı vardır." Sırrı İçöz, Emin Draman, Ömer Evcı, Report on Yozgat, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.



occasion. The lights discernible from the neighboring villages also “served as a fundamental propaganda.”<sup>95</sup> This report showed that even though the term was avoided in the regulatory documents sent by the party general secretary, the receptors perceived their role within the framework of “propaganda.” Nevertheless, one of the most recurring concepts used in party archives, namely “*telkin*” was highly reminiscent of “propaganda.”

The first signification of “*telkin*” in the 1890 edition of James Redhouse’s Ottoman-English dictionary was “communicating orally.”<sup>96</sup> Other dictionary entries underlined “talking clearly to explain something clearly to the interlocutors.”<sup>97</sup> *Telkin* had an Islamic connotation that influenced and informed its use by the party correspondence. The second sense, “teaching a novice to repeat the articles of the faith,” concerned “initiation” to Islam. *Telkin* meant reciting and repeating “the articles of faith,” but especially the shahada declaring, “There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God” to “a deceased person that he may answer for the questioning angels.”<sup>98</sup> This implied the belief in the potential success of “talking” and “repetition” even to the most indifferent (i.e., the dead). The sense of repetition found in *telkin* was reminiscent of how Hitler and Goebbels perceived propaganda.<sup>99</sup>

The meaning of *telkin* evolved into “suggesting” or “inoculating someone with an idea, teaching, instilling it into their mind” (*bir şeyi biriniñ zihnine koymak, öğretmek, zihnine girmek*).<sup>100</sup> During the third CHP Congress, organized in May 1931, the participants used the term in the negative sense of “giving false impressions” and causing misunderstandings.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> “Hülâsa ş Dil bayramı Konya da kadın erkek, bütün halkın ilgisi ile dört gün ve dört gece dilimiz hakkındaki propagandalı törenlerle kutlandı. Yurttaşlar, dilimize karşı gösterilen yüksek ilgiden çok memnun kaldılar. Dilimizin gelecekteki yüksek durumu ve bu durumun Türk kültürü üstünde yapacağı faydalı değişikliklere büyük umutlarla bağlanıldı. Çocuklar, bayram şenliklerini takip ettiler. Bu şenliklerin neden ileri geldiği ve şimdiye kadar neden buna benzer şenlikler yapılmadığı zaman zaman ve velileri tarafından kendilerine anlatıldı. Bu itibarla yarının nesli de bayram hakkında bir fikir edinmiş bulundu. Şehrin gece tenviratı, civar köylerden görülmekte ve nazarı dikkati celp etmekte olduğundan dil bayramı için bu gece tenviratı da esaslı bir propaganda olmuş oldu. § İlçelerde yapılan dil bayramı tezahüratını gösteren raporlarla söylevler örneğini bağlı olarak derin saygılarımla sunulmuştur.” From the governor of Konya and the director of the CHP provincial administrative committee to the CHP General Secretary, Konya, 24-28 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-105-03.

<sup>96</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 588.

<sup>97</sup> “Bir sözü söyleyip muhataba iyice aflatmak” Şemseddin Sami, *Kamus-ı Türki* (İstanbul, 1901), 143.

<sup>98</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 588; Sami, “münevver,” 399.

<sup>99</sup> David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (London, New York: Routledge, 1993), 12.

<sup>100</sup> Raif Necdet [Kestelli], *Yeni Resimli Türkçe Kamus* (İstanbul: Ahmed Kâmil Matbaası, 1927), 235.

<sup>101</sup> “Deminki maruzatımda yanlış fikirler telkin edecek noktalar görüyorum.” Hüseyin Bey (Kars), *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 140.

*Telkin* also meant “instilling” an idea about the necessity of saving money, avoiding waste of economic resources, or paying taxes properly.<sup>102</sup> In some occurrences, the deputies used the term synonymously with “propaganda” or within a context in which they referred to “indoctrination” by “erasing (a certain) mentality” from “peasants and people’s minds.”<sup>103</sup> Therefore, the main idea related to this term was to replace an older habit or attitude with a new one. If *telkin* was an inevitable part of communication, it had to be won over for a good cause and used in the name of the party, this time to give the “true” impression and to avoid misunderstanding.

Overall, *telkin* referred to a teaching method distinct from scholarly instruction and other persuasive techniques that rely on logic and argumentation. The party program developed in May 1931 used “*telkin*” within the context of “National Education and Training” (*Milli Talim ve Terbiye*) by referring to the inculcation of the principles of the republic such as “republicanism, nationalism, and secularism” as well as “respect for the Turkish nation, the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and the Turkish state” in each level of “schooling” (*tahsil*).<sup>104</sup> In this case, inculcation was a part of institutional education controlled by the Ministry of Education.

The directives of the People’s Preachers Organization (September 1931), in turn, opposed “suggesting” (*telkin*) to “instructing” (*tedris*), derived from Arabic “school” (*medrese*). The Preachers had to treat issues (national history, bravery, nationalism, culture) “in a way that does not resemble the detailed instruction in schools” (*mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedrise*

---

<sup>102</sup> Istanbul deputy Sadettin Bey [Uraz], *ibid.*, 160.

<sup>103</sup> “Bendenizin rica edeceğim nokta; biliyoruz hepimiz memleketin her tarafından geldik, tekrar memleketlerimize döneceğiz, bir vazife olarak şunu rica ediyorum. Fırka namına propaganda yapalım, ve bu zihniyeti köylünün ve halkın kafasından silmeye çalışalım ve verginin vatani bir borç olduğunu ve umumi işlere iştirak demek olduğunu telkin edelim.” Alâaddin Bey [Tiritoğlu], deputy of Kütahya, *ibid.*, 125..” Malûmu âliniz, Serbest Fırka çıktıktan sonra memlekette tuhaf bir propaganda başladı. Her tarafta vergiler ağırdır deniliyor. Bu propaganda o kadar fazla ve fena neticeler verdi ki vergi hakkında şimdiye kadar şahsan hiçbir ağırlık hissetmediğim halde bana da bir şüphe geldi. Acaba hakikaten vergiler ağır mıdır dedim. Binaenaleyh memlekette mühim bir telkin vesilesi oldu.” Alâaddin Bey [Tiritoğlu], deputy of Kütahya, *ibid.*, 124.

<sup>104</sup> “Kuvvetli cümhuriyetçi, milliyetçi, lâik vatanşay yetişirmek tahsilin her derecesi için mecburî ihtimam noktasıdır. Türk milletine, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisine ve Türkiye Devletine hürmet etmek ve ettirmek hassası bir vazife olarak telkin olunur.” *Ibid.*, 79.

*benzemeyen bir şekilde*).<sup>105</sup> This distinction sheds light on an important element of the Kemalist State's pedagogy, which will be divided into two in this dissertation. Scholarly pedagogy concerned the educational policies taken over by the Ministry of Education, thus mainly concentrating on the instruction of pupils in schools. On the other hand, popular pedagogy was concerned with political communication and citizenship education of adults.

The emphasis on "persuasion through suggestion and repetition" (*telkin*) and its opposition to "instruction" (*tedris*) reveal another similarity with the conception of propaganda according to Goebbels: simplicity.<sup>106</sup> The lack of "detail" (*teferruat*) means a lack of depth in the ideas communicated to the audience. A second important aspect of Kemalist pedagogy associated "instruction" with institutions of education that were secularized, unified, and expanded since the republic's early years. It was precisely the unscholarly aspect of the People's Preachers that distinguished their pedagogic role from that of professional educators.

The emphasis on the lack of detail in the directives of the People's Preachers Organization also revealed the perception that those who drafted the document had of their audience. The audience was commonly called "people," which, in line with the findings of the previous chapter, derived from the category of "commoners" (*avam*) and was often interchangeably used with "masses" (*kitle*). This perception can be traced back to the work of Gustave Le Bon, who deeply influenced some segments of late Ottoman intellectual elites. Le Bon's reception within the Ottoman intellectual field directly divided the population between an "enlightened group" (*fi'ye-yi münevvere*) and the rest of the population deemed inferior.<sup>107</sup> Le Bon's understanding of the "crowds" also impacted the National Socialist vision of "propaganda."<sup>108</sup>

Another concept commonly used to discuss the People's Preachers' activities was "*irşad*." *İrşad* meant guiding someone to make the right choice, putting them on the right path. This word was not used in the People's Preachers Organization directives but was prominent in the

---

<sup>105</sup> "Türk medeniyeti Türk tarihi Türk kahramanlıkları ve kısa tarifiyle Türk kültürünün mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedris şekline benzemeyen ve her zaman arzu ve hevesle dinlenebilecek olan bir mahiyette telkinine ehemmiyet verilecektir." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 6.

<sup>106</sup> Goebbels, Speech to representatives of the press, 15 March 1933. Translated by: David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, 180.

<sup>107</sup> Daniel Kolland, "Making and Universalizing New Time," 336.

<sup>108</sup> David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, 26.

party correspondence concerning their activities. During and after the First World War, *İrşad* was repetitively used by the Unionists and the imperial government in Istanbul for political purposes that sometimes were conflicting. It figured prominently in the opposition between the Damat Ferit Pasha cabinet in Istanbul and the “National Forces” (*Kuva-yı Milliye*), the nationalist militia taking up arms against the terms of the 1918 Mudros Treaty. As mentioned above, the Ankara government created the “Guiding Committees” (*İrşad Encümeni*) in April 1920 to counter the “Counseling Committees” (*Heyet-i Nasîha*) sent to the provinces by the imperial government in Istanbul. Both committees used religious arguments to convince their audiences. According to the research conducted by Erkan Fincan in military archives, the “Counseling Committees” told their audience that “it was canonically lawful to kill the militia of the National Forces (*Kuva-yı Milliye*)” and that “Mustafa Kemal and his followers were Bolsheviks.”<sup>109</sup> Since Bolshevism was a vital threat, the “right path” and the “right choice” could not refrain from using violence.

As the CHP consolidated its authority over the state throughout the 1920s, the division between the remnants of the late empire and the new republic faded. However, as [Chapter 5](#) will show, new antagonisms emerged based on political disagreements regarding the type of republic desired by different political groups and factions. The emphasis on persuasion remained strong, as it was considered the best way to neutralize political dangers before they became severe threats. With the CHP’s newfound authority and access to resources, especially compared to its time as a nationalist militia in the early 1920s, its leadership understood that persuasion was most effective when conducted on the ground by mediators familiar with the local terrain, such as preachers.

The idea of choosing local party spokespeople was influenced by religious tradition and political communication styles in Italy, Russia, and Germany. Another argument against the idea of “sacrality transfer” is the circulation between Turkey and its close and distant neighbors regarding the methods of political communication. Concentrating on the Islamic meanings of the state idiom dissimulates other factors that led the CHP to create the People’s Preachers Organization. The vocabulary used by the party leadership about the People’s Preachers

---

<sup>109</sup> Erkan Fincan, “Heyet-i Nasîha’dan İrşat Heyetlerine: Millî Mücadele’de Halkı İkna Çalışmaları” (MA Milli Savunma Üniversitesi, 2020), 45.

Organization can be thus interpreted as a synthesis of older models – Islamic or “classical” – and the value that political “propaganda” gained globally with the emergence of new political regimes, such as Fascism in Italy, National Socialism in Germany, and socialism in the USSR which were closely followed by the CHP General Secretary.

As previously mentioned, prominent party members involved in education policy for children and adults visited Germany, Italy, and Russia and produced reports about the different methods used in these countries. The influence of the Russian model was particularly significant in shaping the People’s Preachers Corps and the People’s Houses, as these initiatives were developed after the visits. Unlike the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the party documents did not clearly distinguish between “agitation” and “propaganda.” In this respect, the party’s approach had more similarities with Nazi propaganda than with the Soviet approach. Despite the distinction between *telkin* and *tedris*, the People’s Preachers considered political education of the people through the transmission of relevant knowledge more important than the Nazi concept of propaganda.

Moreover, the early republican pedagogues and policymakers were well aware of methods simultaneously employed in Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, and Fascist Italy. Baltacıoğlu’s publications in the magazine *Yeni Adam* (New Man), a title reminiscent of the idea of palingenesis identified by Roger Griffin as the ideological core of fascism, dedicated many pages to the contemporary ‘masters of eloquence’ such as Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini (See Figure 4).



Figure 4. Cover of *Yeni Adam*, 19 December 1935.

On the cover, there are eight individuals depicted from left to right. These include Alphonse de Lamartine, Comte de Mirabeau, Demosthène, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, Jean Jaurès, Adolf Hitler, Léon Gambetta, and Benito Mussolini. The cover reads, “How to become a (good) orator?”

The cover of *Yeni Adam* reflected how important pedagogues of the period, starting from Baltacıoğlu, perceived the oratory art. The references to brilliant orators in İsmail Hakkı’s imagination were temporally vast but spatially narrow. They covered the period from antiquity to the interwar era between Athens and Paris. From Demosthenes to Hitler, all these clergymen and politicians shared something in common that *Yeni Adam* valued greatly: oratory skills. Demosthenes was probably the most pertinent example, given the content of İsmail Hakkı’s article on oratory art. According to the author, oratory art was a matter of education and should not be limited to a small elite. All “students and teachers” should learn to address larger crowds.

Despite the title that promised to teach the readers how to become good orators, the article only talks about liberating oneself so that one can dare to speak in front of crowds. Hence, oratory art was not a technical affair in İsmail Hakkı’s perception. Another interesting point in this article was that he considered oratory skills socially constructed. Their perceived lack of

oratory skills was not a matter of “psychology” but “social” factors: anyone can become an orator, even those with a speech defect.

Although the article leaves out many figures represented on the magazine cover, like Hitler, Mussolini, Jaurès, or Gambetta, it unveils Ismail Hakkı’s nuanced political perspective. He considered oratory art to transcend ideological boundaries. It presents a cover where the French bishop Bossuet, an opponent of state secularization, and the National Socialist Führer, an atheist, are put side by side without being a contradiction.

Despite its title evoking the notion of rebirth prevalent in the burgeoning fascist regimes of 1930s Europe, *Yeni Adam* maintained an ambivalent stance towards these regimes.<sup>110</sup> In 1936, an article titled “Fascism and Pedagogy” showcased translations from the French and Italian press regarding the educational methods of National Socialists in Germany and Fascists in Italy. This article was prominently featured on the cover with the headline: “Read the article on Fascism and Pedagogy in this issue.” Adolf Hitler appears twice on the cover: first, fervently addressing crowds from a pulpit in the upper right corner, and second, saluting militarized youth. Joseph Goebbels is depicted addressing crowds from behind a pulpit in the bottom left corner.

---

<sup>110</sup> Roger Griffin provides a generic definition of fascism: “fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism.” Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 27,32-36.



Figure 5. “Faşizm ve Pedagoji.” *Yeni Adam*, 19 March 1936.

Given Ismail Hakkı’s views on mass oratory, Hitler and Goebbels – like Jean Jaurès and Léon Gambetta of the previous cover - could have been presented as positive examples. The article, on the other hand, had an overall critical tone. The subtitle of the article read: “Fascism is a social regime. It has its own limitations, confinements, and peculiarities. This valuable study shows this regime’s imprint on pedagogy.” In the rest of the article, the authors criticized fascist regimes for focusing on military training and neglecting mathematics. Not without cynicism, the author noted that if the fascists taught mathematics to their youths instead of “training them for imperialist wars” and emerging a “war psychology,” the youth would be able to “count the dead” in the case of a future war.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> “Askerî cimmnastiğin de neden rişaziye hassalarını inkişaf ettirmek gaye- sini gütmediğı pek açıkça anlaşılıyor : çünkü bütün spor talimleri çok iptidâî bir rişaziyenin işini görecek, yani, ekonomi politiğı anlamış olanlar önüne ge- çemezler de gelecek harp patlarsa o zaman ölenleri kolayca saymağa yarayacak...” “Faşizm ve Pedagoji,” *Yeni Adam*, 1936, 8.



The photographs used in *Yeni Adam* were reminiscent of the ceremonial images of the early republican era that will be analyzed in [Chapter 5](#). The People’s Houses also organized activities to promote youth sports education. Statesmen, including Mustafa Kemal, saluted the militarized youth in Ankara and other provinces. *Yeni Adam* expressed a critical view towards Fascist pedagogy and its emphasis on the sportive and military education of youth. This could be interpreted as a subtle critique of the efforts to mobilize youth mobilization within the People’s Houses. Alternatively, it could be seen as a way to argue that the Turkish model differs from these examples. In any case, *Yeni Adam*’s repetitive choice to put Hitler, Nazi youth, and the propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels on the cover pointed to a form of fascination with Nazi aesthetics.

Against this background, the party-aligned press did not have any problem with the methods used by the fascist regimes for education and propaganda. During the rise of National Socialism in Germany, the mainstream media, represented by *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (National Sovereignty), a party-aligned daily newspaper, celebrated the establishment of the “Propaganda Ministry.” The German Propaganda Ministry was one of the “novelties” brought by National Socialism. Before the arrival of this luminary figure, “propaganda” was conducted from the offices of Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and it was “frowned upon to talk about it openly.” Goebbels was presented as a revolutionary who “destroyed the negative considerations” about “propaganda.”<sup>112</sup> He was also praised for his oratory skills. Despite the cold impression left on his face, Goebbels influenced his audience with the “deep meanings” and “fervency” of his words and arguments instead of using “voice and gestures.”<sup>113</sup> The Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung*

---

<sup>112</sup> “Nationalsozialistliğin getirdiği yenilikler arasında yeni bir (Propaganda Vekâleti)nin tesisi en mühim hareketlerdendir. O zamana kadar siyasi propaganda hariciye dairelerinin gizli odalarında yapılan ve alenen bahsedilmesi hoş görülmeven bir hareket addedilirdi. Eski siyasilerin propaganda hakkındaki bu telakkilerini yıkan Dr. Goebbels oldu. Goebbels başlangıçtan beri propagandanın ve siyasi meseleler üzerinde halkı tenvir etmenin bugünkü hükümetler için hem mübrem bir ihtiyaç ve hem de büyük bir vazife olduğu kanaatini ileri sürmüştür.” “Berlin Mektubu: Almanya’da yeni Propaganda Vekilliği,” *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 19 June 1933.

<sup>113</sup> “Kendisi sima itibariyle insanda eyi bir tesir bırakanlardan değildir. Bilakis onun çok çalışmış kafasını örten yüzünde oldukça soğuk bir ifade var. Fakat Goebbels’in sözleri... İşte bütün kıymeti burada. Simasının yaptığı soğuk tesir ile sözlerinin candan gelen harareti tezat ona büyük bir cazibe veriyor. Goebels hususi konuşmalarında bile kürsüde nutuk söyleyen bir hatip kadar tesir bırakan; hem dinleyenleri jestleriyle veya sesinin şiddetile değil sözlerinin derin mana ve hararetiyle teşhir eden bir insandır.” Ibid.

*und Propaganda*, RMVP) was highly praised by the nationalist press, which saw it as an example of how important it was to “enlighten the people” for contemporary governments.<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, the Nazi initiatives to institutionalize and centralize propaganda were compared to measures already taken by the republican leadership, such as the People’s Houses. *Vakit* (Time) praised the new ministry as a form of People’s House (*Halkevi*), a cultural center created by the CHP in February 1932.<sup>115</sup> The press articles about the People’s Preachers Organization also explained the foundation of this new organization by referring to foreign examples instead of presenting them as rooted in Islamicate practice of knowledge transmission. In 1933, *Son Posta* gave the example of Russian efforts to “do propaganda of the new regime among the common folk” while reporting about the People’s Preachers Organization.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>114</sup> “Nationalsozialistliğin getirdiği yenilikler arasında yeni bir (Propaganda Vekâleti)nin tesisi en mühim hareketlerdendir. O zamana kadar siyasi propaganda hariciye dairelerinin gizli odalarında yapılan ve alenen bahsedilmesi hoş görülmeven bir hareket addedilirdi. Eski siyasilerin propaganda hakkındaki bu telakkilerini yıkan Dr. Goebbels oldu. Goebbels başlangıçtan beri propagandanın ve siyasi meseleler üzerinde halkı tenvir etmenin bugünkü hükümetler için hem mübrem bir ihtiyaç ve hem de büyük bir vazife olduğu kanaatini ileri sürmüştür.” Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> “Goebbels’in idare etmekte olduğu propaganda ve halkı tenvir vekaleti adeta bir halkevi demektir.” “Yeni Alman Idaresi ve Yeni Propagandalar,” *Vakit*, 3 September.

<sup>116</sup> “Bilhassa Rusya’da halk arasında yeni rejimin propagandasını yapmak için genç hatipler yetiştirilmektedir.” “Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Yetiştirecek: Halk Hatipleri için Bir Talimatname Yapıldı Faaliyete Başlanıyor,” *Son Posta*, 11 January.

## *Conclusion*

---

The recurring themes in the directives of the People's Preachers, People's Houses, and related correspondence and published materials indicate that, despite the early republican pedagogic mission, there was also a concerted effort to propagate the regime's values using traditional rhetorical techniques. The dissemination of politically relevant knowledge was the primary focus of the regulatory documents for these two organizations.

Although the concept of propaganda was seldom explicitly mentioned, the establishment of the People's Preachers Organization emerged as a way to analyze institutions and organizations from model countries in Asia and Europe. This analysis aimed to find a balance between these new institutions and the traditional rhetorical knowledge, and tools inherited from the past. Despite the absence of the term "propaganda" in the founding documents, recipients of these documents understood their actions as propaganda.

A key element in the organization's founding documents was the social and symbolic capital necessary to ensure that the public would listen to those tasked with educating them. In addition to garnering respect from listeners, the organization aimed to establish an emotional connection and create an environment that would resonate with the audience. The next chapter will explore the sources of social distinction for the CHP pedagogues and propagandists during the single-party rule. More particularly, it will examine how the People's Preachers themselves appropriated the category of "münevver" to discuss their pedagogic mission.



## 5. People's Preachers: Teachers of the Common Folk

---

At the time of Commander Ratıp Bey, the CUP enrolled me with the number 81 in its Aleppo committee. The pure Turkishness of my family, known as “Mantıkçıoğulları,” can be proven back to five-six generations. I was born in 1888 in Kilis. You may find a list of my salaried and volunteer duties in the application form.

I worked a lot for the Republican People's Party in Kilis, especially in Gaziantep. We might say that there is almost nobody who does not know me thanks to my services at the People's Houses, my oratory, and my lectures. I believe that my country should still be ruled by the principles of the Republican People's Party. I am a poet, and I have published several works. Three of the four articles published in the Gaziantep brochure (1933) were mine. I also penned articles diffused by the Gaziantep People's House. I am the one who developed the textile sector in Gaziantep by increasing the number of weaving looms from 250 to thousands. I am the one who standardized the Antep pistachios and molasses. I would not claim that I was deprived of higher education because someone denounced me, but I am an autodidact. I know construction and the constitution and am completely capable of proposing draft laws, especially on the life-draining route tax. Six out of seven deputies of Gaziantep today are undoubtedly superior to me. I am proud that I worked at the party and the Gaziantep People's House with Ömer Asım Aksoy. Doctor Muzaffer Canpolat was my middle school student. Another deputy from Gaziantep, Cemil Alevli, is a close friend. Party members in Kilis, Gaziantep, and Bolu know me very well.”<sup>1</sup>

This short autobiography (*hal tercümesi*) was written in 1950 by Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, a People's Preacher from Gaziantep, a southeastern town in Turkey and the center of a province bordering Syria. Yılmaz Bey was selected as a People's Preacher in the central district of

---

<sup>1</sup> “Binbaşı Ratıp Bey zamanında İttihat ve Terraki Cemiyetinin Halep komitasında 81 numarasında kayıtlı idim. “Mantıkçı oğulları” diye ünlenen ailemin öz türklüğü 5-6 nesle kadar sayılabilir, 1888 doğumlu ve Kilisliyim. § Bulduğum aylıklı ve karşılıksız görevler talepname de yazılıdır. § C.H. Partisinde Kilis ve bilhassa Gaziantep'te oldukça emeklerim var. Halkevlerindeki hizmetlerim ve hitabet ve konferanslarımla beni oralarda tanımayan yok gibidir. § Yurdumu hala C.H. Partisinin inandığı umdelere göre idare etmesi gerektiği kanaatindeyim. § Şair ve birkaç eser sahibiyim. 933 Gaziantep broşürünün dörtte bir yazısı benim olduğu gibi eserlerimden Gaziantep halkevinde neşredilmiş olanları da var. § Gaziantep dokumacılığını 250 tezgâhtan bugünkü haline ve binlere yetiştiren, Antep fıstık ve pekmezini standardize eden de benim. § Yüksek tahsilden jurnal edilerek mahrum kaldığımı ileri süreceğim değilim, ancak kendimi oldukça yetiştirmişlerdenim ve hiç olmazsa bina, esasî vergileri hakkında beyanı mütalea ve ulusun ömür törpüsü olan yol vergisi yerine mükemmel bir kanun tasarısı sunabilecek kudretteyim. § Gaziantep'in şimdiki milletvekillerinden 7 de 6 sı cidden benden üstün şahsiyetlerdir. Bunlardan Doktor Muzaffer Canpolatın, orta okulda talebem olması ve Ömer Asım Aksoy'la Partide Halkevinde birlikte çalışmış ve Cemil Alevlinin de yakın bir arkadaşım bulunmasıyla müfthirim. Beni Gaziantep, Kilis, Antep ve Bolu C.H. Partisinin eski ve yeni [illegible] çok iyi tanırlar. (...)” Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

Gaziantep both in 1931 while working in the city as the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce and in 1938 after he became the private accountant of the provincial government.<sup>2</sup>

Yılmaz Bey's autobiography – written to reinforce his application for being included in the party's election lists – is in many ways representative of the 3,500 party spokespeople active during the single-party rule (1931-1945). There were forty-four employees of chambers of commerce, many accountants, and even more teachers among the People's Preachers. Many preachers who applied to run for legislative elections mentioned their "elite" origins in terms of a well-known lineage. Many applicants underlined their "pure Turkishness" and even sometimes explained being born in Thessaloniki or Yemen by their father's jobs to show that they were not Jews, Arabs, Greeks, or some other non-Turkish population living under the Ottoman Empire.

The CHP General Secretary prioritized education level, diplomas, speaking foreign languages, and publications. More than half of the questions were about the applicants' education level. Dokuzoğuz's autobiography also shared with the others an emphasis on education level. Again, Dokuzoğuz's apophysis about not having a higher education degree showed the requirement for a higher education. A high school degree (*iydadi*) was not enough, but he could also claim to be self-taught, which he considered an added value for his résumé.<sup>3</sup> Dokuzoğuz's mention of his aptitude in proposing draft laws indicates that he learned about composition by himself or with the help of his "well-known" family, which he underlined in the first line of his application letter.<sup>4</sup>

Another common but unspoken aspect of Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's application letter was that many of the administrative elites of the single-party period were, indeed, privately educated. References to private education were common in application letters filed between 1939 and 1950. Many applicants explained their scholarly credentials (diplomas) by referring to their

---

<sup>2</sup> Dokuzoğuz appears in the lists of 1931 as Yılmaz Bey, "*ticaret odası katibi*" while in 1938 he is identified as "*Vilayet hususi muhasebe müdürü*." Lists of the People's Preachers, 1931-1938, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>3</sup> Dokuzoğuz claims that the last diploma he received was from *Halep İydaisi*. BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>4</sup> Marc Aymes, "La tâche de l'interprète, 1934-2023: Histoire linguistique pour petits et grands," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. Upcoming (2024).

private education.<sup>5</sup> Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's claim about being self-thought might indicate his private education or qualifications he earned from his career at the Chamber of Commerce and as the accountant of the provincial government.

Yılmaz Bey spent most of his career as a civil servant. While he remained in his hometown for quite a while compared to other civil servants, he was obliged to move. He first went to Bolu, 900 kilometers northwest of his hometown, and then to Sivas. While applying to run for the legislative elections in 1950, Yılmaz Bey had been far from his hometown for eleven years. Like many other preachers, he hoped his long-term activism for the Party would provide him with opportunities for further social mobility in the party and state bureaucracy.

Indeed, he underscored that his political and cultural activities went far beyond his administrative tasks. Yılmaz Bey featured "his oratory (*hitabet*) for the party" and publications in People's House magazines in his résumé. His work for the Party was consistent. The provincial directorate of the Party acknowledged this by selecting him among the People's Preachers in 1931 and 1938.<sup>6</sup> He published many articles in *Başpınar*, the monthly magazine of the Gaziantep People's House. Despite all of these efforts and his application, Dokuzoğuz never made it to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the life goal he pursued until 1950. His three books never entered the national literary canon established during his active years as a civil servant, poet, and People's Preacher.

Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's biography captivates the tension between different uses of the term "*münevver*" in the early republican era and underscores its difference from its current translation, "intellectual." According to the recurring classifications of the CHP, Dokuzoğuz, like many other People's Preachers and People's House members, was among the "*münevvers*" working tirelessly to "enlighten" (*tenvir*) people on the values of the party and the republic.

This chapter focuses on how the *münevver* described teachers and mid- and low-ranking civil servants like Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz when the CHP mobilized them for its pedagogic mission. It examines the meanings attributed to this social category by the party leadership and People's Preachers themselves to reflect on to what extent the early republican efforts to centralize and

---

<sup>5</sup> A good sample concerning the candidates' explanation of their education level would be these lists mixing applications from different provinces, 1945-1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1; 340-1420-1. See Chapter 7.

<sup>6</sup> List of the People's Preachers, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

institutionalize the political education of adults impacted the meaning of a crucial sociopolitical category of the early republican era.

### 5.1. Enlightened Enlighteners

---

The preceding chapters on Kemalist Pedagogy discussed that *münevver* was a pivotal concept extensively used by early Republican sources to articulate their educational objectives. This notion held such significance that it recurred prominently in the People's Preachers Organization directives. These directives distinctly categorized their target audience into two groups: the “*münevver*” (enlightened) and the “popular masses” residing in urban locales, juxtaposed with the “ordinary-minded people” inhabiting rural areas. This gives us a first marker of distinction, in which social and cultural elements intersect with the location of the two groups: towns versus rural areas. Implicitly, this classification positioned the People's Preachers within the ranks of the “enlightened” segment of society. Still, they were to engage with the “enlightened” and the rest of the population. The opposition between the “*münevver*” and ‘the others’ in the directives pointed to a dichotomic understanding of the society. Still, the group composed of “*münevvers*” was larger than a small group of intellectual and cultural producers in the spotlight of Turkey's cultural stage.

Important political figures of the period were also concerned about the *münevver*. Falih Rıfkı [Atay] (1894-1950) was deeply engaged in Mustafa Kemal's dinners as a regular attendee and as a vocal columnist involved in press controversies during his tenure as a deputy. He discussed “*münevver*” in its strict sense, referring to cultural and intellectual production and their institutions in a post-revolutionary context. His book *New Russia* delved into the educational system and propaganda methods in two post-revolutionary settings. In comparing the old regimes of Turkey and Russia, Falih Rıfkı highlighted a significant disparity regarding the economic and cultural elites, distinguishing between the “bankers and artisans” and the “intellectuals” (*münevver*).



Both countries are in the palm of European banks and artisanal workshops; this world sees a danger for the Asian colonies in the development movements of both countries, especially Russia; in both countries, this world is the friend of the palace and the enemy of the people; in Turkey the banker and the factory owner are more devout Muslims than the caliph, in Russia they are more zealous Christians than the village priest; in one case the exploiter has a green turban, in the other a golden cross. § There is a difference; in old Russia, universities, literature, and art were not dull copies but living cultural centers. In Old Turkey, the university, literature, and art were unconscious. Old Russia produced countless intellectuals (*münevver*) for the revolution and the palace. The youth of the Russian Revolution was prepared to establish a new order in place of the destroyed institutions. In the big cities of Russia, the centers of knowledge, science, and art can be considered so rich that they can be compared with any other Western country. The Turkish revolution (*ihtilal*) found this material scarce and poor.<sup>7</sup>

Falih Rıfki's reference to the "*münevver*" intersected economic, symbolic, and social capital, hence his discussion of the broader "field of power." The question of *münevver* arises following a discussion of other elites, specifically the economic elite comprising bankers and factory owners. In Falih Rıfki's depiction of the Russian and Turkish old orders, these economic elites, or the great capitalists, inhabit a distinct sphere—a class aligned with the palace yet at odds with the rest of the population. Falih Rıfki drew from Soviet discourse, asserting its relevance to the Turkish context, particularly regarding the exploitation of religion by economic elites. He contended that bankers and factory owners exhibit greater loyalty as exemplars of great capitalism than the caliph in the Turkey of yore.

However, a crucial disparity emerges between old Turkey and old Russia. In Russia, the former regime cultivated *münevvers* capable of becoming advisors to the palace which ended up becoming the avant-gardes of the revolution (*ihtilal*). Those groomed for the revolution were primed to usher in a new order, given Russian cities' rich cultural and intellectual tapestry

---

<sup>7</sup> "İki memleketde Avrupa bankalarının ve zanaat tezgâhlarının avucu içindedir; bu âlem, her iki memleketin bilhassa Rusya'nın inkişaf hareketlerinde Asya müstemlekeleri için tehlike görür; her iki memleketinde de bu âlem sarayın dostu ve müttefiki halkın düşmanıdır; banker ve fabrikacı Türkiye'de haliyeden daha koyu Müslüman, Rusya'da köy papazından daha mutaassıp hıristiyandır; istismar birinde yeşil sarıklı, birinde altın haçlıdır. § Bir fark var; Eski Rusya'da darülfünun, edebiyat ve sanat donuk kopyeler değil, canlı kültür ocakları idi. Eski Türkiye'de darülfünun, edebiyat ve sanat şuursuzdu. Eski Rusya saray için olduğu kadar, ihtilal için de sayısız münevver yetiştirmiştir. Rus ihtilal gençliği, yıkılmış müesseseler yerine yeni bir nizam kurmak için hazırlanmıştır. Rusya'nın büyük şehirlerinde ilim, fen ve sanat ocakları her garp memleketi ile kıyas edebilecek kadar zengin addolunabilir. Türk ihtilali bu malzemeyi mahdut ve fakir buldu." [Atay] Falih Rıfki, *Yeni Rusya*, 9.

akin to their Western counterparts. In contrast, the Turkish Revolution found that such material was wanting. Falih Rıfki deemed that the “enlightened” segment of society was “poor and limited” compared to Russia’s vibrant intellectual landscape (universities, literary, and artistic fields). Falih Rıfki’s concerns were about the role of intellectual actors and institutions central to the norm-making and policy-making processes and the cultural productions allowed to sustain a regime. In other words, establishing a “cultural hegemony” after reversing an old regime.

Falih Rıfki was a prominent CHP member. The weaknesses, the poverty, and the insufficiencies of the “enlightened” classes became a talking point in political controversies about the revolution and “reactions” against it within the party. During the third CHP Congress organized in May 1931, hence roughly four months before the foundation of the People’s Preacher’s Organization, the deputy of Kütahya, Alâeddin [Tiritoglu], talked about the *münevvers* while discussing the requirements to enroll new party members in the provinces. Alâeddin Bey provoked a debate by opposing the enrollment of “all Turkish citizens with political rights” to the party. He argued that for “non-revolutionary political parties which only aim at obtaining power,” this inclusive (or catch-all) membership policy was good. However, for “revolutionary parties which aim at implementing the ideology that emerged from the revolution,” the situation was different.<sup>8</sup> In Turkey, since the “revolution was still backward,” it was not convenable to enroll potential “Sheikh Mehments” to a party with “its Kubilays” and hence not take the risk of introducing reactionary agents among those ready to become the martyrs of the defense of the new regime.<sup>9</sup> The “backwardness” of the revolution concerned the “*münevver*.”

---

<sup>8</sup> “Evvelâ nizamnamemizin yedinci maddesile siyasi haklara malik her Türk, Fırkamızın azası olabilir. Vakiâ inkılâpçı olmıyan ve nihayet bütün emeli mevkii iktidara gelmekten ibaret olan fırkadalarda bu usul çok güzeldir. Fakat Fırkamız herşeyden evvel inkılâpçı ve inkılâbın doğurduğu ideolojiyi, mefkûreyi memlekette tatbik etmeğe azmetmiş bir fırkadır.” *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, 229.

<sup>9</sup> “Arkadaşlar, sinesinde daha dün bir Kubilây yaşatan Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkası hukuku siyasiyesi vardır diye içinde bir Şeyh Mehmet yaşatamaz. (...) Ve hepimiz biliyoruz ki inkılâp çok geridir.” *Ibid.*, 230.

My friends! I am a friend of yours who comes from the village... I saw all this very clearly, and I know. When I was talking about the fez, niqab, and the lattice earlier, I stated that in all sincerity. I stated it clearly and with all sincerity. Democracy is a good idea for a country. It is an ideal for all of us. Our party goes in that direction. We lack *münevvers* in this country. According to what I see in my hometown, the youth is divided in two. – Let me be more precise: in my principle, this country has two types of *münevvers*. First are the ones in big cities. These – unfortunately, as I will present – went to France. Those who went to France are French from head to toe. Those who went to Germany, are Germans, to the United States, Americans. My friends, the second type are the *münevvers* in small cities. They live in second-class cities throughout Anatolia. Please do not assume that I want to leave the country’s future in their hands. [Because] they are Arabs. They are under the influence of Arabic culture. They do not shave their beards. They do not wear jackets or vests. All in all, their mentalities are Arabic. But the youth that our revolution will form is completely different. Today, we want a youth from the Turkish peasantry’s bosom. This is my point of view. As a result, I reject the protest against my words.<sup>10</sup>

In this lengthy and fervent talk, “*münevver*” meant “enlightened” with the light of the “revolution.” The “enlightenment” (*münevver-ness, münevverlik*) in Alâaddin Bey’s speech was rather political. It concerned the assimilation of the revolutionary tenets. This political “enlightenment” was measured by their clothing, reflecting the assimilation of “ideological principles.” The “shortage of *münevvers*” meant the scarcity of people persuaded by the cause. Kubilay, the latest victim of a reactionary attack, a young teacher serving in Menemen, represented dedicated republican educators and soldiers working for the preservation of the new regime.

This depiction of *münevver* contrasted with another one reserved for educated elites, more similar to “intellectuals.” The tension between Kubilay as a *münevver* citizen and the discourse

---

<sup>10</sup> “İhtilâl prensipleri, memlekette, açık konuşalım arkadaşlar! Birbirimizi aldatmağa lüzum yoktur. Refik Şevket Beyefendi bendenizi bu kürsüde protesto ettiler, arkadaşlar, köyden gelen bir arkadaşınızım, Hepsini açıkça gördüm ve biliyorum, demin fes, peçe ve çarşaf dediğim zaman samimiyetten söyledim. Açık ve samimi olarak söyledim. Demokrasi, memleket için gayet güzel fikirlerdir. Hepimizce ideal budur. Fırkamız buna doğru gidiyor. Memlekette münevver azdır. Benim memleketimde gördüğüme göre gençlik iki kısımdır. Daha açık konuşalım; benim prensipimce memlekette iki kısım münevver vardır. Birisi büyük şehirlerdeki münevverlerdir. Bunlar maalesef arzedeceğim— Fransaya gitmiştir. Fransaya giden saçından tırnağına kadar Fransızdır. Almanyaya giden Almandır. Amerikaya giden Amerikandır. Arkadaşlar, ikinci kısım küçük şehirlerdeki münevverlerdir. Bunlar Anadolunun ikinci kısım şehirlerinde bulunur. Zannetmeyin ki memleketin atisini bunların eline mi bırakalım demek istiyorum. Bunlar da Araptır. Bunlar arap kültürü altında kalmışlardır. Bunlar da sakal kestirmiyor. Ceket, yelek giymiyor; hulâsa tamamen arap zihniyeti güdüyorlar. Binaenaleyh ihtilâlin yetiştireceği gençlik bambaşka bir gençliktir. Bugün biz türk köylüsünün içinden çıkmış bir gençlik istiyoruz. Benim noktai nazarım budur. Binaenaleyh protestoyu kabul etmiyorum.” Alâaddin Bey [Tiritöğlü], deputy of Kütahya, *ibid.*, 236.

about Western-educated (‘cosmopolites’) and locally educated (‘provincials’) intellectuals was a point of tension in the issue. “Cosmopolite” (*kozmpolit*) was a recurrent term that was derogatorily used to talk about super-Westernized intellectual elites. Alâeddin Bey was critical of both groups. The ‘cosmopolites’ were criticized for being too French, German, or American, hence not conforming with the “ideology” of the party. The ‘provincials’ were too tightly devoted to traditional values because of the religious character of their education in Qur’anic schools (*mektep*), theological colleges (*medrese*), or other instances of “self-learning” such as in “mosques, Sufi convents, offices of public administration, libraries, and private mansions of great scholars.”<sup>11</sup> Both groups were accused of their distance from popular culture (the “values of the peasantry”). The revolution claimed to represent this culture. Interestingly, compared to the eulogy by Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz referred to at the beginning of this chapter, “self-learning” did not have a necessarily positive meaning: it all came down to the question of what the purpose of this learning was.

Against this background, one might argue that “*münevver*” has two distinct and unrelated meanings. The first concerns the intellectual and cultural producers, also called “high” and “urban” intellectuals.<sup>12</sup> The second would be the “humbler intelligentsia as popularizers of existing knowledge” as opposed to the producers. Hence the “low,” “rural,” or, in the highly centralized Turkish-Anatolian context, “provincial” intellectuals.<sup>13</sup> Yet, both Falih Rıfki’s observation in *New Russia* and Alâeddin Bey’s ranting about the scarcity of “*münevver*” in post-revolutionary Anatolia did not distinguish between high and low intellectuals. They rather talked about “*münevver*” in general. As a result, it is difficult to divide these two types of “*münevver*” into definite and comparable types. If there are two strands of “*münevver*,” these two strands only gain meaning in relation to the whole. And the People’s Preachers were one side of the whole.

The founding document of the People’s Houses was given fifteen days after the opening of the People’s Houses for the constitution of its branches. Each People’s House had to constitute

---

<sup>11</sup> Concerning spaces of self-learning common to the late Ottoman intellectual elites, see Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l’Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps*, 52.

<sup>12</sup> Alessandro Olsaretti, “Beyond Class: The Many Facets of Gramsci’s Theory of Intellectuals,” *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 4 (2014): 367.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

nine branches, namely, “Language, Literature, and History,” “Fine Arts,” “Theater,” “Sports,” “Social Assistance,” “Popular Schools and Courses,” “Library and Publications,” “Villagers,” and “Museums and Exhibitions.”<sup>14</sup> Branch committees had to be formed within two weeks by prioritizing certain professions that were considered to be among the “elements of enlightened (*münevver*) thought.”

There should be no interruption in registering members to the People’s Houses. In this context, citizens (scholars, men of letters, teachers, civil servants, doctors, lawyers, artists, members of fine arts, scientists, sportsmen, young people, those who know the state and needs of the country, and all other elements of enlightened (*münevver*) thought... and so on) who will increase and strengthen the work of the People’s Houses should be encouraged with appropriate and gentle explanations in terms of the service of the People’s Houses to the country. This point should not be misunderstood: All citizens, regardless of their education and level of knowledge, are equally valuable sons and daughters of the country from the point of view of the People’s Houses. The People’s Houses should try to gather them all under its roof. The People’s House is truly the home of the people. This spirit must always prevail.<sup>15</sup>

When we examine the occupations listed here, we notice that the lines of work that require higher levels of education prevailed; the list starts with the producers of knowledge like “scholars” (*alim*) and “scientists” (*fen adamları*). The circular also calls for the participation of intellectual and cultural producers, such as “men and women of letters” (*edipler*) and “artists and members of fine arts” (*sanatkâlar ve güzel sanat unsurları*). It also features the mediators and transmitters of knowledge, such as “teachers” (*muallim*). These occupations are typical for “intellectuals” and “intellectual elites,” understood as “cultural producers” or those “who intervene in the political sphere as cultural producers.”<sup>16</sup> Still, “civil servants, doctors, lawyers,

---

<sup>14</sup> C.H.F. *Halkevleri Talimatnamesi*, 10-21.

<sup>15</sup> “Yeni açılan Halkevlerinde şube komitelerini intihap üzere aza kaydı için bir hafta on beş gün... gibi bir mühlet verilmiştir. Bu mühlet geçtikten sonra intihap yapılmakla beraber bu intihaptan sonra dahi inkıtasız olarak şubelere aza kaydına devam etmek icap eder. Yalnız yeni kaydolunan aza tabiatıyla ve ancak gelecek senenin intihaplarına iştirak edebilirler. Halkevlerine aza kaydı için hiç fasıla verilmemelidir. Bu meyanda Halkevlerinin çalışma faaliyetini arttıracak ve kuvvetlendirecek vatandaşlara (âlimler, edipler, muallimler, memurlar, doktorlar, avukatlar, sanatkârlar, güzel sanat mensupları, fen adamları sporcu gençler, memleketin halini ve ihtiyacını bilenler ve alelumum münevver fikir unsurları... ve saire) Halkevlerinin memlekete yapacağı hizmet noktasından münasip ve yumuşak izahlarla teşvik olunmalıdır. Bu noktanın da yanlış anlaşılması lâzımdır: Tahsili, bilgi seviyesi ne olursa olsun bütün vatandaşlar Halkevi telâkkisi noktasından aynı derecede kıymetli memleket evlatlarıdır. Halkevleri bunların hepsini kendi çatısı altında toplamağa çalışmalıdır. Halkevi hakikaten halkın evidir. Bu ruh daima hâkim olmalıdır.” Circular from the CHP General Secretary, Ankara, 3 March 1932, published in: *ibid.*, 27-28.

<sup>16</sup> Gisèle Sapiro, “Modèles d’intervention politique des intellectuels,” 9. See also Charles Kurzman and Lynn Owens, “The Sociology of Intellectuals,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28, no. 1 (2002): 63.

athletes, and young people” followed these groups. Hence, the professional groups included in the “elements of enlightened thought” (*münevver fikir unsurları*) encompassed a group larger than those generally associated with “intellectuals.”

The circular revealed how the party leadership privileged certain professions based on educational level and knowledge, but its attention did not draw an exclusionary framework. These groups were the first targets. There was an implicit relationship between the level of education, the resulting professions, and understanding “the circumstances of the country” (*memleketin halini*). Nevertheless, one could be included in the group if one understood and embraced the party’s values regarding the transition from an empire to a nation-state, intensified reform and social change, a post-war and post-genocidal economy and society, and the resulting “needs of the country.”

These categorizations and hierarchizations between professions and occupations persisted in the minutes of the May 1931 party congress, in the party correspondence concerning the foundation of the People’s Preachers Organization and the People’s Houses. They were also maintained in later correspondence about their operations. In 1933, many speeches were delivered both in Turkey and outside of Turkey for the decennial of the republic. The reports of these speeches highlighted how the party members evaluated the success or failure of their activities by observing the composition of their audience. A retired general delivered a lecture during a diplomatic ceremony for the republic’s tenth anniversary in Plovdiv (Bulgaria). In his report, the general claimed that “a crowd composed of many officers, reserve officers, and enlightened men and women” participated in the ceremony.<sup>17</sup> In 1936, a CHP deputy sent a report about the success of his “Independence and Revolution” lecture and stated that the “lecture room was filled with the *enlightened* class, merchants, shopkeepers, and a group of peasants.”<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> “Konferansta birçok zabitan, ihtiyat zabitleri, münevver kadın ve erkekten mürekkep kalabalık bir halk hazır bulunmuştur.” Report on the decennial of the republic organized in Plovdiv (Bulgaria), no signature, 1933, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/221-488-17.

<sup>18</sup> “Konferans esnasında salon şehrin münevver tabakalarıyla Tüccar, Esnaf ve bir takım köylülerle kâmilten dolmuş ve bir çok kimseler ayakta kalmıştır.” From the CHP provincial administrative committee to the CHP General Secretary, Erzurum, 21 March 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-895-2.

Later correspondence of the CHP followed the same line. *Münevver* kept being used both as an adjective and a noun. Reports produced in Izmir on the performance of the provincial party organization in 1935 described the “party” and the “People’s Houses” as “enlightened individuals” (*münevver zatlar*).<sup>19</sup> Following this logic, Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz and other preachers were “intellectuals” of the party by their active involvement in enlightened institutions. Generally speaking, the noun identified someone who actively contributed to the political mission embraced by the Party, while the adjective identified a marker of social distinction. However, the picture was more complex because the latter ones - for instance, “enlightened men and women” - also had to be integrated into the Party’s mission. Their role was to disseminate this mission as capillaries reaching down to the provincial and vernacular level, whereas the *münevver* tout-court was like a beating heart at the center of the Party’s structure, appearing in national newspapers and printing houses.

As mentioned earlier, *münevver* came from Arabic etymology. From 1928 to 1945, various measures taken to “reform” (*ıslah*) or “purify” (*tasfiye*) the Turkish Language from “foreign” elements were taken. These measures were called the “Language Revolution” (*Dil İnkılabı*), starting from the Linguistic Congress organized between 26 September and 4 October 1932. These reforms, including the change in the alphabet and the purification of vocabulary, were referred to as “Turkish Language Reform.”<sup>20</sup> The Language Reform impacted and diversified the words used to talk about intellectual elites, including producers and transmitters. The “teachers” (*muallim*) became “öğretmen,” “writers” (*muharrir*) became “yazar,” and “*münevver*” became “*aydın*.” The substitute words were not always successful, and some were abandoned after a while. For instance, the word “deputy” (*mebus*) was replaced by “*saylav*,” yet this word was even abandoned by the party leadership in the 1940s.

Concerning *münevver*, its pure Turkish substitute, “*aydın*,” and the rarer loan word from French, “*entelektüel*,” the situation was different. The three words remained in the vocabulary. The sources referred to them interchangeably. The People’s Houses brochure, published in

---

<sup>19</sup> “Parti ve halkevi kurulları münevver zatlardır. Bu sayede halkın kültürel, vergil, sosyal ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak mühim adımlar atılmış ve muvaffakiyet elde edilmiştir.” Saadettin Epikmen, Report on Izmir for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>20</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, “Gouverner par les mots: une histoire linguistique de la Turquie nationaliste,” 8-13.

1935, talked about the People's Houses Popular School and Courses branch as the result of the "Atatürk intellectuals" (*Atatürk aydınları*). Following the same reform, the word "tenvir" was replaced by "aydınlatmak" from the same 'pure Turkish' root." In 1945, while celebrating the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the People's Houses, Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu talked about the national and patriotic duties for the "aydın."

All People's Houses and their branches are directed towards one objective. This objective is to root the Turkish revolution in broad popular life and ensure national unity [...]. Before this objective, all our *aydın*s, all our citizens working for the state, should commit to this work. I repeat so that all our *aydın*s hear me out: We are all indebted to this homeland (*vatan*) and this nation to work in the People's Houses and to be beneficial to others in some way.<sup>21</sup>

The connotations of these two words changed over time. According to Doğan Gürpınar, opting for the word from Arabic etymology signified alignment with opposition to the CHP. Still, there was no palpable difference between these two words in the sources from the 1930s and 1940s. Both *münevver* and *aydın* were used to refer to educated elites, intellectual producers, transmitters, and a larger group of state servants whose distinguishing characteristic was their literacy, diplomas, and superior position in local social hierarchies. This is how a brochure from 1935 exhorted them:

This time, the hand of the Republican regime and the efforts of Atatürk's intellectuals must take upon themselves the task of bringing literacy and learning, which blind, ungrateful, and crippled regimes have restricted and withheld, to the feet of the people. It should offer to the people in abundance, let them drink it to the fullest, and arouse in them the pleasure of drinking this nectar of civilization.<sup>22</sup>

This formula reproduced the well-known logic of Ziya Gökalp in his distinction between the elites and the rest of the population explored in the first chapter.

The intellectuals and thinkers of a nation are called the elites of that nation. The elites have a high education and upbringing and are separated from the people by their education

---

<sup>21</sup> "Arkadaşlar: Halkevleri bütün kollarile, bir tek amaca yönelmişlerdir: Bu amaç da kültür yolundan her zaman milli değerlerimizi işlemek, Türk devrimini geniş halk hayatı içinde kökleştirmek, milli birliği sağlamaktır. Böyle bir amaç karşısında bütün aydınlarımız, devlet hizmetinde yer alan bütün yurttaşlarımızın kendilerini bu işe vermeleri gerektir. Bütün aydınlarımızın beni duymaları için tekrar ediyorum: Hepimiz halkevinin içinde çalışmağa, birer suretle başkalarına faydalı olmağa, bu vatan için, bu millet için borçluyuz." Speech of Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu for the 13th anniversary of the People's Houses, 1945, BCA BÖKM 30-10-0-0/11-64-10.

<sup>22</sup> Kör, nankör, sakat rejimlerin kısıdığı ve esirgediği okuma yazma bilip öğrenmeyi bu defa Cumhuriyet rejiminin eli, Atatürk aydınlarının emeği, halkın ayağına kadar götürmek, halka bol bol, kandıra kandıra sunmak, bu medeniyet nektarını içmenin zevkini onda uyandırmak ödevini üzerine almalıdır. *Halkevleri Broşürü*, 94.



and upbringing. These are the ones who should go towards the people. Why should the elites go towards the people? Some people answer this question: “The elites should go to the people to bring culture to the people.”<sup>23</sup>

Gökalp’s ways of talking about *münevver* did not distinguish between them and the “elites,” hence used them synonymously. In this context, it is pertinent to translate “*münevvers*” as “intellectuals.”<sup>24</sup> Given the context of political responsabilization, we can also translate it as “enlightened enlighteners.”<sup>25</sup> The role of the “intellectuals” was to learn the national culture (*hars*) from the people and transfer them to (international) civilization (*medeniyet*).

The People’s Houses brochure followed the same logic and compared the Ottoman intellectuals with that of Atatürk’s generation” (*Atatürk neslinin münevveri*). The new generation of elites were on Atatürk’s side as opposed to the Ottoman ones, who betrayed the peasantry by condescending their language and values.<sup>26</sup> The term “intellectuals of the revolution” (*inkılap münevverleri*) was also used in the brochure of the People’s Houses, carrying a similar meaning to the “Atatürk’s intellectuals.”<sup>27</sup>

Through the People’s Houses, the Party aimed to educate the people and broaden the ranks of the intellectual elites working for its agenda. One of the main objectives was publications that would “introduce the villages to the intellectual elites.”<sup>28</sup> The latter was meant to learn from the “common folk” (*halk*). In turn, the common folk had to learn about “civilization” (*medeniyet*) from the intellectual elites. In contrast, the latter had to learn national culture from

---

<sup>23</sup> “Bir milletin münevverlerine, mütefekkirlerine, o milletin (güzideleri) adı verilir. Güzideler yüksek bi tahsil ve terbiye görmüş olmakla halktan ayrılmış olanlardır. İşte halka do.ru gitmesi lazım gelenler bunlardır. Güzideler halka doğru niçin gidecekler? Bu suale bazıları şöyle cevap veriyor: Güzideler halka hars götürmek için gitmelidirler.” Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, 43.

<sup>24</sup> Margrit Pernau, “Provincializing Concepts: The Language of Transnational History,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36, no. 3 (2016): 483-99.

<sup>25</sup> Esin Ertürk Asar, “Poor Enlighteners: Pedagogy, Politics and Elementary School Teachers in the Early Republican Era.”

<sup>26</sup> “Halkın ve köylünün dışından tırnağından okutarak memleketine ve evine yenilik ve güzellik getirsin diye yetiştirmesine sebep olduğu Osmanlı münevveri ilk işe onun dilini unutmakla, onun kıymetini hakir görmekte, ondan ırfan heyecanını nez’etmekle işe başlamışken, Atatürk neslinin münevverleri, Atatürk’ün safında, çocukluğunun ve gençliğinin en aziz ve değerli yıllarında sonsuz ve girif gayretlerle öğrenmiş oldukları eski yazıyı, eski üslubu eski ifadeyi, eski ilmi bir kenara bırakıyorlar, halka beraber halkla bir rahlede yazılarına, üslup ve ifadelerine yeni bir cıyadet ve sarahat, yeni bir selabet ve selamet vermek feragatini ve şuurunu gösteriyorlardı.” *Halkevleri Broşürü*, 95.

<sup>27</sup> “Fakat muhakkakki dahi kudsi ve aziz olan bu köy ziyaretleri her Türk okumuşunun, her inkılâp münevverinin boynuna borçtur.” *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>28</sup> “Köyü münevvere tanıtacak neşriyat” *ibid.*, 127.

the former. Thus, the People's Houses aimed to understand better the two poles of society. According to this logic, the "common folk" (*halk*) or "peasantry" was seen as the true owners of the country.<sup>29</sup> However, they disliked and distrusted the intellectual elites. In other words, the peasantry viewed them as "aliens" (*yaban*). This specific passage alludes to the famous novel by Yakup Kadri, published in 1932.

The more time passes, the more I understand. The Turkish *entelektüel*, the Turkish *aydın*, is a strange loner in this vast and desolate world called the Turkish country. A hermit? No. I should say a peculiar creature. Imagine a person to whom it is unclear to which race or species he belongs. As he moves toward the bottom of the country, and he considers his homeland, he feels he is moving away from his roots. Even if he doesn't feel it, the emptiness, the cold and repulsive air around him reminds him constantly that he is an aberration, a strange plant uprooted from his own soil. § I don't know if there is the same deep gulf between the peasants of every country and the literate class (*okumuş yazmış zümre*)! But the difference between an educated Istanbul boy (*okumuş bir İstanbul çocuğu*) and an Anatolian peasant is greater than the difference between an Englishman from London and an Indian from Punjab.<sup>30</sup>

*Yaban* narrates the journey of a disabled reserve officer who seeks shelter in a village in central Anatolia during the final stages of World War I until the Turkish "War of Independence" reaches a significant military triumph. The protagonist in the book is Ahmet Celal, an educated resident of Istanbul who encounters the Turkish rural population for the first time during his stay in a central Anatolian town near the Porsuk River. As the story unfolds, Ahmet Celal's attitude towards the peasantry changes from disdain for their perceived lack of cleanliness, ignorance, and national apathy to questioning the "intellectuals" (*entelektüel*) or the "intellectual elites" (*aydın*) in Turkey for their disconnection from the authentic Turkish folk. In 1932, when it was first published, *Yaban* was widely acclaimed as a literary masterpiece. Renowned writers and critics praised this timely work as the "first original

---

<sup>29</sup> "Münevverin köylüyü memleketin sahibi tanınması, köylünün artık münev vere (*yaban*) diye bakmaması yolunda sadece ferdi teşebbüsler veya resmî tedbirler halinde değil de içten gelen, milletçe duyulan ve bütün gençliğe mal olan, her Türk tarafından benimsenip yürütülen tedbirler halinde de vamlı ve şuurlu bir faaliyet, gün geçtikçe göğsümüzü kabartacak bir nizam ve ahenge kavuşmaktadır." *Halkevleri Broşürü*, 128.

<sup>30</sup> "Gün geçtikçe daha iyi anlıyorum. Türk entelektüeli, Türk aydını, Türk ülkesi denilen bu engin ve ıssız dünya içinde bir garip yalnız kişidir. Bir münzevi mi? Hayır; bir acaip yaratık demeliyim. Öyle ya bir insan tasavvur edin ki hangi ırktan, hangi cinsten olduğu belli değildir. Kendi vatanı addettiği memleketin dibine doğru ilerledikçe kendi kökünden uzaklaştığını hissediyor. Hissetmese bile etrafında olan boşluk, soğuk ve itici hava, ona her an kendi toprağından sökülmiş bir aykırı, bir acaip nebat olduğunu bildiriyor. § Her memleketin köylüsüyle okumuş yazmış zümresi arasında, aynı derin uçurum var mıdır, bilmiyorum! Fakat okumuş bir İstanbul çocuğu ile bir Anadolu köylüsü arasındaki fark bir Londra İngilize bir Pencaplı Hintli arasındaki farktan daha büyüktür." Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban*, 36.

Turkish novel” that would impress “every progressive Turkish intellectual.”<sup>31</sup> Reşat Nuri [Güntekin], who was known for a successful novel (*Çalılıkuşu*, “The Wren”) with a similar theme of the encounter between the educated Istanbul elite and the Anatolian peasantry, also reviewed Yakup Kadri’s *Yaban*.

This young officer takes charge of a duty that every enlightened (*tenevvür etmiş*) Turk wants to fulfill yet most frequently fails to perform. Indeed, there is hardly a Turk who has not realized that this duty is the most sacred of all duties towards our country; but most of them have wandered about it for years as an impossible dream.<sup>32</sup>

Both the citation from *Yaban* and the subsequent book review published on *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (Sovereignty of the Nation) pointed at an important sociopolitical concept and issue in the first decade of the Turkish republic: the dynamics between educated and urban enlightened elites and intellectuals and the rest of society.<sup>33</sup> Both novels criticized the backwardness and indifference of the Anatolian peasantry and the corruption and apathy of the central and provincial elites.<sup>34</sup> The author of the novel was Yakup Kadri [Karaosmanoğlu] (1889-1974), a renowned writer and politician of the late Ottoman Empire and early republican Turkey. Yakup Kadri’s political commitments and literary inclinations evolved throughout the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), the First World War, which he observed as a journalist, and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1923.<sup>35</sup> While formerly a supporter of an “art for art’s sake” literary

---

<sup>31</sup> “Yaban bizce ilk orijinal Türk romanıdır. (...) Yaban’ı okuyan her ileri Türk münevveri de: İşte bir roman! diyecektir.” Vedat Nedim Tör, “İşte Bir Roman: Yaban,” *Kadro*, April, 1933, 49.

<sup>32</sup> “Genç zabıt tenevvür etmiş her Türk’ün ifa eylemek istediği ve ekseriya edemediği bir vazifeyi deruhte etmiş bulunuyor. Filhakika bu vazifenin memleketimize karşı görülecek vazifelerin en kudsisi olduğunu anlamamış hemen hiçbir Türk yoktur; fakat en çoğu bunu, tahakkuku imkânsız bir hayal gibi senelerce sayıklamıştır.” This citation is taken from an unsigned postface citing different reviews published about *Yaban* immediately after its publication in 1932. See Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban*, ed. Atilla Özkırmı (İstanbul: İletişim, 1990), 288.

<sup>33</sup> Literary scholarship underlined the centrality of this matter by studying the cultural artifacts of the late Ottoman and early republican times. Sibel Erol noted how “the figure of an intellectual” and the dichotomy of “intellectual vs. the people” was crucial for the “nation’s narration” in Yakup Kadri’s successive novels. Sibel Erol, “The Image of the Intellectual in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu’s Works,” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 16, no. 1 (1992): 4-5. Nurdan Gürbilek showed the transitions from the late Ottoman to the early republican era concerning the image of the educated elites. See: Nurdan Gürbilek, “Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 2/3 (2003).

<sup>34</sup> Abir showed how Reşat Nuri modified the content and language of his famous novel for its 1937 edition, underlining the evolution of the main character and the political outcome concerning the indifference and corruption of provincial elites and administrators. Nihan Abir, “Çalılıkuşu’nun Hikayesi” (Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Sibel Erol, “The Image of the Intellectual in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu’s Works,” 14-17.

movement, Yakup Kadri became a proponent of “national literature” after the war. Following the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey in October 1923, he became a deputy for the People’s Party (*Halk Fırkası*) from the southeastern province of Mardin.<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, like his novel’s protagonist, Kadri had no personal ties to this area, but being a *yaban* did not prevent members of the elite like him from ensuring a prestigious – and well-remunerated – tenure, provided that this “strangeness” be compensated with fervent nationalism. During the Republic’s formative years, he played a considerable role in policymaking, especially in cultural reforms aimed at nationalizing Anatolian society.<sup>37</sup> His exclamation concerning the abyss between the “enlightened” Istanbul elites and the Anatolian peasantry echoed the social representations and political claims of the early republican leadership he was a part of.

The term *münevver*, or its pure Turkish equivalent, “*aydın*,” which originated in the late Ottoman Empire, played a central role in shaping the early Republican educational mission and became a social category. As evidenced by the quote from Yakup Kadri, the gap between the intellectual elites and the rest of the population became a public concern, sparking extensive discussions beyond party correspondence and documentation and extending into the realms of literature and journalism. This social category implied responsibilities, duties, and obligations. But what about the People’s Preachers and other People’s House members who have taken on the responsibilities assigned to the intellectual elites? Did they also consider their mission to enlighten people with the light of the revolution? The following section will analyze lecture reports and speeches of the People’s Preachers to investigate if the People’s Preachers appropriated this category about themselves.

---

<sup>36</sup> The moment of its foundation the Party was called “People’s Party” (*Halk Fırkası*), after the foundation of the liberal opposition party, the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), the party leadership changed its name to the *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası* (Republican People’s Party), the party’s name was modified again following the Language Reform (1932) replacing *fırka* from Arabic root with *parti* from Latin root. See: Erik-Jan Zürcher, “The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?,” §16.

<sup>37</sup> Yakup Kadri was a member of the Language Commission (*Dil Encümeni*) founded in 1928 with the aim of adopting the Latin alphabet. He was also one of the founders of the Society for the Study of Turkish (*Türk Dili Tetkik Cemiyeti*) in 1932. Geoffrey L. Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

## 5.2. Münevvers in Republican Sermons

---

To determine whether the People’s Preachers considered themselves *münevver*, one should also consider if People’s Preachers discussed the concept at all. *Münevver* was a recurring concept in the writings of the People’s Preachers, especially when addressing topics like People’s Education (*Halk Terbiyesi*) or the cultural reforms of the early republican era, such as Language Reform. The efforts to establish a national literary canon were closely linked to the standardization of the official language. Consequently, the People’s Preachers also discussed the concept of *münevver* in their lectures on language and literature. They also re-employed the vocabulary that the party leadership used to discuss their pedagogic mission (Chapter 3): enlightening, suggesting, and setting people on the right path (*tenvir, telkin, irşad*).

Kâzım Özcan, a teacher from Tokat, wrote that he was sent to villages to “enlighten our peasant citizens” and “show them the right path” (*tenvir ve irşad*).<sup>38</sup> Kemal Engin Bara summarized his services to the party as “lectures on oratory,” “showing the people on the right path” (*irşad*), and “delivering speeches in the name of the party.”<sup>39</sup> These ways of expressing themselves reveal that the people’s preachers have espoused the pedagogical role assigned to them. On rare occasions, People’s Preachers also delivered lectures on *münevvers* and their responsibilities. This section will analyze how the People’s Preachers discuss the concept of *münevver* and examine whether the party leadership’s rhetoric on *münevver* has influenced them.

The *münevvers* were mentioned while treating issues ranging from Language Reform to literary history, people’s education, local history, and the relationship between the nation and

---

<sup>38</sup> “Tokak vilayetinin Reşadiye kazasının Başçiftlik köyü okulunda 1925 yılından 1932 yılına kadar başöğretmenlik yaptım. Arzum üzerine 1932 yılında Tokat merkezine öğretmenlikle nakil edildim. Halen Tokat merkezinde öğretmenlik yapmaktayım. Tokat Halkevinin açıldığı 1932 yılından beri de bu teşkilâtın muhtelif kollarında ve hâlen Kütüphane komitesi heyetine üyeyim. Bundan başka Cumhuriyet Bayramlarında Halk Kürsülerinde, Partimizin umdeleriyle iç ve dış siyasetimiz hakkında verilen yüksek direktiflere göre köylü vatandaşlarımızı tenvir ve irşat için hitabet vazifesiyle köylere gönderildim ve iki yıldan beridir de Eşsiz Kahraman ATATÜRK’ün ihtifal günlerini, bu kahramana yakışır bir şekilde tebarüz ettirmek suretile, partimizin verdiği bu alandaki vazifeleri başarmış bulunuyorum. Bu hizmetlerime mukabil Vali ve Halkevi reisleri tarafından verilmiş teşekkürnamelerim de vardır.” Kâzım Özcan’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>39</sup> “Fırkadaki fa’aliyetim, Eminönü Halkevinde irşad ve hitabet dersleri, konferanslar, ve icab eden günlerde parti namına nutuklar vermekten ibarettir.” Kemal Emin Bara’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1420-1.

the army.<sup>40</sup> In the whole corpus of Language Day, the term “*münevver*” appeared around thirty times both in speech transcriptions and ceremonial reports. The archives of Language Day also used “*münevver*” both as an adjective and a noun. Starting with the following paragraph, I will translate “*münevver*” as “enlightened” when used as an adjective and retain the original term when used as a noun.

The Nazilli People’s House reported that the audience of the 1934 celebration was constituted of an “enlightened popular mass” (*münevver bir halk kitlesi*).<sup>41</sup> Ankara reported that the “enlightened youth of the country and the people” listened to the speeches delivered with great enthusiasm.<sup>42</sup> Aydın’s local newspaper referred to the reform as something that should “make each enlightened Turk swell with dignity.”<sup>43</sup> Those examples used “*münevver*” in its original meaning, “enlightened” with the light of education. This education should intersect with scholarly education, resulting in diplomas, but also contain the meaning of having political education, resulting in political sensibilities that align with the CHP.

One of the main issues discussed in the Language Day speeches was literature. The speakers criticized the pompous and convoluted language used by late Ottoman writers, novelists, and poets. *Münevver* was a key social category in the arguments about the benefits of the reform. Language Day speeches echoed top-down party documents dividing Turkish society between the *münevvers* and the *halk* (people). In this case, *münevver* meant something broader than the

---

<sup>40</sup> The *münevvers* were mentioned while talking about the Language Reform in Afyon, Kocaeli, Sivas, Mardin, Konya, Antalya, and Burdur. Source: Afyon: BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1166-93-1; Amasya, 1166-93-2; 1167-97-1; Kocaeli: 1169-105-2; Sivas: 1170-109-1; Trabzon: 1170-110-3. And speeches published in *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*. and *Konuşmalar: Broşür 2*, (Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, July 1941).titled Nafi Atuf Kansu, “Halk Terbiyesine Dair,” *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 9-15.; Abdülbakı Gölpinarlı, “Divan Edebiyatı”*Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 90-105.; An Officer, “Millet ve Ordu” in *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 52-65.; Kâzım Demir, “İzmir vilâyetinin eski coğrafya ve tarihine umumî bir bakış”*Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 80-89; İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, “Biz Türkler Nereden Geliyoruz, Nereye Gidiyoruz, Biz Neyiz?” *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 25-29.

<sup>41</sup> “Dil bayramının bu gece evimizin bahçesinde çok kalabalık ve *münevver* bir halk kütlesi hazır bulunduğu halde ilişik program mucibince geniş ölçüde kutlulanmış olduğunu bildirir ve bu vesile ile de en derin sevgi ve saygılarımızı sunarım efendim.” Report from Nazilli, 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/13-71-5.

<sup>42</sup> “Yurdun bütün *münevver* ve gençleri ve halk yapılan bu bayran tezahürlerine candan ve büyük bir imanla iştirak etmişler hatiplerin ve profesörlerin şairlerin ATATÜRK dili hakkında verdikleri izahlar, okudukları örnek şiirler halkın üzerinde geniş manada bir tesir oyandırmıştır.” Report on the celebration of Language Day, Ferit Celal Güven, 29 September 1936, Ankara, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1166-94-01.

<sup>43</sup> “Edebî Şef Atatürkün bütün esaslarını kendi eliyle hazırlıyarak teşkil ettiği ve Millî Şef İnönünün bimayesinde geniş ilerlemeler gösteren Türk dil kurumunun dokuz yıl gibi kısa bir zaman içinde başardığı işler her *münevver* Türkün göğsünü itibarla kabartacak kadar önemli ve kıymetlidir.” Report on the celebration of Language Day, 26 September 1941, Aydın, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1166-95-01.

literary field. The *münevver* represented the “lettered” and “literate” (*okur-yazar, okumuş*) segments of society, indicating access to an elementary level of education that enabled reading and writing. Like the press debates, Language Day orators envisioned the *münevver* as a coherent social group, often referring to them as a “class” (*zümre*) or an “estate” (*tabaka*), with a focus on their literary activities.

Much of the discussion on the *münevver*, understood as “literati,” centered on a fin-de-siècle literary movement that emerged in the Ottoman Empire. By criticizing the proponents of *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* (the New Literature) for their inaccessible literary language and alleged political apathy, Language Day speakers distinguished between the “Ottoman *münevvers*” and their republican counterparts.

When delving into the realm of late Ottoman *münevvers*, one cannot overlook the proponents of the “New Literature” movement who stood prominently at its forefront. This avant-garde literary wave surfaced during the late nineteenth century, revolving around the esteemed literary and intellectual journal *Servet-i Fünun* (Riches of Sciences).<sup>44</sup> The crystallization of this movement found its defining moment in the stance taken by Recaizâde Mahmut Ekrem, particularly regarding the construction of rhymes, which starkly diverged from widely accepted norms.<sup>45</sup> Far from having traditionalist inclinations, the New Literature movement pursued novelty and sought inspiration from the Parnassians in France. For this reason, it was disdained for excessive Westernization. It was often depicted as the culmination of a prolonged decay within the Ottoman intellectual elite, marking a departure from entrenched literary conventions.<sup>46</sup>

While the example of fin-de-siècle *münevvers* was recurrent, the depiction of the *münevvers* of the imperial realm was more or less timeless. The speakers often opposed the “Ottomans” to the “republicans.” They accused the former of priding themselves on their “knowledge” and

---

<sup>44</sup> Daniel Kolland, “Making and Universalizing New Time.”

<sup>45</sup> Kathleen R. F. Burrill, “A Nineteenth-Century Master of Turkish Literature: Notes on Recaizade Mahmut Ekrem (1847-1914) and His Literature Course,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3, no. 4 (1979): 127; Fevziye Abdullah, “Muallim Naci İle Recaizade Ekrem Arasındaki Münakaşalar ve Bu Münakaşaların Sebep Olduğu Edebi Hadiseler,” *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 10 (December 2010): 165. Cited by: Zeynep Ertugrul, “L’histoire littéraire en train de se faire. La littérature comme thématique dans les Fêtes de la langue (1934-1948),” 103.

<sup>46</sup> Zeynep Ertugrul, “L’histoire littéraire en train de se faire. La littérature comme thématique dans les Fêtes de la langue (1934-1948),” 101-09.

“enlightenment” but introducing foreign words that the common people could not understand or use. The speakers depicted the late Ottoman era as a time of widespread corruption. “Imams in mosques,” “professors at chairs,” “mothers appealing to their God,” and “village chiefs” all spoke different languages. They condemned the “rip-off *münevvers*” (*münevver müsveddesi*) for “showing off their knowledge and dexterity” by writing in a pompous language rich in foreign vocabulary but inaccessible to ordinary people.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned in the previous sections, the early republican leadership was ambiguous about the dichotomy between the *münevver* and the people. The party’s correspondence was rife with this dichotomy; however, the official discourse opposed it with unwavering force. In speeches delivered for the celebration of Language Day, the overreaching issue concerning the *münevvers* was often termed “duality” (*ikilik*) between the high and low registers of Ottoman Turkish.

“Many centuries ago, our grandfathers used to live a national (*kavmî*) life. After the emergence of Islam, they found themselves in this new lifestyle of Islamic civilizations’ religious, moral, juridical, linguistic, economic, and international traditions. Their national characteristics were influenced by the powerful pervasions of these traditions that could not touch the popular classes. While this situation persisted, the *münevver* class forgot the national being (*budunluk benliği*) and the nation’s name. The word “Turkish” became a condescending word used by the urban [class] who came out of science and knowledge centers, which are the madrasas in Islamic civilization, against the rural [population]. This group [of people], who did not cherish the Turkish language and looked down on the Turk, mixed the Arabic and Persian words they learned in the madrasas with pure Turkish while speaking and writing. In this way, the Turkish nation was divided into two [halves] that did not understand each other’s language. This forged, and the group language became increasingly processed using more foreign ingredients, and the number of pure Turkish words progressively decreased. The Turkish words in this contrived language became a drop in the bucket.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> “Beş vakit İmam minarede Başka bir Dille haygırır, Anamız tanrısına başka bir dille yakarır, kürsüde hoca başka bir dille bağırır, Hekim başka bir dille yazar, muhtar başka bir dille konuşur, münevver müsveddesi halktan ve Halk dilinden uzaklaşdıkça hüner ve marifet yapıyorum sanır.” Speech by C. Tarım, Director of the local publishing house, 24 August 1936, Kırşehir, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-105-01.

<sup>48</sup> “Bundan asırlarca önceki dedelerimiz kavmî bir yaşayıştan islam aconuna ayak atar atmaz kendilerini milletler arası bir yaşayış olan islam medeniyetinin dinî, ahlakî, hukukî ,bedîî lisanî ve iktisadî ananeleri ortasında buldular.ve kavmî özlükleri bu ananelerin sürekli fakat bütün halk tabakalarına tamamıyla inemiyen güçlü sinimleri altında kaldı. bu hal sürüp gidince münevver zümre budunluk benliğini ve adını unuttu. Türk sözü islam uygurluğunun bilim ve bilgi ocakları olan medreselerden yetişenlerce ve bunların çok sinimleri altında kalan şehirlilerce köylülere sarfedilen bir tahkır sözü oldu. Türkü aşağı gören bu takım Türkün diline de değer vermedi.tabiatıyla onu işleyip inkişaf ettirmeli, öz Türkcenin içine medreselerde öğrendiği arapça ce farsça sözleri



In the thirty occurrences in which the preachers mentioned *münevvers* in the corpus studied, the Ottoman diglossia was explained as follows. The Ottoman language was accessible to only a select elite.<sup>49</sup> The precise term used to describe this privileged elite was “class” (*tabaka* or *zümre*). The social tissue of the imperial order was binary. Society was divided into two: the *münevvers* and the popular classes. *Münevvers* were distinguished from the rest of society by their urban life and access to education. They were “literate” (*okur-yazar*) in both senses of the term.<sup>50</sup> They were the minority in an illiterate population, estimated at around 10% in 1923 and 20% in 1935.<sup>51</sup> But they were also immersed in the written culture with their access to centers of science and knowledge. As a result, they were “endowed with culture” (*kültür sahibi*).<sup>52</sup> By choosing to express themselves with the elite language instead of the popular language, the Ottoman “class of *münevvers*” was responsible for the duality and conflict (*ikilik* and *anlaşmazlık*) between the people and the elites.<sup>53</sup> One of the main objectives of the Language Reform was to end this duality and bring the *münevvers* and popular masses closer.

---

karıştırarak yaptığı düzme bir dil ile konuşmağa, yazmağa başladı. Bu suretle türk budunu bir birinin dilini anlamayan iki tabakaya ayrıldı. Bu düzme ve takım dili gittikçe işlendi. Ve işlenirken yabancı malzemeler kullandı ve bu dilde öz türkçe sözler azaldıkça azaldı. Son sonunda bu yapmacık dilin içinde türkçe sözler devele kulak gibi kaldı.” Nahit Bey, Language Day, 26 September 1934, Muğla, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-107-2.

<sup>49</sup> “Osmanlıca namını verdiğimiz bu dil, aynı zamanda arapça ve farsçanın karışık kaidelerini beraber öğrenmek mecburiyeti yüzünden memleketimizde cehalet artmıştı. Türk olduğumuz halde bir Türk şairinin sözlerini veyazlarını okuyup anlamak memlekette pek az kimselere nasip oluyordu.” Hilmi Dülek, Speech delivered for the Language Day, Kocaeli, August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-105-02.

<sup>50</sup> “Bunda da muvaffakiyetten sonradirki millet tam manasile istiklâl ve benliğini kazanmış sayılır birmilletin medeniyet, kültür tarih bakımından en büyük varlığı dilidir. dünyanın,tarihin en eski ve en büyük moilleti olan türk milletinin dilile dünya dilleri içinde aslılığını varlığını benliğiyle mühafaza etmiş biricik dil olarak gösterilebilir. bu ana aslı dil zaman olduki milli simasını hatta mahiyetini büsbütün değiştirecek bir şekil aldı hepimiz biliyoruzki münevver tabaka dediğimiz okur yazar zümre ile yabancı tesirleden ancak ihmal edilmek yüzünden kurunmuş kalan büyük halk külesinin dili arasında yabancı iki dil arasındaki fark kadar ayrılık görüldü. arapça acemca ile bir azda türkçenin karışmasından meydana gelen dile osmanlı adı da verildi. bu dil osmanlı vatani osmanlı milleti gibi yamalı bir bohçaya benziyordu. bu dil bizim kültür ve millî dilimiz olamazdı.” Abdullah Günel, Language Day, Trabzon, 27 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-110-03.

<sup>51</sup> Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, “Genel Nüfus Sayımı 20 İlkteşrin 1935: Recensement général de la population au 20 octobre 1935,” (Ankara: Mehmet İhsan Basımevi, 1937).

<sup>52</sup> “İşte, dil devrimimizin amaçlarından biri; konuşma dili ile yazı dili arasındaki ayrılığı elden geldiği kadar azaltmak,kitapları,gazete ve dergileri ve yazılan her şeyi her Türkün dil yönündanan anlayabileceği bir hâle getirmek,aydın dediğimiz kültür sahibi vatandaşların konuşma dili ile ö bir vatandaşların dilinde bir ayrılık ve karşılıklı anlaşmazlık bırakmamak,yabancı kelimeleri dilimizden atmak ve yerine öz türkçeleri koymak...” Lütfi Dağlar, Inspector of Primary Schools, Speech delivered for the Language Day, 24 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-97-1.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. Lütfi Dağlar, Language Day, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-97-1.

The duality between the language register of the *münevvers* and that of the “popular class” who “preserved the purity of their language”<sup>54</sup> was paralleled by the “written and oral languages.”<sup>55</sup> According to Abdullah Günel, who explained the Language Revolution in Trabzon, it was because of the *münevver* class who were “under foreign influence” that the gap between written and oral Turkish was as significant as the gap between “two foreign languages.” While the “*münevver* class” of the whole of Ottoman history was responsible for “neglecting” the Turkish language, ensuing the separation between the “people” and the “members of the government,”<sup>56</sup> pre-Ottoman *münevvers* such as Aşık Paşa (1272-1333) were exemplary nationalists because they employed a lower register in their poetry.

This critique of the figure of the timeless Ottoman *münevver* had to do with republican populism. “Populism” here should be divided into two. The first is the self-proclaimed “populism” (*halkçılık*) of the CHP during its formative years. “Populism” was one of the CHP’s six ideological pillars or its “essential characteristics” symbolized by the six arrows on its logo. It was defined by the party during its fourth congress as the principle of “absolute equality” between all the citizens of the Turkish republic independently of their “professional groups,” whether it be “farmers, handicraftsmen, laborers, industrialists, merchants, or civil servants.” It reduced economic inequalities between professional groups to a social “division of labor.” The principle of populism was used explicitly to avoid “class conflict” and “secure the social order.”<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> “Derleme neticesinde aşiretler ve köy halkı arasından toplanan kelimelerin eski ve öz Türk kelimelerinden farksız olduğu malumdur. Dilimizin safiyetini bozmıyan halk tabakası aynı zamanda her millî mes’elede temiz kaynaklı bir Pınardır. Bir zamanlar asırların yüklü olduğu istibdat ve taassubun onları irfandan mahrum bırakması, köylerine gelen bir mektubun bile okuyucusu bulunmaması bir hükümet sistemi için verilecek en rezilane bir nottur. Taha Toros, Language Day, Seyhan, 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-109-03.

<sup>55</sup> “İşte, dil devrimimizin amaçlarından biri; konuşma dili ile yazı dili arasındaki ayrılığı elden geldiği kadar azaltmak, kitapları, gazete ve dergileri ve yazılan her şeyi her Türkün dil yönündən anlayabileceği bir hâle getirmek, aydın dediğimiz kültür sahibi vatandaşların konuşma dili ile bir vatandaşların dilinde bir ayrılık ve karşılıklı anlaşmazlık bırakmamak, yabancı kelimeleri dilimizden atmak ve yerine öz türkçeleri koymak...” Lütfi Dağlar, Inspector of Primary Schools, Speech delivered for the Language Day, 24 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-97-1.

<sup>56</sup> “Fakat Aşık Paşa gibi düşünenler çok olmadığı gibi bu düşünce de çok sürmedi. Anadolu da Türkçe bir kenara atılmıştır: bu atılış halk dili ile hükümet mensubeyni arasında 600 senelik bir ayrılış doğurdu.” Kadri Özyalçın, Language Day, Sivas, 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-109-1.

<sup>57</sup> “The aims of our Party, with this principle, are to secure social order and solidarity instead of class conflict, and to establish harmony of interests.” *The Republican Party of the People, The Republican Party of the People Program: Accepted by the Forth Grand Congress of the Party*, May 1935, 76-2471, 76-5021, 6, T.B.M.M. Kütüphanesi, Ankara, Turkey.

While the emic definition of “populism” may appear distinct from scholarly accepted ones, both iterations are intricately linked. “Populism” can be delineated as a political discourse disseminated by a “self-appointed elite, which arrogates to itself alone the ability to interpret the ‘true’ needs of the people.”<sup>58</sup> The critique of the Ottoman *münevver*s complements the party’s populist discourse by challenging the legitimacy of previous elites, emphasizing their inability to grasp the ‘true’ needs of the people. The single-party regime sought to cultivate its own intellectual elites, aligning with its critiques of the late Ottoman intellectual establishment. Within this milieu, the People’s Preachers emerged as a new class of *münevver*.

Paradoxically, the mission of removing class differences between the *münevver* and the *halk* by increasing the people’s education level was also the *münevver*’s responsibility. In 1936, the Elazığ People’s House organized a lecture titled “The Modern State and the Role of the *Münevver*.” Since the “modern state was, in itself, an issue of knowledge,” “all individuals” living in such a state partook in “measuring the value of the benefits and prosperity” that stemmed from it. The “masses” and the “*münevver*s among the masses” bore this responsibility. However, the *münevver*s were especially accountable for participating in the “perfection of the state structure (*teşkilât*) and its laws.” The *münevver*s” should not neglect the task of teaching and raising the nation to a conscious and prosperous level, nourishing the modern state’s cultural institutions by populating its organization, and cultivating the masses.”<sup>59</sup> Concerning the responsibility of the *münevver* to educate the masses, this speech echoed the pedagogic mission formulated by the late Ottoman and early republican political elites ([Chapter 4](#)). The pedagogic mission of the “*münevver*” within the context of Elazığ was complex.

---

<sup>58</sup> Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*.

<sup>59</sup> “Görülüyorki modern devlet başlı başına bir ilim mes’ulesidir. Bu büyük ve önemli vasıfları taşıyan devleti kuran milletin hemen her ferdinin bunların ne demek olduğunu ve yaşamasında bunlardan gelen büyük faide ve saadetlerin kıymetini ölçecek ve anlayacak duruma gelmesi lazımdır. § Modern devlet içinde mes’uliyet hisselerinde yığın ve bu yığın içinde bilhassa münevverlerin iştiraki büyüktür. Modern devlet, yalnız teşkilatı ve kanunları mükemmel olması ile tam yolunda sayılamaz. Bilhassa zihniyetlerin, iş ve vazife hayatlarının da modern devlet mefhumlarına ve icaplarına göre düzenlenerek buna göre işlenmesi lâzımdır. Bu yolda münevverlerin çok heyecanlı ve ateşli faaliyetleri olmalıdır. Bir taraftan milleti yetiştirmek ve onu da modern devlet içinde mes’ud ve meş’ur bir seviyeye ulaştırmak için uğraşırken öte yandan modern devletin kültür kurumlarını besleyüp teşkilâtı doldurmak suretile yığına kültür yaymak ödevini ihmal etmemelidir.” C.A., “Modern Türk Devleti ve Münevverlere Düşen Ödevler,” *Altan*, 22 November, 1936.

First, it will do so within the scope of their own work, that is, within their official duties. While following their work, the people will see, understand, love, and believe in how the state's mechanism works. The second will be outside the *münevver*'s official duty and entirely the national ideal's duty. The best and most productive workplace is the People's Houses. The People's Houses have everything in every aspect for the nation's development.<sup>60</sup>

These *münevvers* had to fulfill their official responsibilities while working towards a national ideal beyond their "official" duties. The phrase "official duties" is significant as it may indicate that the speaker associated *münevvers* with those who have official duties, such as civil servants. This passage is reminiscent of Şükrü Saraçoğlu's 1945 speech, in which teachers and civil servants were called upon to work alongside the *münevvers*. The People's Houses were considered the most suitable places for gathering *münevver*, as they also "gathered all the resources for the development of the nation." Despite having all the necessary resources, the People's Houses failed to gather the *münevvers* who would work for them and help achieve their goals. According to the speaker, "we live in an era that requires the unity of the *münevvers*" in their efforts, convictions, and goals. Nevertheless, *münevvers* failed to comply with the requirements of their social position.

Many *münevvers*, from whose knowledge, energy, virtue and zeal we expect so much, seem to be avoiding their duties. It is the intellectuals who have the biggest share in the material and spiritual well-being of the country. No matter how difficult and heavy the tasks assigned to them, it is imperative that they do them, or at least struggle to do them. It is very difficult to tolerate those who forget and ignore this. We, the intellectuals and those who are very prosperous, never fulfill our duties towards the country and the ideal. Instead of being offended and resentful, it is necessary to have a sense of justice, reflect and take action. This is what we say to those who will be offended. Our duty is great; our responsibility is heavy, and our ideal is lofty. The Turkish nation has the right to demand its intellectuals to accomplish this task.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> "Birincisi kendi götüğü işlerin içinde yani resmi vazifeleri dahilinde yapacaktır. Halk işlerini takip ederken devletin iş mekanizmasının nasıl işlediğini görecek anlayacak, sevecek ve inanacaktır. İkincisi ise münevverin resmi ödevinin dışında ve tamamen ulusal idealinin ödevi olacaktır. Bunun için de en güzel ve en verimli çalışma yeri Halkevleridir. Hakevleri milletin kalkınması için her yönden her şeyi içinde toplamıştır." Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> "Bilgisinden, enerjisinden, fazilet ve gayretinden çok şeyler beklediğimiz bir çok münevver adeta bu ödevlerini yapmaktan kaçınıyor. Memleketin maddi ve manevi saadetinden en büyük hisseye mazhar olanlar münevverlerdir. Verilen işler ne kadar güç ve ağır da olsa yapmaları ve hiç olmazsa yapmaya savaşmaları şarttır. Bunu unutanlara ve aldırış etmeyenlere tahammül etmek pek güçtür. Biz münevver ve çok mes'ud geçinenler yurda ve ülkeye karşı vazifelerimizi asla yapmıyoruz. Buna gücenip darılmaktansa insaf edüp düşünmek ve harekete geçmek lazımdır. Gücenip darılacaklara da sözümüz budur. Vazifemiz büyük, mes'uliyetimiz ağır, idealimiz yüksektir. Türk milleti yetiştirdiği münevverlerinden bu ödevi başarmalarını istemekte haklıdır." Ibid.

This speech was delivered by a certain C.A., probably Cemile Aytaç, who was a member of the Elazığ People's House when it was delivered. C.A. did not initially refer to herself as a *münevver*. However, in the concluding paragraph, a teacher born in Bursa, considered herself and her audience at the People's House part of the *münevver* category. Whether the speaker was indeed Cemile Aytaç or not, Aytaç, who was a dedicated People's House member and who delivered many lectures enlightening her audience throughout her career, named her son "Aydın" (Enlightened) and then named his daughter "Işık" (Light) and son "Demir" (Iron).<sup>62</sup>

The magazine of the Elazığ People's House, *Altan*, regularly published articles calling the *münevvers* to action. In February 1937, Tevfik Gür, the director of the People's House and the governor of Elazığ, published an article titled "Do not say I do not care, do not be offended." The anaphora of the article was "My enlightened friend." The article reminded the enlightened audience of the value of the "revolution" and the *münevvers*' tasks and responsibilities resulting from the revolution. To illustrate the transformation brought by the republic, Gür mentioned the change in the urban landscape resulting from the war and genocide. Elazığ used to have a considerable Armenian population and was home to increased missionary activity in the late Ottoman Empire. The article reminded the enlightened audience that the city was compared to Paris by Eastern populations (*doğu elleri ahalisi*) because of a couple of buildings imitating "Gothic" architecture in the city. Then he reminded his readers that he was writing about the "Five Brothers district" (*Beş kardeşler mevki*).

These five mudbrick wrecks were not alone in the birth and spread of this false reputation: the movements created by the nine colleges and their offshoots, which were assigned to strangle your national conscience and kill your national spirit, and the close relations with foreign countries, which were established to your detriment, were all reinforcing this reputation to the detriment of your national assets, national history and national feelings. The situation was not pleasant at all: you may have only the title deed to your property. You were saddened and oppressed by the culture of the people living above you with their coffers, national feelings, fabricated histories and general culture (*umumi bilgi*).<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Aydın Aytaç, "My Life and Profession," *aydinaytac.com*, <https://aydinaytac.com/en/my-life-and-profession/>.

<sup>63</sup> "Bu yalancı şöhretin doğup yayılışında bu beş kerpiç enkazı yalnız da değildi: senin milli vicdanını boğmağa, milli ruhunu öldürmeye memur edilen dokuz dane kollej ve teferruatın husule getirdiği hareketler, yabancı memleketlerle hep senin ziyanına kurulmuş olan sıkı münasebetlerle milli varlıklarının, milli tarihinin ve

The buildings he referred to belong to the Fabrikatorian brothers (“Five Brothers”), a wealthy Armenian family that owned a modern silk factory in the city.<sup>64</sup> All members of the family were killed during the Armenian Genocide, and these “distinctive” set of buildings housing the five brothers and their extended families was decimated.<sup>65</sup> Tevfik Gür reminded his readers seventeen years after the genocide that “the time has changed.”<sup>66</sup> The buildings and the brothers were not there anymore. And this change impacted the role of *münevvers*.

The fame that these five brothers, three brothers: that these colleges, these schools have gained and carried in vain has been destroyed, and you have reached a revolution that has strengthened your national existence, taught you your history, established and maintained the conditions for a decent life within your national structure, given you national pride, and finally created your national culture.<sup>67</sup>

The governor of the city kept addressing his “enlightened” friends. He advised them to be grateful for the “revolution” which decimated these families and their buildings. He condemned them for “looking for the turban and the cross for a cure.”<sup>68</sup> He claimed that the republican schools were superior to those communitarian schools and the religious ones. “The most important duties were allocated” to these schools and their continuation in the People’s Houses. These “duties were written down in the directives of the People’s Houses, article by article, with all its clarity” and were handed over to the *münevvers*.<sup>69</sup>

The article presupposed that all *münevvers* of the country received directives for the People’s Houses. It criticized the *münevvers* for relying on Muslim religious notabilities (the “turban”) on the one hand and Christian ones (the “cross”) on the other. It praised the

---

milli duygularının aleyhine hep bu şöhreti takviye ediyorlardı. Durum hiç de hoş değildi: sen belki yalnız malının tapusuna sahiptin. Kasalarile, milli duygularile, uydurma tarihlerle, umumi bilgilerle senin üstünde yaşayan insanların kültürleri altında üzülüyor, eziliyordun.” Tevfik Gür, “Bana Ne Deme, ve Darılma,” *Altan*, 1937.

<sup>64</sup> Zeynep Kezer, “The Projections of a Roof: An Ottoman Armenian Family Residence in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Turkey,” *Platfrom*, 23 November, 2024, <https://www.platformspace.net/home/the-projections-of-a-roof-an-ottoman-armenian-family-residence-in-nineteenth-century-eastern-turkey>.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> “Devir değişti.” Tevfik Gür, “Bana Ne Deme, ve Darılma.”

<sup>67</sup> “Beş kardeşlerin, üç kardeşlerin : bu kollejlerin, şu mekteplerin fuzuli olarak kazanıp taşıdıkları şöhretler yıkıldı, yaratılan milli varlığını kuvvetlendiren, tarihini öğreten, milli bünyen içinde efendice yaşama şartlarını kurup yaşatan, milli gururunu kazandıran, nihayet milli kültürünü yaratan bir devrime eriştin.” Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> “Derdine daima sarık ve haçtan derman aradın.” Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> “Sarıklı ve haçlı mekteplerin pek üstünde olarak açılan ve çoğaltılmasına devam edilen mekteplerinle çocukların bilgili ve terbiyeli edilirken, milli kültürünü kuvvetlendirip yayacak ve yetişkin olanları milli şuurun icapları dairesinde bilgili edecek olan bu kültür kaynağına da en önemli ödevler ayrıldı ve verildi. Ve bu ödevler Halkevi talimatnamesinde bütün açıklığı ile madde madde yazıldı ve senin eline teslim edildi.” Ibid.

“revolution” for ending these religious notabilities and promoting “national” ones to be diffused through secular educational institutions. Ultimately, he compared the directives of the People’s Houses with fragments of the Qur’an.<sup>70</sup> This comparison allowed the author to recall the enlightened audience again. Did they read these directives? Did they know the People’s Houses had a sufficient budget to satisfy their needs? Did they know they had a well-decorated library with magazines and newspapers? Did they know it had instruments, a concert hall, projectors, theater scenes, cameras, rooms, lecture halls, and a garden for children’s play? He addressed his “respectable and knowledgeable *münevver*.”<sup>71</sup> He claimed, “Among all these things, you are the only thing missing.”<sup>72</sup>

My enlightened friend!... half of the hours you are not in bed are empty. Many times, you are seen in cafes, gardens, mutual visits. You do or do not do these things. However, you should know that you are in a revolution that bears the burdens of these hours you are wasting against your country and the public interest.<sup>73</sup>

Elazığ had unique characteristics that help explain the fervor of the article. The party was notably weak in Eastern Anatolia, and Elazığ stood out among cities for its particularly weak presence of both the party and the People’s Houses. [Chapter 9](#) will show that the party often tried to compensate for its regional weaknesses by assigning provincial governors and other civil servants, appointed to the city as part of their mandatory state service, to bolster and energize its provincial organization. The article’s author, Tevfik Gür, served as the governor and the People’s House director in 1937. This dual role was necessitated by the scarcity of other *münevvers* to assume these responsibilities.

Tevfik Gür continued to lament the failure of the local *münevvers* to engage in the city’s pedagogic mission. Why didn’t they publish articles on Altan? Why didn’t they share their

---

<sup>70</sup> “Bu milli kur’anın bir cüzüdür.” Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> “Bu talimatnameyi hiç okudun mu? Halkevi deyip geçme. Biraz üzerinde dur. İçinde neler var, bir sayalım: 1- Evvela her yıl bütün çalışma isteklerini tatmin edecek kifayette bir bütçesi var. 2- İyi döşenmiş bir kütüphanesi ve dört bin ciltten fazla kitabı, günlük gazete, haftalık ve aulık mecmuaları var. 3- Bilardo ve satranç salonu ve takımları var. 4-Müzik çalışma ve çalıştırma vasıta ve aletleri, çalıştırma elemanları, verilen konserleri konser verilecek iki kapalı bir açık yeri var. 5- Fikir çalışmalarını yayacak mecmuası ve yazılacak kitapları parasız bastırıp yayacak teşkilatı var. 6- Konferanslar için teşkilatı ve dinletecek yerleri var. 7- Sahnede çalışmak için bütün vesait ve malzemesi ve rejisörü, açık ve kapalı sahneleri var.” Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> “Sayın görgülü ve bilgili münevver, bütün bu varlıklar arasında yalnız sen yoksun.” Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> “Münevver arkadaş!... yatakta olmadığın saatlarının yarısı boştur. Çok defalar kahvelerde, bahçelerde, müteakabil ziyaretlerde görünüyorsun. Bunları yapıyorsun veya yapmıyorsun. Lâkin, şunu bilmelisin ki, yurduna, âme menfaatlerine karşı heder etmekte olduğun bu saatlerin me’suliyetlerini taşıtan bir devrimdesin...” Ibid.

knowledge with those less informed? Why didn't they pay attention to what was discussed at the People's Houses?<sup>74</sup> It was their duty to do all these things.

The duties and responsibilities associated with belonging to a largely defined class of educated elites were treated differently. When it was the most explicit, it was a general call to action for them. In more implicit forms, it was about criticizing a certain kind of *münevver* to put forward the ideal of the *münevver* in light of the current political context. The celebration of the sixth anniversary of the People's Houses in Sivas, for example, featured a speech that dealt not with the 'responsibility of intellectuals' but with an "intellectual debt," or a debt arising from "knowledge and awareness" (*irfan borcu*).

Our intellectual debt is to teach the popular masses what we have learned. Our slogan 'Populists, for the people, and with the people,' does not mean governing the people like an animal flock. Populists, for the people, and with the people, means working with popular enterprises in which the people act knowingly and lovingly.<sup>75</sup>

Cemal Gültekin was a literature teacher born in Erzurum (1893). He had studied at the Teachers Training College (*Darülmüallimin*) in 1915. Gültekin became a People's Preacher in 1931 while he was the director of education (*maarif müdürü*) in Samsun. He was later appointed to Sivas for the same job.<sup>76</sup> While working in Sivas, he actively participated in the activities of the local People's House, contributing to the publication of its magazine.<sup>77</sup> As a teacher, a provincial administrator working for the Ministry of Education, and a People's Preacher, Gültekin clearly distinguished himself from the "popular masses." He and his audience were included in "we" as the owners of "intellectual debt."

Cemal Gültekin's "intellectual debt" lay in enhancing the value of both the "individual" (*ferd*) and "collectivity" (*kütle*) by transmitting "skills and technical knowledge" to present to

---

<sup>74</sup> "- (ALTAN) a bir iki satır yazı yazmıyorsun ve itiyat etmiyorsun, yazılanları da okumuyorsun. (...) – Bilgilerini muhtelif suretlerle bilmiyenlere öğretmiyor ve söylenenleri de dinlemiyorsun." Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> "Bizim fikir borcumuz halk kütesine bildiklerimizi öğretmektir. Halkçı, halk için, halkla beraber demek halkı hayvan sürüsü gibi sevk ederek devleti idare etmek demek değildir. Halkçı, halk için, halka beraber demek; halkın iştirakile, halkın seyerek ve bilerek birlikte iş yapması demektir. Cemal Gültekin, "Halkevlerinin 6ıncı yıldönümünde Halkevinde kitapsaray ve yayın şubesi başkanı, Kültür Direktörü Cemal Gültekin tarafından verilen söylev," *Ortayayla*, 1 February, 1938.

<sup>76</sup> 18 January 1937, BCA Bakanlar Arası Tayin Daire Başkanlığı 30-11-1/110-1-18.

<sup>77</sup> Fatih Tosun and Necdet Aysal, "Muallim Cemal Gültekin (1893-1953)," in *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi* (2022).



generations at the People's Houses.<sup>78</sup> In this regard, intellectuals like Gültekin, including high and low-ranking civil servants, oversaw "People's Education."

The analysis of press debates in the first chapter revealed that the press used the category of "*münevver*" in a way that closely resembled how intellectuals were considered in sociological and universalist terms. The party leadership's references to the "*münevver*" in the 1930s mirrored discussions in the press. Many columnists participating in these press debates were also actively involved in CHP circles. The establishment of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses broadened the definition of "*münevver*" to encompass high- and low-ranking civil servants who were modestly involved in editorial and literary fields. This emphasis on an intellectual elite was rooted in the party leadership's efforts to educate the public and counter the symbolic influence of religious intellectual elites.

---

<sup>78</sup> "Kütlenin ve ferdin kıymetini değerini arttırmak lazımdır. Okullar, üniversiteler ancak gelecek nesilleri yetiştirir. Bizim ihtiyacımız bugünkü nesildir. Okulun dışında kalan kadın erkek her ferde müstakil ve ileri millet fertlerinin haiz olduğu kabiliyeti, tekniği bilgiyi vermek lazımdır. Bunu sağlayacak ve yapacak kurumların başında halkevleri gelir." Cemal Gültekin, "Halkevlerinin 61nci yıldönümünde Halkevinde kitapsaray ve yayın şubesi başkanı, Kültür Direktörü Cemal Gültekin tarafından verilen söylev."



## II. The Making of Provincial Kemalism

---

This section will discuss “Kemalism” concerning the operations of the party-state apparatus during the single-party era. What I mean by “provincial Kemalism” is the people, values, ideas, and actions of the provincial sections of the Republican People’s Party, including the People’s Houses and the People’s Preachers Organizations from 1931 to 1945. The term “Kemalism” will not be used analytically, as it was initially coined by foreign observers and only adopted by the party in 1935. Provincial Kemalism, on the other hand, refers to the relationship between the party’s central organization—specifically its General Secretary and deputies based in Ankara—and its provincial branches. This section will explore how the CHP General Secretary set the stage for the People’s Preachers. Chapter 6 will delve into the preparations made by the party leadership for the stage, the staging, and the performance of the People’s Preachers. It will also reflect on the party’s perception of the audience, namely the common people. Chapter 7 will quantitatively analyze the lists prepared by the provincial administrative committees to examine the social assets of the People’s Preachers and determine who was considered a “*münever*” in 1930s Turkey. Chapter 8 will explore the motivations and rewards of preaching for the party, which led thousands of individuals to take the stage in the party’s name. Finally, Chapter 9 will analyze the limitations of this extensive system in standardizing and centralizing political communication based on inspection reports produced by the members of the parliament.



## 6. Setting the Stage

---

“The Organization of People’s Preachers will be created to tell the people the principles of the Republican People’s Party, our great ideals, our ideas, and objectives depending on everyday political circumstances also with the [spoken] word (*söz*), one of the most effective ways of communication (*telkin*). The objective of this organization is to prevent our fundamental communications from being made carelessly by unprepared random individuals (*herhangi bir zevat*) and to have this task done by our friends, qualified to speak eloquently, and to have these friends ready in advance for any situation with the principles and knowledge to speak in every circumstance.”<sup>1</sup>

The creation of the People’s Preachers Organization was proclaimed in a circular letter and in a set of directives sent to the provincial sections of the CHP by the Party’s Secretary General in September 1931.<sup>1</sup> The “directives” (*talimat*) was an eleven-page-long document that explained the reasons for forming this organization and the responsibilities of the locally selected party spokespeople. People from the “party’s center,” meaning the General Secretary in Ankara, also were sent around Turkey to deliver speeches. These people, such as high-ranking party members and deputies, were not obliged to conform to the principles outlined in the directives.<sup>2</sup> Although both local preachers and central party officials embodied the new mission based on the conviction about the power of the spoken word, the opposition between the “center” (*merkez*) and “provinces” (*taşra*) was key to the Party’s strategy.

Before delving into the content of these documents, it is helpful to explain the administrative and geographic structure of the organization within the Turkish state. The People’s Preachers formally depended on the Party’s “Provincial Administrative Boards” (*Vilayet İdare Heyeti*). Therefore, the “province” (*vilayet*) was the main unit in the organization’s system. Each

---

<sup>1</sup> “Cümhuriyet Halk Fırkasının prensiplerini ve büyük ideallerimizi ve günlük politika vaziyetine göre fikir ve maksatlarımızı en müessir telkin vasıtalarından olan söz ile de halka anlatmak için Fırkanın hatipler teşkilatı yapılacaktır. Teşkilattan maksat, esaslı telkinlerimizin gelişi güzel ve hazırlıksız olarak herhangi zevat tarafından yapılmasına meydan bırakılmayarak bu mühim işi itinalı bir surette yetiştirilecek, müessir söz söylemeye liyakatlı arkadaşlarımıza yaptırmak ve bu arkadaşları her zaman söz söyleyecek esaslar ve malûmat ile her hale karşı evvelden hazır bulundurmaktır.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

<sup>1</sup> The same ordinance was also published in January 1933 in daily *Vakit*. “C.H.F. Halk Hatipleri Talimatı: Semt, köy ve mahalle ocaklarımızın da bir iki hatibi olmak lazımdır. Fırka hatipleri için dersler açılacaktır.” *Vakit*, 11 January.

<sup>2</sup> “Bu talimatta yazılı teşkilat Fırkanın halk hatipleri teşkilatıdır. Fırka liderlerinin her yerde, Fırka mebuslarının mecliste söz söylemeleri ve Fırka merkezinden ayrı vazifelerle gönderilecek olanların lüzumuna göre verecekleri nutuklar bu talimattaki esaslara tabi değildir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

province was divided into districts (*kaza*) and sub-districts (*nahiye*). Depending on the level of the party organization in each province, the Party had branches in districts and sub-districts. The distinction between the “center” and the “provinces” (*vilayetler*) was mirrored by the opposition between the “central organization” (*merkez teşkilatı*) and the “peripheral (or provincial) organization” (*taşra teşkilatı*), indicating dependence but distance from the central decision-making centers, hence the capital.<sup>3</sup> The image of a disconnected and abandoned “province,” akin to Madame Bovary’s provincial town, Yonville, prevailed in early republican discourse.<sup>4</sup>

The Party’s organization followed the state’s administrative scheme, which was divided between the “center” (*merkez*) and the “province” (*taşra*).<sup>5</sup> In this regard, the People’s Preachers Organization was not extraordinary since each ministry had a “central organization” (*Merkez teşkilatı*) and a provincial organization (*taşra teşkilatı*). Similarly, the Party’s General Secretary was based in Ankara, the capital. Ankara, the Party’s “center,” oversaw the provincial organization in each *vilayet*. The Party’s Provincial Administrative committees collaborated closely with the provincial governor (*vali*), who depended on the orders of the “center,” which formally meant the Ministry of Interior. Until 1939, the Party’s General Secretary was, at the same time, the Interior Minister.

For the party general secretary, a powerful party organization meant a progressively increasing number of party members and continued presence and activity in the provincial and district sections. After the creation of the People’s Houses in 1932, a well-functioning party organization also required an active People’s House with members zealously organizing cultural events such as lectures (*konferans*), theater plays, sporting activities, village visits, and more. The internal reports considered the party “weak” (*zayıf*) in a region with a shortage of active members and if the local party offices were not regularly frequented.<sup>6</sup> In the absence of

---

<sup>3</sup> Nathalie Duval, “L’École des Roches et ses élèves (1899-2009).”

<sup>4</sup> Tanıl Bora, ed., *Taşraya Bakmak* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> In early republican Turkey, the public administration was divided into the central, the capital, and the provincial organization (*taşra*). State documents diligently divided these organizations concerning civil servants’ appointments. For an example case, see appointment documents from the Ministry of Transportation (*Nafia Vekaleti*), 31 May 1934, BCA BTBD (Bakanlıklar Arası Tayinler Başkanlığı) 30-11-1-0/86-15-85.

<sup>6</sup> The party’s obsession with numbers and statistics concerning the activity of the People’s Houses can be observed in the reports produced throughout the years. *Halkevleri 1932-1935: 103 Halkevi Geçen Yıllarda Nasıl Çalıştı*, (1935); *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*.

a powerful party organization, with many local party members working actively for the Party, provincial and district governors acted as the heads of the Party's provincial organization. This lack of differentiation between the state and party institutions, caused by a political party's capture of the state institutions, was integral to the functioning of the People's Preachers Organization and the single-party regime.<sup>7</sup>

National holidays stood out as the most important occasions for the People's Preachers. Turkey had multiple national holidays established during different moments of the "Turkish War of Independence." The departure of Mustafa Kemal to Samsun in May 1919, the gathering of the Grand National Assembly in April 1920, the victory of Dumlupınar in August 1922, and the proclamation of the Republic in October 1923 were all annually celebrated in schools, public squares, and the People's Houses. The directives referred to national holidays, local celebrations, and commemorations such as a particular city's liberation or occupation day. After Mustafa Kemal's death, another annual commemoration was established on 10 November.<sup>8</sup> Celebrations and commemorations made up a large part of the People's Preachers' paper trail. Nevertheless, the occasions for the People's Preachers to address the crowds were not limited to these events.

The People's Preachers Organization was established spontaneously in September 1931. Addressing some of the issues discussed in the first chapter was among the causes of the Party's decision to create the organization. The Third CHP Congress in May 1931 did not mention the "People's Preacher." Still, the idea of educating the masses so they do not think that taxes were high, the new government was corrupt, etc., was repeatedly voiced during the Congress. The new party program, which was drafted during the Congress, planned to organize "lectures" (*konferans*) on topics determined by the Party's General Administrative Board.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Gilles Dorronsoro and Benjamin Gourisse, "Une clé de lecture du politique en Turquie : les rapports État-Partis," *Politix* 107, no. 3 (2014): 201.

<sup>8</sup> Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish : Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*; Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*.

<sup>9</sup> "Yeni nizamnâmemiz, Umûmi İdare Heyeti'nin tespit edeceği mevzular dahilinde Fırka teşkilâtımızın yer yer konferanslar tertip etmelerini de emreder." Recep [Peker], "Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Programın İzahı için Recep Bey'in Konferansı," (1931).

The directives of the People's Preachers organization echoed the discussions during the Congress. They mentioned, "speech" (*nutuk*) and "lectures" as well as other occasions to address the crowds, such as town fairs, collective circumcision feasts (*sünnet bayramı*), and election days.<sup>10</sup> The People's Preachers Organization functioned as follows. The CHP General Secretary would send circular letters to all provincial branches with a topic in mind and sometimes supplementary documents. Each provincial administrative board would send reports to the General Secretary after the event. This constitutes their main trace in the the party archives. But sometimes, local and national newspapers would also publish articles about the events. As early as January 1932, *Akşam* reported the creation of the People's Preachers, for example, announcing that the preachers selected in each district would deliver "lectures" on various issues determined by the party leadership.<sup>11</sup> The lectures were often summarized, advertised, or reported in the local or national press to amplify their reach.

The mobilization of the People's Preachers was improvised and spontaneous because a similar but larger institution, the People's Houses, was created shortly afterward. The documentation about the People's Houses overshadowed that of the People's Preachers in the party archives. The paper trail of the People's Preachers Organization was limited to the founding circular, the lists of the preachers sent in 1931-1932, an updated list in 1938, and a few circular letters about the People's Preachers' good conduct.<sup>12</sup> The documents became even more scarce after 1939. The death of Mustafa Kemal in November 1938 and the start of the Second World War in September 1939 impacted the priorities of the party general secretary. The economic problems during the Second World War arguably led to the Party having fewer resources to prompt and monitor political celebrations after 1939. After the war broke out, "party preachers" or "People's Preachers" came up only when the Party organized "lectures" on the ongoing conflict or related issues. Nevertheless, People's Houses magazines, reports,

---

<sup>10</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

<sup>11</sup> "Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Yetiştirecek: Halk Hatipleri için Bir Talimatname Yapıldı Faaliyete Başlanıyor."

<sup>12</sup> "Cumhuriyet Bayramı Programı Hazırlandı: Balıkesir üç gün, üç gece en büyük bayramı neşe ve sevinç içinde kutlayacak," *Türk Dili*, 27 October; "Yurtta Bayram Heyecanla Kutlandı: Cumhuriyet ve yaratıcısı yurdun her yerinde candan alkışlandı," *Ulus*, 1 November.



and the national press contain numerous references to the “speeches delivered by People’s Preachers,” “party preachers,” or “lectures” organized at the People’s Houses.

Organizing political celebrations and engaging public speakers for political communication is not specific to the CHP’s single-party rule. Since the sixteenth century, the circumcision of the Ottoman princes, for instance, showcased the power of the Sultan’s and the administrative and military elites around him.<sup>13</sup> National holidays and public speeches were also the order of the day during the Second Constitutional Monarchy.<sup>14</sup> The parliament established 10 July as a national holiday a year after the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. This holiday was called “*îd-i milli*,” like religious festivals such as “*îd-al fitr*,” celebrating the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan.<sup>15</sup> It was celebrated in public squares and churches within different religious and linguistic communities.<sup>16</sup> The parliamentary discussions about establishing the holiday referred to the French holiday of 14 July.<sup>17</sup> This national holiday was conceived in order to increase the “consciousness of Ottomanness and unity” among the citizens.<sup>18</sup>

Under the Second Constitutional Monarchy, overseeing, controlling, and staging public speeches or political lectures outside national holidays was common. The Young Turks organized “festivals, demonstrations, speeches, leaflets” for propaganda.<sup>19</sup> Conferences were delivered primarily by party intellectuals and published.<sup>20</sup> The Unionists and their opponents

---

<sup>13</sup> Derin Terzioğlu, “The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation,” *Muqarnas* 12 (1995); Kaya Şahin, “Staging an Empire: An Ottoman Circumcision Ceremony as Cultural Performance,” *The American Historical Review* 123, no. 2 (2018): 464.

<sup>14</sup> Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*. See an example: *Şaşra Vatandaşlarımıza Hediye-yi Hürriyet*, ([Dersaadet] İstanbul: Matba‘a-yı Kütüphane-i Cihan, [1324] 1908).

<sup>15</sup> Sanem Yamak, “Meşrutiyetin Bayramı: 10 Temmuz İd-i Millisi,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 38 (March 2008). See also E. Mittwoch, “İd al-Fitr,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, ed. P. Bearman (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014), 38; Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye’de Aydın’ın Kısa Tarihi*; François Georgeon, *Le mois le plus long. Ramadan à Istanbul de l’Empire ottoman à la Turquie contemporaine* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2017), 152.

<sup>17</sup> Sanem Yamak, “Meşrutiyetin Bayramı: 10 Temmuz İd-i Millisi,” 327.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>19</sup> Nathalie Clayer, “The Time of Freedom, the Time of Struggle for Power: The Young Turk Revolution in the Albanian Provinces,” in *The Young Turk Revolution and the Ottoman Empire. The aftermath of 1908*, ed. François Georgeon and Noémi Lévy-Aksu (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017), 118-21.

<sup>20</sup> See for instance *Şaşra Vatandaşlarımıza Hediye-yi Hürriyet*.

used public speeches called “lectures” for political communication. A “lecture” by Lütü Fikri Bey, a leading opponent of the CUP and the founder of the Freedom and Accord Party (*Hürriyet ve İtilaf Partisi*), was delivered in the Union Garden (*İttihād Bahçesi*) in Thessaloniki in 1910, criticized the CUP rule. This speech was reportedly prevented by the local crowds’ “whistles and blows.”<sup>21</sup> Another example is the famous speech by the novelist Halide Edip in Sultanahmet Square in Allied-occupied Istanbul before the “national resistance,” which can be considered a bridge between Unionist and Kemalist politics.<sup>22</sup>

The People’s Preachers Organization had its roots in earlier attempts at political communication implemented by two competing governments of the armistice era: the Istanbul government under the Sultan and the Ankara government under the nationalist militia. In April 1919, the Istanbul government created the Advisory Committees (*Heyet-i Nasıha*) with orators traveling in Anatolia.<sup>23</sup> The first Committee was rather small. A former provincial governor, a local notable, a former deputy, two former high-ranking militaries, and two muftis set out to travel around Anatolia to reassure the local population of the measures to be taken by the Istanbul government to counter the consequences of the Great War.<sup>24</sup>

The secret proceedings of the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara contained many references to “propaganda” from the Allies, the “Bolsheviks,” and the Istanbul government. These references mostly concerned the military mobilization and the fact of accepting or refusing the Turkish defeat. In a dynamic like the one explained above for 1931, the Ankara government around Mustafa Kemal created the Guidance Committee (*İrşad Encümeni*) to counter oppositional voices only a few days after the opening of the Grand National Assembly.<sup>25</sup> This Committee was comprised of members of the Ottoman Empire’s Islamic,

---

<sup>21</sup> “Bu konferans bin üç yüz yirmi altı senesi temmuzun altıncı şalı günü Selānikde İttihād bahçesinde verilmek istenilmiş fakat Sāmi’inden bağız kimselerin ıslık ve düdüklerle itdikleri nümāyişler üzerine ikmāl olunamamışdır.” Lütü Fikri Bey, *Selanik’te Bir Konferans: Bizde Fark-i Siyasiye; Hal-i Hazırı* (Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Ahmet İhsan, [1326] 1910).

<sup>22</sup> Halide Edip, “Sultanahmet Mitingi,” (Ankara: TRT Arşiv, 1919), Youtube Video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECH8H-rtIXU&t=3s>; Nuray Özdemir, “Milli Mücadele Dönemi Mitinglerinde Türk Kadını,” [Turkish women in rallies during the national struggle.] *Belgi Dergisi*, no. 21 (January 2021).

<sup>23</sup> Erkan Fincan, “Heyet-i Nasıha’dan İrşat Heyetlerine: Milli Mücadele’de Halkı İkna Çalışmaları,” 28.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> See for instance, *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Gizli Celse Zabıtları (20 Nisan 1920 - 21 Şubat 1921)*, (Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 2023), 14,16,38, 57, 70, 81, 106.

administrative, and military establishment (*ilmiye, mülkiye, askeriye*) and was not selected locally. They were supposed to travel around Anatolia to meet local notables (*eşraf*) and the ulema or invite them to Ankara.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast, the 1930s People's Preachers Organization presented a crucial difference that reflected the consolidation of a one-party regime. Unlike earlier initiatives, which sent people from Istanbul to the provinces to persuade provincial elites and notables to join the national struggle, the People's Preachers were selected locally. Provincial units were tasked with organizing republican sermons according to uniform criteria set by the Party's general secretary. Moreover, although the Unionists organized public and mass demonstrations, the centralization of the bottom-up mobilization did not exist to that extent before the CHP single-party rule.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, there was continuity as they were recruited from similar types of elites regarding profile and skills (Chapter 7).

The People's Preachers Organization was the first durable attempt to select and train local and secular representatives of state-administrative and party-political power. The Party's provincial sections selected People's Preachers among the party members based on their likability and rhetorical qualifications. Beyond the organic ties to the Party, the Preachers also had to be chosen among those interested in and capable of taking up this duty. The CHP General Secretary in Ankara monitored their selection and activities by corresponding with the provincial sections or, in the case of the absence of provincial sections – many were still in the making in the early 1930s – with the provincial or district governors.

In 1931, the year of the People's Preachers Organization's foundation, provincial sections nominated 1360 preachers. By 1938, this number reached 2039, marking a rise of approximately 33% of the workforce. Throughout the time under study here (1931-1945), 3433 people were selected as preachers of the Party.<sup>28</sup> With a total population of approximately 16 million, and in a period when, according to the 1927 census, only seven percent of that

---

<sup>26</sup> The terms *eşraf* and ulema are used in the primary sources cited by Betül Aslan. See: Betül Aslan, "Milli Mücadele Döneminde Halkı Aydınlatma ve Propaganda Faaliyetleri Yürüten Önemli Bir Komisyon: "İrşad Encümeni",” *Atatürk Dergisi* 4, no. 2 (2004): 133.

<sup>27</sup> For the political uses of mass mobilizations such as boycott movements under the Second Constitutional Monarchy, see Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey*, 39-58.

<sup>28</sup> There is a small number of documents from 1933 and 1934 reporting the selection of 34 preachers.

population was literate, this number is noteworthy.<sup>29</sup> The People's Preachers Organization, which corresponded to a small group compared to the total population, likely prompted the Party's general secretariat to take precautions because of the risk that this small and selective group might use their duty of conveying the Party's principles to the general public as a source of social distinction.

The General Secretary of the Party strictly prohibited using 'People's Preacher' as an official title or rank. This suggests that individuals became preachers due to their social and political trajectory, rather than the title of preacher serving as a credential for pursuing a more qualified career. As shown in [Chapter 8](#), this does not mean that becoming a preacher did not provide social mobility or facilitate access to certain political positions. In September 1931, the People's Preacher Organization was almost a secret organization created within the Party. While the circular letter was sent to each provincial administrative board, the local and national newspapers did not announce the foundation of the organization.

---

<sup>29</sup> *Genel Nüfus Sayımı 20 İlkteşrin 1935: Recensement général de la population au 20 octobre 1935*, 383.

The secrecy around the People’s Preachers Organization was lifted a year later. The celebration of the Republic’s decennial in October 1933 was the occasion to make the organization more inclusive by expanding its numbers. In January 1933, several national newspapers published the directives and announced the organization’s existence to the larger public.<sup>30</sup> The Party aimed to recruit a few months before the celebrations and update the preacher lists for Republic Day. Thus, it implemented new measures to include ordinary citizens in its communication. For instance, the “People’s Chairs” (*Halk Kürsüleri*) were created to invite all citizens to take the stage to celebrate the Republic’s decennial.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 6. People’s Chairs in Zonguldak (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

There was a clear continuity between the People’s Preachers Organization (1931), the People’s Chairs (1933), and the Propaganda Committees (1950). The People’s Preachers Organization was created shortly after the municipal elections, while the Propaganda

---

<sup>30</sup> “C.H.F. Halk Hatipleri Talimatı: Semt, köy ve mahalle ocaklarımızın da bir iki hatibi olmak lazımdır. Fırka hatipleri için dersler açılacaktır.” “Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Yetiştirecek: Halk Hatipleri için Bir Talimatname Yapıldı Faaliyete Başlanıyor.”

<sup>31</sup> “Halk Kürsüleri talimatnamesi komisyonca tertip edilmiştir.” Summary of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary High Commission meeting held on 26 August 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1135-35-2.

Committee was created shortly before the legislative elections. In the meantime, the People's Chairs opened space for public speeches to other individuals not preselected within the provincial organization. Each citizen above 18 years of age had the right to apply to speak at the People's Chairs. Still, a committee of three people was responsible for preselecting the speakers a couple of days in advance or spontaneously during the public demonstrations.<sup>32</sup> The People's Chairs allowed the Party to recruit new preachers based on their performance during the decennial celebrations.<sup>33</sup> Beyond this enthusiasm, everyone in the Party who performed an interesting and well-aimed speech in public, even more just after the language reform, was surely not every Turk's cup of tea. Only those who stood out by their "readiness," "skillfulness," and their ability to "produce good impressions on people" were employed by the Party.<sup>34</sup> The commission corresponded with each local party directorate on the speakers' performance to find new speakers during these celebrations.<sup>35</sup>

In 1938, the Party General Secretary showed its intention to maintain the People's Preachers Organization, sending another circular to the provincial sections requiring updated lists of preachers. In March 1950, the Party General Secretary created "Propaganda Committees" to prepare for the upcoming elections, during which the provincial sections produced similar lists of local members of the Party. The Propaganda Committees had a more limited scope than the People's Preachers Organization; their role was more electorally oriented because they were created after the return to the multi-party regime. Still, the Propaganda Committees did not

---

<sup>32</sup> "Halk Kürsüleri talimatnamesi komisyonca tertip edilmiştir." Summary of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary High Commission meeting held on 26 August 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1135-35-2.

<sup>33</sup> "Cumhuriyetimizin onuncu yıl dönümü bayramında Halk Kürsülerinden söz söyleyenler arasında en iyilerinin ve yetiştirildikleri takdirde çok mükemmel hatip olacakların isimlerini ilişik listede arz eder ve derin saygılarımı sunarım efendim." Response from Trabzon to the circulars from the General Secretary, 13 February 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/12-63-1.

<sup>34</sup> "Bunlar içinde ateşli söyleyen ve hatipliğe her surette istidat ve kabiliyeti olup halk üzerinde her zaman güzel tesirler yapacak olan kaymakam Osman Nuri ve muallim Azmi beylerle, muallim Mebrure Hanımdır." Correspondence between the Directorate of the CHP in Tavşanlı (Kütahya) and the CHP General Secretary, 16 November 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/12-63-1

<sup>35</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and various directorates, October 1933 – January 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/12-63-1.

differ from the People's Preachers Organization regarding the social characteristics of the individuals recruited.<sup>36</sup>

The Party aimed to increase membership throughout the 1930s, especially in the provinces outside the capital, Ankara, to organize and maintain cultural activities. The Party General Secretary corresponded with the provincial directorates to discuss the women's or civil servants' enrolment to the Party.<sup>37</sup> Regular reports from CHP deputies who visited the party organization in their respective provinces discussed actual participation in party activities.<sup>38</sup> The People's Preachers Organization stood out among the various attempts by the single-party regime to create platforms to make ordinary citizens participate in party politics.

The directives generally referred to the "public sphere" and did not differentiate between state property and privately owned public spaces. Neither do they provide precise information on the location. After all, the occasions to address the crowds also varied. The Preachers were responsible for national and local holidays, commemorations, and election rallies in city centers or schools. But the same Preachers also had to "seize the opportunity" and "break into conversation" whenever and wherever "wrong and harmful things" were being said, "in a train, a caravanserai, or around a cup of coffee."<sup>39</sup> Town fairs and circumcision feasts were mentioned in the directives.<sup>40</sup> The party reports also referred to other places like cinema buildings.<sup>41</sup> A part of the required skills was inevitably linked to improvisation and versatility.

---

<sup>36</sup> "Komite azalarının gergin, uyanık, halk arasında serbest konuşabilen, bilhassa halkın sevgi ve saygısını kazanmış, sözü dinlenir üyelerden seçilmesine dikkat edilecektir." Circular on the creation of Propaganda Committees, 27 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/10-51-14.

<sup>37</sup> Documents about the new members of the CHP can be found in following files: 18 August 1930, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-4-20; 7 January 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/15-77-3; 2 August 1939, BCA 490-1-0-0/4-21-17; 2 August 1939 BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 4-21-29.

<sup>38</sup> CHP Inspection Reports, 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>39</sup> "Meselâ, herhangi bir sebeple yapılmış bir içtimada veya başkalarının verdikleri konferanslarda fırkamızın hüviyetine, şerefine ve prensipine uymayan bir ifade ve cereyan gören fırkacı, kim olursa olsun, derhal söz alarak bildiği, gördüğü kadar mevcut halkı tenvir etmeli ve yine mesela bir tren yolculuğunda, bir kahve sohbetinde, bir otel, han arkadaşlığında konuşanlar yanlış ve zararlı şeyler söylerlerse dinliyenlerin hüsnü telakkî edeceği bir tarzda söze katılarak yanlışları tashih etmelidir." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 12.

<sup>40</sup> "İster bütün memlekete ait büyük millî günler olsun, ister mahallî sevinç veya keder sebeplerile halkın bir arada toplanacağı zamanlar olsun, her yerde ve her toplanışta fırkamızın sesi işitilmelidir. Meselâ: Cumhuriyet bayramı günü mekteplerin her tarafında fırkamız namına nutuklar vermek lâzımdır. Diğer taraftan meselâ, memleketimizin aziz bir parçası olan herhangi bir kasaba veya köyümüzün düşman işgalinden kurtulduğu gün o mahallede Fırkamızca nutuklar söylenmelidir. Bir köyün muhtar intihabında, belediye ve mebus intihaplarında Fırka hatipleri yer yer nutuk söylemelidirler. § Mesela bir köyde umumî sünnet düğünü, kasabalarda panayır sebepleriyle toplanışlar hatiplerimizin faaliyetleri için iyi ve tabii bir zemin hazırlarlar." *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>41</sup> See the analysis of Zihni Orhon's speech in Chapter 11. For the translation, see Appendix.

Still, one location stood out in the party strategy in terms of ceremonial setting, almost tailored *ad hoc* for ritualized encounters between the people and the regime.

### 6.1. The Stage: The People's Houses

---

The People's Houses and the People's Preachers Organization were tightly connected. Their successive creation within five months indicates the Party's improvisational attitude towards resolving the problem of the spoken word. The People's Houses became the platform for the Preachers after their foundation. The CHP first created the People's Preachers Organization in 1931, and a few months later, on 19 February 1932, the People's Houses. These institutions were a space for social gatherings where people organized weddings, concerts, theater plays, radio broadcasts, and movie screenings.<sup>42</sup> The People's Houses were primarily an attempt to institutionalize the political communication of the Party. They were influenced by the existing nationalist cultural centers such as the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), which in Ottoman times had close ties with the CUP.<sup>43</sup>

The "lectures" (*konferans*) organized by the CHP connected the People's Preachers Organization to the People's Houses.<sup>44</sup> A borrowed word from French, "lecture" meant public lectures delivered often on a pulpit. In his *Conférences de Morterolles*, Alain Corbin worked on a similar setting in the late nineteenth century but had to imagine the content of these political *conférences* targeting adults.<sup>45</sup> Contrary to the *Conférences de Morterolles* that had to be imagined by the historian, the lectures delivered at the People's Houses were often announced and published in local newspapers or People's Houses magazines, leaving us valuable sources to know their content.

By 1938, the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses were interconnected to the degree that it was difficult to distinguish between them. In December 1938, the Party General Secretary sent a circular to the People's Houses and not to the provincial administrative boards of the Party requiring the updated lists of People's Preachers. The same

---

<sup>42</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 125-53.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, 28.

<sup>44</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*.

<sup>45</sup> Alain Corbin, *Les conférences de Morterolles, hiver 1895-1896 : à l'écoute d'un monde disparu* (Paris: Flammarion, 2011).



circular letter also demanded that the People's Houses prepare for the occasions to "benefit from the spoken word as the most effective means of communication."<sup>46</sup>

The People's Houses was a broader and more ambitious project than the People's Preachers Organization. In particular, a branch of the People's Houses connected the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses. Organizing lectures (*konferans*) was among the main objectives of the People's Houses "Language and Literature" branch. One of the main activities of the People's Houses was organizing "lectures," and their reports and statistics contained statistical information about them. The People's House in Elazığ, for instance, declared organizing fifty-one lectures on "language, national days, history and health, and social issues" diffused "with speakers" in 1935.<sup>47</sup> People's Houses also organized political ceremonies in which People's Preachers participated. An article published by *Ülkü* (Ideal) magazine in 1941 underlined the importance of the "Language and Literature" branch in organizing "lectures to root the Party principles by increasing the love for the motherland (*yurt sevgisi*) and the sentiment of citizenship responsibility."<sup>48</sup> The terms "preacher" or "orator" (*hatip*) and "lecturer" (*konferansçı*) were used interchangeably by the party leadership.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> "Mahalli Parti teşkilatı vasıtası ile yapılan müracatlardan ve icap eden tetkiklerden sonra vilayetinizden Halk Hatibi olarak seçilen arkadaşların isimleri merbut listelerde kayıtlıdır. Telkin vasıtalarının en müessiri olan "Söz" den faydalanmak ve bu arkadaşların konuşma kabiliyetlerinin inkişafına amil olmak için fırsat ve imkânların sık sık hazırlanmasını diler, sevgiler sunarım." Circular from the CHP General Secretary to the People's Houses, 6 December 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/4-19-21.

<sup>47</sup> "Dil, sayılı ulusal günler, tarihsel ve esenlik, sosyal konular üzerine 51 konferans vermiş ve konferansları koparlorlarla da yaymıştır. Günün ajans haberlerini hergün hoparlorla kente vermiştir. Ve vermektedir." "1935 Yılı Çalışmaları," *Altan: Elâziz Halkevi*, 23 February, 4.

<sup>48</sup> "Halkevleri'nde "Parti prensiplerinin kökleşmesine yurd sevgisinin ve yurddaşlık vazifeleri duygusunun yükselmesine yarıyacak mevzularda konferanslar vermek" Dil ve Edebiyat şubesinin vazifesidir. Tâlimatnâmede konferansların "halkı ilgilendirecek mâhiyette olması ve "ilmî fennî mevzularda bilhassa yeni buluşların halk diliyle iyzhâna" çalışılması istenmektedir." Kemal Ünal, "Halkevleri'nin Çalışmasında Bâzi Yeni Esaslar," *Ülkü*, 1940, 5.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

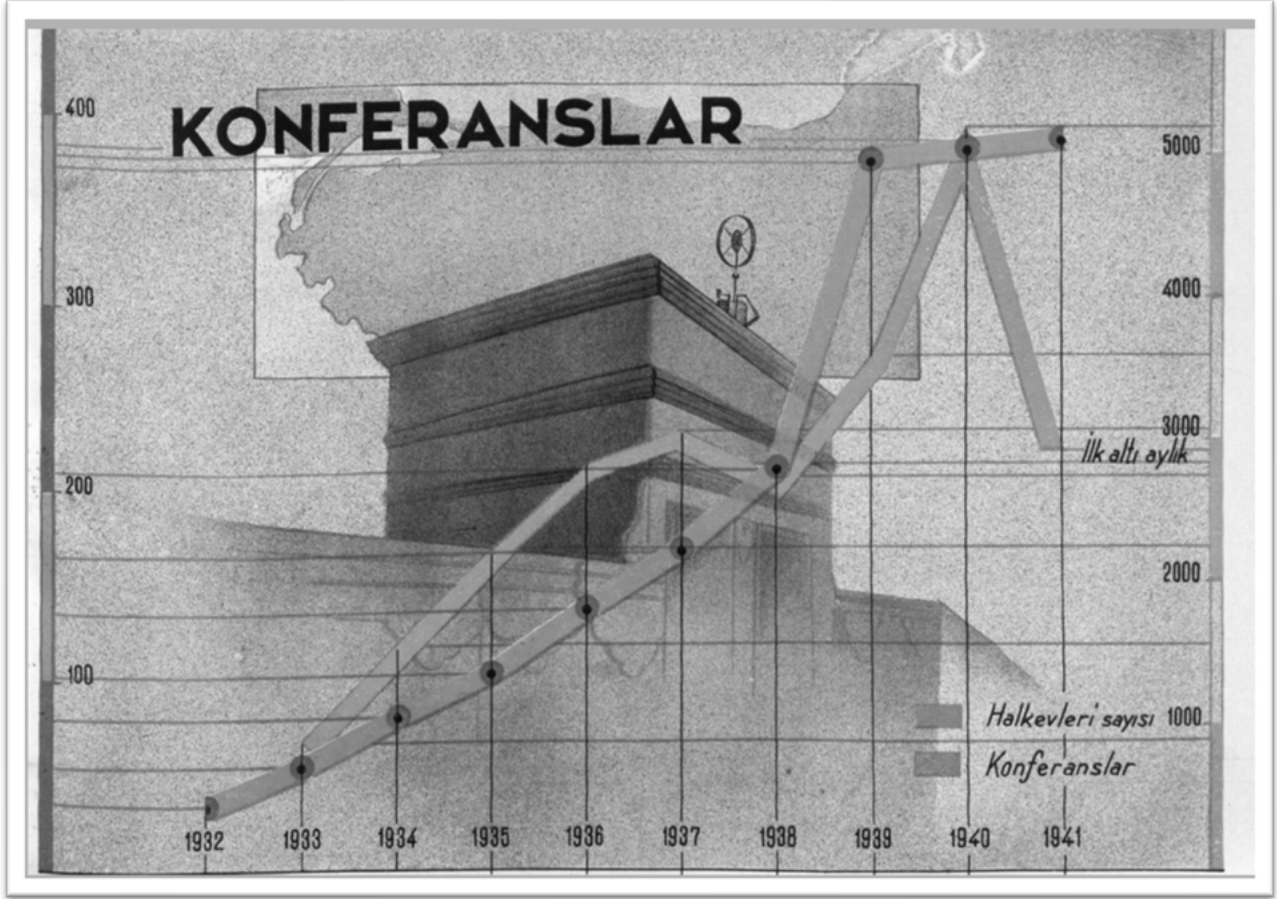


Figure 7. Graph showing the number of lectures per year (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halk Evleri ve Halk Odaları, 1942)

The People's Houses were also the place to train the "speakers" (*konferansçı*). In 1940, an article about the new principles of the People's Houses referred to the Party's past efforts and how it managed to organize lectures through the People's Houses, "prompting great interest in the country."<sup>50</sup> Moreover, The Sivas People's House was situated in the central district of the province (*Merkez Kazası*) and regularly published the magazine *Ortayayla* (named *Dört Eylül* after 1939). This magazine was among the most substantial publications by a People's House outside big metropolitan cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. The magazine provided

<sup>50</sup> "Halkevleri'nde konferansı teşvikden maksad, bir taraftan da konferansçı yetiştirmektir. Şimdiye kadarki hazırlıkların iyi bir neticesini yakında almış bulunuyoruz. Geçen Mayıs ve Haziran'da vilâyetlerden kazalara ve nahiyelere doğru Partice Halkevleri'nde verilen konferanslar memleketde büyük bir alaka uyandırmıştır." Ibid.

detailed information on its members and activities.<sup>51</sup> In 1938, the provincial party directorate selected nine preachers in Sivas central district (*merkez*). Six of them were also house members who regularly published in the magazine.<sup>52</sup>

The records of the People's Preachers Organization are closely connected with those of the People's Houses, both stored in the CHP's archive. A key intersection is Language Day, with files organized alphabetically by province. Some lists of People's Preachers are occasionally found in these Language Day documents. For example, the first file, covering Afyon from 1934 to 1947, contains seventy-five documents, and similar reports exist for every Turkish province.<sup>53</sup> Despite this level of organization, the files are not always perfectly ordered. In the Afyon file, for example, documents are misplaced among the reports. It is unclear whether this was due to the CHP General Secretary or because the archivist could not differentiate between the two organizations. After a few telegrams, a letter, and a speech transcription, the file unexpectedly includes a 33-page manuscript on the People's Preachers from Afyon and other provinces.<sup>54</sup>

This confusion in documentation and conservation can be explained by the fact that the same bureau of the Party dealt with the Preachers and the Houses. Since both organizations were interrelated and had similar objectives, neither the party leadership nor the Houses felt the need to distinguish between preachers and House members because several People's Preachers were actually simultaneously People's Houses members.<sup>55</sup> For the Party's internal correspondence, the People's Houses and the Party's local organization went hand in hand.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> These were the same magazines. *Dört Eylül* was previously called *Ortayayla*. The name was changed in 1939 to honor the reunion of Sivas Congress at the beginning of the national resistance movement following the end of World War I.

<sup>52</sup> Cemal Gültekin, Behram Altay, Bedia Tan, Ahmet Göze, Fevzi Kalkancı, and İbrahim Olcaytu. BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>53</sup> These documents were collected and digitized by Emmanuel Szurek within the framework of collective research projects funded by French National Research Funds. Later, they are also digitized by the state archives. I would like to express my gratitude to my master's thesis advisor, Emmanuel Szurek, for motivating me to pursue this subject matter on archives and generously providing me with access to digitized documents.

<sup>54</sup> Documents between pages 7 and 41 are about the People's Preachers Organization and not on Language Day. BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1166-93-1.

<sup>55</sup> For example, Abdullah Günel from Trabzon, 2 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-110-3.

<sup>56</sup> "23 Nisan çocuk bayramı haftası bu yıl da çocuk esirgeme kurumunca yurdun her tarafında canlı bir şekilde kutlanacaktır. Parti örgütlerimizin ve Halkevlerinin çocuk mevzuları üzerinde konferanslar vermek müsamereler tertip etmek suretile kutlama işine yardım etmelerini dilerim." Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 8 April 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-23.

As stated previously, the General Secretary of the Party strictly forbade using “People’s Preacher” as a title or rank. As a result, tracing the activities of the People’s Preachers in the press was difficult. Yet, an article published on 2 January 1938 referred to the speaker of a lecture delivered in the Ankara People’s Houses as a People’s Preacher.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, the provincial sections did not always respect this rule. Shortly after the circulation of the directives for the People’s Preaches, the General Secretary reminded the provincial directorates that ‘People’s Preacher’ was not a title but “only a responsibility that we give among ourselves to our friends from the party.”<sup>58</sup> Still, the People’s Houses occasionally referred to their members who deliver public speeches as “party preachers”<sup>59</sup> or “People’s Preachers.”<sup>60</sup>

Even without being recognized through an official title, the preachers soon became particularly recognizable by the citizens. This is also because the People’s Houses, in which they often performed, “turn[ed] urban public spaces into didactic environments.”<sup>61</sup> In some cases, this happened in the very heart of towns or cities. In others, though, some city centers were moved away from the historical downtowns to underline the break from imperial rule.<sup>62</sup> In the case of creating a new city center from scratch, the People’s Houses were new buildings generally facing the newly created “Republic Squares” in each city center, increasing their accessibility.

In new and old neighborhoods and buildings, the People’s Houses were conceived as alternative gathering spaces that would allow the transmission of politically relevant knowledge. The nexus between knowledge transmission and sociability was particularly apparent in the public library created in each People’s House. The Party General Secretary monitored the collections of these libraries, regularly sending newspapers, books, magazines,

---

<sup>57</sup> N. Baydar, “Halkevinin Yeni Halk Hatibi,” *Ulus*, 2 January 1938.

<sup>58</sup> Recep Peker to provincial directorates, 11 November 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/2-7-21.

<sup>59</sup> “Saat tam II de memurin Hükümet ve Halk Cumhuriyet meydanına toplanarak Partimiz Hatibi bir örneği ilişik söylevi verdi.” Report on the Language Day, Erdek (Balıkesir), 8 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1166-93-1.

<sup>60</sup> “Dil kurultayının açılması münasebetile trabzon belediye alanında halk hatibi iskender paşa baş öğretmeni hasan fahri tarafından halka verilen söylev süretidir.” Report on the Language Day, Trabzon, 24-28 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-110-3.

<sup>61</sup> Zeynep Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey : State, Space, and Ideology in the Early Republic*, 234.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, 176.

or brochures recommended by the Party.<sup>63</sup> They also had a lecture hall where members delivered lectures or staged theater plays. Incarnating the permeable threshold between the closed building with its institutional dimension and the open public space, the new People's Houses buildings were "designed with a second-floor balcony or a roof terrace" that could be used by the People's Preachers or other party orators to address the crowd outside the People's House building.<sup>64</sup>

The economic consequences of the long-term war effort and the Great Depression were felt on the stage of the People's Preachers. The Party built new buildings but struggled financially to finance these ambitious constructions. When the Party's provincial section did not build a new People's House, the Houses were located in the Party's provincial and district organizations. In these cases, creating a proper space for organizing the public lectures was difficult. In Manisa's Akhisar district, for example, the People's House director complained about the unfitness of the building used for the People's House in January 1937, pointing to the insufficiency of donations made by the local population.<sup>65</sup> The construction of the People's House in Manisa was not completed until 1944 "because of the circumstances." The word "circumstances" (*ahval*) was often used to refer to the Second World War in this period.<sup>66</sup> Even in these cases, lecture halls in the People's Houses were a priority. Despite the financial challenges, it was the first room built in the Akhisar People's House.<sup>67</sup>

New buildings were to integrate the broader scenery of new squares and neighborhoods corresponding to the CHP's urban planning ideals and political identity. Yet, in several cases, old buildings were even more telling of how interwoven this identity was with the recent past of the country: The stage on which the preachers intervened often stood on the ruins of

---

<sup>63</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and the People's Houses, 31 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-19.

<sup>64</sup> Zeynep Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey : State, Space, and Ideology in the Early Republic*, 231.

<sup>65</sup> "Ev olarak kullandığımız bina ihtiyaçlarımıza cevap vermektan pek uzak olduğundan inşasına teşebbüs ettiğimiz yeni binamızın mesarifi inşaiyesine karşılık teşkil etmek üzere halkımızın teberruati halen 13400 liraya baliğ olmuştur." From Akhisar People's House to the CHP General Secretary, 26 January 1937, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/846-346-4.

<sup>66</sup> An example case is the *Dünya Ahvali* lectures organized at the People's Houses in the 1940s. The lecture aimed at explaining the war to the local populations.

<sup>67</sup> "Parti ve Halkevi binamızın Ahval dolayısıyla henüz tamamlanmamış olan, yalnız temel kısmı bitmiş bulunan salon yerini gösterir iki adet planın leffen takdim kıldığımız arz eylerim derin saygılarımla." From CHP Akhisar district organization to the Party Inspector in the region, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1760-1143-1.

genocide or the population exchange, such as abandoned churches or houses belonging to Christians.

The property left by the forcibly removed populations was distributed to local notables, Muslim refugees (*muhacir*), or used by state institutions thanks to the Law of Abandoned Property.<sup>68</sup> Settling People's Houses on "abandoned" property was part of the party-state usurpation. The People's House of Isparta, for instance, was created in a house belonging to a Rum (Greek-Orthodox) inhabitant of the city who was forced to leave the country after the population exchange agreement.<sup>69</sup> The Kayseri People's House operated in an Armenian church that was first usurped by the Turkish Hearths, another nationalist cultural center that closed shortly before the foundation of the People's Houses.<sup>70</sup> The People's House in Mersin was built on a "former church building."<sup>71</sup> Lastly, the People's House in Gaziantep was built on the Armenian Catholic Church of Kendirli (See Figure 8).<sup>72</sup> built in 1860 with the financial help of Napoléon III. The city of Gaziantep, formerly called Antep, obtained this honorary title, referring to a warrior's fight against the "infidels," to commemorate the local involvement in the War of Independence. In the early republican era, the church and the neighboring Latin Catholic school first hosted a Teachers' Training College turned into the People's House in 1932. A small balcony was added to the Latin School building on the east side of the Kendirli Church. This balcony became famous for being the stage for Mustafa Kemal's speech during his visit to Gaziantep in 1933.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Oya Gözel Durmaz, "The Distribution of the Armenian Abandoned Properties in an Ottoman Locality: Kayseri (1915–18)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 5 (2015); Ümit Kurt, "The Plunder of Wealth through Abandoned Properties Laws in the Armenian Genocide," *Genocide Studies International* 10, no. 1 (2016). Taner Akçam, "The Spirit of the Law: Following the Traces of Genocide in the Law of Abandoned Property," *International Criminal Law Review* 14, no. 2 (2014). Next to Kendirli Church, another example is People's House of the province of Kayseri, that is also built on an usurped Armenian church. See: Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 62.

<sup>69</sup> Ülkü Çelebi Gürkan, "Modernin İzini Sürmek: Yok Olan Bir Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlık Örneği Olarak Isparta Halkevi Binası," *İdealkent* 13, no. 35 (2022): 104.

<sup>70</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 44.

<sup>71</sup> "Konferanslara ve temsillere tahsis edilen ve eskiden kilise olan muhasebeî hususiyeye ait bir bina genişlik itibarile kafi, fakat tertibat ve şekli mimari noktai nazarıdan maksada uygunsuzdur." Ömer Asım Aksoy to the CHP General Secretary, 10 March 1936, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-896-1.

<sup>72</sup> Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*, 189.

<sup>73</sup> "'Centre' for Turkish Archaeology is Ready: The Turkish Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Institute is opening its doors on 25 October 2023 in Gaziantep," Delegation of the European Union to Türkiye, updated 25 October 2023, accessed 13 January 2024, [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/t%C3%BCrkiye/centre-turkish-archaeology-ready-turkish-archaeology-and-cultural-heritage-institute-opening-its\\_en?s=230](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/t%C3%BCrkiye/centre-turkish-archaeology-ready-turkish-archaeology-and-cultural-heritage-institute-opening-its_en?s=230).



**Figure 8. Gaziantep People’s House was built on the Kendirli Church. building in the central district of Antep, which was “abandoned” following the Armenian Genocide.**

Converting churches into party buildings and People’s Houses was not systematic. In the Harput district of Elazığ, for instance, churches were left to ruin after the relocation of the city center away from the historical city center.<sup>74</sup> This lack of a uniform policy concerning the aftermath of the genocide indicates that there were no central decisions concerning the management of abandoned property but arrangements to fit the local context. The use of churches as People’s Houses is interesting in contrasting the narrative of “forgetting and erasure” concerning the destruction of the Ottoman Christians. In the case of Antep and Kayseri, the repurposing of Christian sacred spaces into republican and secular spaces of

---

<sup>74</sup> Zeynep Kezer, “The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey: Spatializing Difference,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73, no. 4 (2014).

gathering points to a type of recognition – and even celebration – of the destruction of the local Christian communities rather than forgetting and erasure of the violent past.

## 6.2. The Staging

---

Taking into account the materiality of the stage on which People’s Preachers addressed their public allows us to understand the non-verbal aspects of their speeches that played an integral role in their implicit references and reception. The General Secretary of the Party also oversaw the People’s Preachers’ performances. This staging determined the preaching content, the preachers’ clothing, the spatial disposition of speakers and participants, and the material layout of the stage (the “props”) on which the preachers addressed their audience. In other words, the self-presentation as the Party’s spokespeople merged the content of the lectures with the visual performance aimed at captivating the audience. These visual and material details played a decisive role in the illocutionary force of the nationalist sermons.<sup>75</sup>

Political celebrations were theatrical performances. The CHP General Secretary acted as their stage manager. Similar to the *Mostra della rivoluzione fascista* organized in Italy in 1932 to celebrate the decennial of Mussolini’s Blackshirts March on Rome,<sup>76</sup> the decennial of the Turkish Republic celebrated throughout the country in October 1933 was exemplary for staging political ceremonies in the early republican era. The Party closely monitored the organization of the decennial celebration through the “10th Anniversary Commission.”<sup>77</sup> The commission cared for each detail of the celebrations, ranging from the preparation of the posters and the selection of the theater pieces to be played to the poetry to be recited.<sup>78</sup> Writers with ideological affinities aligned with the CHP, such as the famous novelist and playwright Reşat Nuri [Güntekin], wrote plays to be staged. The Party also launched literary competitions

---

<sup>75</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Le langage autorisé,” 183; Bruno Ambroise, “Une conception non scolastique de l’efficacité linguistique. Bourdieu lecteur d’Austin,” in *Pierre Bourdieu* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 2009).

<sup>76</sup> Marla Stone, “Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 2 (1993); Claudio Fogu, *The Historic Imaginary : Politics of History in Fascist Italy*, Toronto Italian Studies, (Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

<sup>77</sup> BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1150-35-2; 1150-37-1.

<sup>78</sup> Correspondence between Recep Peker, the director of the “High Commission for the celebration of the 10th anniversary” and the Advisor to the Prime Minister Kemal Bey, 14 October 1933, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/198-352-13; BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1150-37-1.



to produce “national literature” and determined the popular songs and epopees to be used during celebrations.<sup>79</sup>

The Republic’s decennial lasted for three days in 1933, and this duration laid out the blueprint for many other celebrations organized by the People’s Houses in the single-party rule.<sup>80</sup> These festivals involved high budgets, fashionable between 1933 and 1938.<sup>81</sup> This emphasis on long-lasting celebrations illustrates the party leadership’s ambition to make political rituals a part of their political communication strategy. Political rituals aim to “draw the attention of their participants to objects of thought and feeling which they hold to be of special significance.”<sup>82</sup> They allow the renewal of the internal agreement about society’s common values, which the party leadership considered key for the sustainability of their revolution.<sup>83</sup>

The paper trail of other political celebrations followed the same pattern as that of Republic Day, which was organized in 1933. Generally, we have enough elements to note that the General Secretary of the CHP sent a circular to provincial directorates for each ceremony requiring minutes including information on the active participants of the events (speakers, musicians, those who recite poetry), names of the theater pieces staged, and a list of activities organized for the festivity with occasional timetables. We found a circular containing the order to organize a ceremony that was both sent to all the country’s People’s Houses and to regions where the Party did not open a People’s House containing the order to organize a ceremony. In response to this circular, we have reports from each provincial directorate, People’s House, or People’s Room (in villages) with meeting minutes elaborating on different activities set up for the ceremony. Moreover, the Houses complemented their reports almost systematically with summaries or transcriptions of the speeches delivered.

---

<sup>79</sup> BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1150-37-1.

<sup>80</sup> “Program for the ceremony of the 10th anniversary,” BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/198-352-13. See also Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*, 229.

<sup>81</sup> The Language Day was celebrated twice in 1936 for five days. In August 1936, it was celebrated between 24 August 1936 and 28 August 1936, and then, a second time on 26 September 1936.

<sup>82</sup> Steven Lukes, “Political Ritual and Social Integration,” *Sociology* 9, no. 2 (1975): 291.

<sup>83</sup> Steven Lukes criticizes the anthropological consensus according to which liberal societies are held together by shared moral and political values. Still, given the emphasis on “principles and values” in the CHP’s internal correspondence, we can say that the party leadership believed in the efficacy of these rituals. See *ibid.*, 298.

These ceremonies followed the same ritual pattern as in other ceremonies where public speeches played a key role. They all started with a wreath-laying ceremony and included singing the national anthem, concerts, and other shows aimed at entertaining the audience in between the core activity of the celebrations: public speeches. All these events were organized at the People’s Houses, a public square, or a school or municipality garden to increase their visibility. The distribution of food, tea, coffee, or even cigarettes was done to attract a larger audience.<sup>84</sup> The audience of each political celebration or public lecture was also supposed to sit in a precise order. High-ranking state officials were often seated on the first row. They often wore formal clothing such as tie suits, and militaries participated in wearing their uniforms. Schoolchildren often seated or stood in a separate location. They participated with their school uniforms or costumes for their prepared shows.<sup>85</sup>

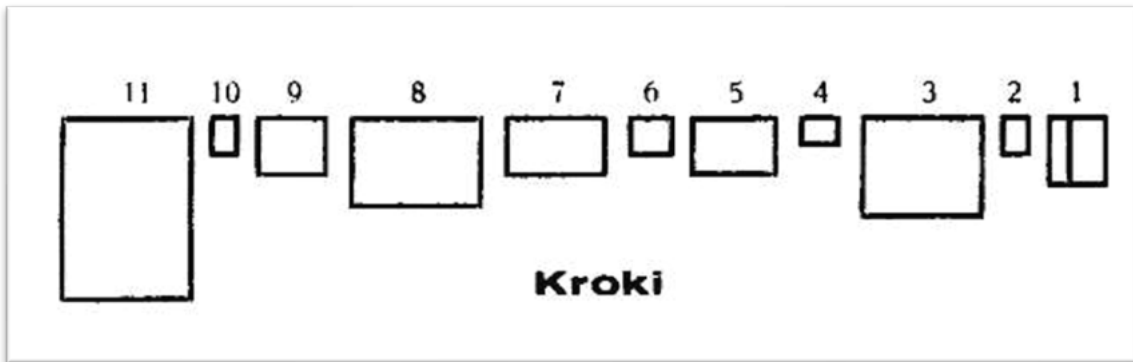


Figure 9. The order of precedence for the celebration of the decennial of the Republic, 1933.

The following sketch was drawn for the Republic’s ten-year anniversary. The first line was dedicated to civil and military officers based on rank. The second line was for reserve officers. The third line was for soldiers, and the fourth was for war veterans. The fifth line was for the gendarmes, followed by the policemen. The seventh line was for the Boy Scouts. The eighth line was allocated for schools, including their teachers and students, followed by the athletes. The tenth line was reserved for charitable organizations, and the last line was for the “people”

<sup>84</sup> İzmir and Iğdır Language Day, Ankara and Dinar Afyon Language Day, 26 September 1934, Kastamonu, Kilis 1936, Buldan Denizli August 1936

<sup>85</sup> Celebration reports often mentioned recited poetry by students. Celebration photos show that the students were seated separately.

without distinction of “class.”<sup>86</sup> This order of precedence explicitly hierarchizes different professional groups. Military personnel are prioritized over law-and-order agents, who are, in turn, prioritized over other civil servants, such as teachers.

Regardless of the location, the preachers were to speak on a high platform. The directives prepared for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic specified that the orators should deliver their speech on a wooden platform “at least half a meter high” decorated by party flags with six arrows.<sup>87</sup> The People’s Houses followed the rule of the wooden platform in other ceremonies, such as the funeral for Mustafa Kemal, which was organized in Denizli on 21 November 1938 (See Figure 4). Sometimes, they spoke behind a desk<sup>88</sup> or against a blackboard.<sup>89</sup> The elevated platform combined with the designation of the propagandists as “preachers” is again reminiscent of the Islamic preacher and his *minbar*. At the same time, using the blackboard resembles a secular learning situation. This way of addressing crowds for political purposes was common in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere long before the People’s Preachers Organization was created.

Their surrounding was decorated with political symbols. The Turkish flag, the party flag, portraits of Mustafa Kemal, and slogans of the new regime were the background of the speeches delivered by the People’s Preachers. The Party’s provincial sections prepared posters with slogans about the particular event, especially during political celebrations. For the decennial, three posters explained different aspects of the Republic. The first poster was prepared with the CHP flag on which six ideological pillars of the Republic showed: “We are republicans, nationalists, populists, statist, seculars (*lâikiz*), and revolutionaries.” Using the party flag for the decennial celebrations showed the strict association of the “republic” for the Party, which is not very surprising given the single-party era.

Early republican reforms, such as the alphabet change, were also associated with the “republic,” making their potential contestation a matter of reaction to the republican order. Another poster explained the “Alphabet Reform,” showing the difficulty of reading old letters

---

<sup>86</sup> The correspondence of the High Commission for the Decennial of the Republic, 14 October 1933, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/198-352-13.

<sup>87</sup> Halk Kürsüleri Öğreneği, 1937, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/132-534-3.

<sup>88</sup> Language Day Reports, Kayseri, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1168-104-3.

<sup>89</sup> Language Day Reports, Çorum, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-98-2.

written differently depending on their place within a word. The last one was dedicated to the “Turkish peasantry” and mentioned that they were the “true owners” of the country. The digitized image of the poster was not fully legible. The poster mentioned peasantry whose “blood we shed for seven centuries” and whose “bones we left in foreign lands,” whose “toil we took from their hands.” The poster criticized the old regime for “dishonoring, humiliating,” and “accusing” the peasantry of “ungratefulness, arrogance” and reducing them to the position of “servants.”<sup>90</sup>

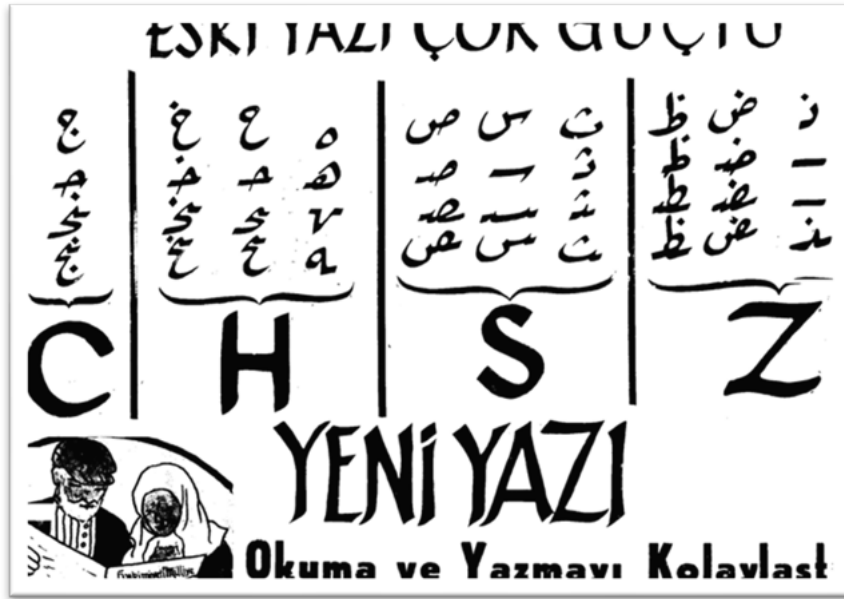


Figure 10. Poster about the Alphabet Reform prepared for the Republic Day, 1933.

“The old script was very difficult. The new script will facilitate reading and writing. A peasant-looking man with the ‘peasant cap’ and a veiled old woman are shown in the left-hand corner of the poster reading the official newspaper, *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (Sovereignty of the Nation).

<sup>90</sup> “Türk köylüsü için: yedi asırdan beri cihanın dört köşesine se(...) ederek kanlarını akıttığımız, kemikleri(...) yabancı topraklarda bıraktığımız ve Yedi asırdanberi emeklerini ellerinden alıp is(...) eylediğimiz ve Buna mukabil daima, tahkir, terzil ile mukab(ele) eylediğimiz ve Bunca fedâkarlıklarına ve ihsanlarına kar(şı) nankörlük, küstahlık, cebbarlıkla, uşaklık menziles(ine) indirmek istediğimiz BU ASIL SAHİBİN HUZURUND(A) BU GÜN HAKİKİ İHTİRAMI(ZDIR)” Correspondence of the High Commission for the Decennial of the Republic, 10 October 1933, BCA MGM 30-10-0/198-352-13.

The attire choices of the People's Preachers was integral to their performance, potentially conveying messages to their audience. However, available sources on the clothing of People's Preachers are limited. Instructions regarding attire were notably absent. While reports sent by provincial administrative committees to the party general secretary occasionally included photos from organized ceremonies, their inclusion was inconsistent. The sporadic nature of these photos reflects both the documentation challenges and the era's technological limitations. Nevertheless, the selective inclusion of these images suggests deliberate attempts to showcase the success and grandeur of specific events, indicating the provincial administrative committees' desire to demonstrate their achievements to the General Secretary. The irregularity of visual sources concerning the People's Preachers introduces biases, potentially favoring successful cases rather than providing a comprehensive view of Anatolian provinces during the early republican period. Despite these limitations, a close examination of the photographic trail of the People's Preachers provides valuable insights into their social distinction and political significance.

The People's preachers often dressed in formal Western attire, such as Panama hats, European-style suits with ties or bowties, and clean-shaven faces for men, sometimes complemented by a well-shaped mustache. Women typically wore dark-colored knee-length dresses or suits, styled with tightly combed hair worn without headscarves. Following a strict seating order, the audience also appeared to contrast these clothing choices when discernible in photos. Military-clad men were often seen grouped together alongside other individuals wearing formal Western attire. Occasionally, individuals in peasant-like attire - such as baggy trousers and flat caps ("peasant caps" in Modern Turkish) - could be spotted at the margins of postcards sent to the general secretary.



**Figure 11. Woman delivers a speech on a wooden platform decorated with the Turkish flags. 21 November 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1433-739-1.**



**Figure 12. Şevket Süreyya Aytaç, a People's House member delivering a speech on an elevated platform covered with a carpet. Courtesy of Aydın, Demir, and Işık Aytaç. (1930s)**

Their adoption of European-style formal or modern military attire distinguished the orators from their audience. The arrangement of seating or standing further underscored the contrast between local administrators, military personnel, and other civil servants—representing the state—and the rest of the population. This distinction was reinforced by the choices of clothing. In essence, the attire of the People’s Preachers aligned more closely with that of the administrative elites (governors, district governors, and other civil servants working in the provincial administration) rather than the supposedly “common” people (*halk*) in their audience. By embracing the clothing style mandated since the enactment of the Hat Law (*Şapka Kanunu*) in November 1925, which applied to deputies and state employees, the People’s Preachers embodied the civilizational aspirations of the Republic, echoing the two public addresses delivered by Mustafa Kemal in respectively in August and November 1925.<sup>91</sup>



**Figure 13. Mustafa Kemal arriving to Kastamonu 24 August 1925.**

<sup>91</sup> “İdarei umumiye ve hususiye ve mahalliye ve bilûmum müessesata mensup memurin ve müsdahdem” “Şapka iktisası hakkında kanun,” *Resmî Ceride* (Ankara), 24 November 1925 [25 Teşrinisâni 1344] 1925, *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 1 September 1925.

In August 1925, Mustafa Kemal visited Kastamonu accompanied by Prime Minister Refik Saydam, Health Minister Fevzi Paşa, and Hamdullah Suphi Bey. During this visit, Mustafa Kemal delivered a speech advocating the adoption of European-style hats over traditional Ottoman headgear like the turban and the fez. In the accompanying imagery, Mustafa Kemal and his entourage are depicted holding their Panama hats, with a young man observed wearing an Ottoman hat behind Mustafa Kemal on his right-hand side.<sup>92</sup>

Mustafa Kemal inaugurated his speech by saluting the “*münevver*” (enlightened) people of the city. He criticized some individuals’ use of religious clothing as a tool of social distinction despite their lack of education and authorization by the Direction of Religious Affairs.<sup>93</sup> He targeted some allegedly “illiterate” sheiks, dervishes, and their disciples for hiding themselves behind their attire. Ridiculing a person within his audience of wearing both the Ottoman fez worn since Mahmud II mandated its use as the modern headdress for the army and a turban connoting religious rank, a traditional shirt, and a European-style jacket at the same time, he incited his audience – starting from the civil servants but extending to the “whole nation” – to choose between the “civilized” attire in circulation before the adoption of the law and traditional clothing.

According to Mustafa Kemal’s speech, clothing was a marker of “enlightenment” (*münevverlik*) and “civilization” (*medeniyet*) because it allowed them to overcome the “superstitious” utterances diffused by the accused sheiks and their disciples. Mustafa Kemal aimed to “eradicate superstitions” and religious opposition to his rule by prohibiting religious

---

<sup>92</sup> Kastamonu: Mustafa Kemal is entering to the city, he is going to make a speech which recommends weaing hats, 24 August 1925, Salt Research, FFT755079.

<sup>93</sup> “Hükümeti Cumhuriyetimizin bir Diyanet İşleri Riyaseti Makamı vardır. Bu makam merbut müftü, hatip, imam gibi muvazzaf birçok memurlar bulunmaktadır. Bu vazifedar zevatın ilimleri, faziletleri derecesi malumdur. Ancak bu yolda vazifedar olmayan bir çok insanlar da görüyorum ki, aynı kıyafet iktisasında berdevamdırlar. Bu gibiler içinde çok cahil hatta ümmi olanlarına tesadüf ettim. Bilhassa bu gibi cühela, bazı yerlerde halkın mümessilleriymiş gibi onların önüne düşüyorlar. Halkla doğrudan doğruya temasa adeta bir mani teşkil etmek sevdasında bulunuyorlar. Bu gibilere sormak istiyorum. Bu sıfat ve selahiyeti kimden, nereden almışlardır. Malum olduğuna göre milletin mümessilleri intihap ettikleri mebuslar ve onlardan teşekkül eden Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, Meclisin itimadına mahzar Hükümeti Cumhuriyettir. Bir de mahalli müntehap belediye reisler ve heyetleri vardır. Millete hatırlatmak isterim ki, bu laubaliliğe müsaade etmek asla caiz değildir. Her halde sahibi salahiyyet olmayan bu gibi kimselerin muvazzaf olan zevat ile aynı kisveyi taşımalarındaki mahzuru hükümetin nazarı dikkatine vazedeceğim.” Mustafa Kemal’s Kastamonu speech, 30 August 1925. Ibid.



leaders from wearing traditional attire.<sup>94</sup> Adopting European-style clothing signified a move towards modernity and alignment with “civilization.” Mustafa Kemal claimed: “Gentlemen and fellow citizens know well that the Republic of Turkey cannot be a homeland for sheiks, dervishes, disciples, or adherents. The most accurate and genuine path (*tarikât*) is the path of civilization (*tarikât-ı medeniye*).”<sup>95</sup>

Therefore, by creating the People’s Preachers Organization along with their “civilized” attire, the republican leadership could achieve two goals at once. The People’s Preachers provided an alternative to traditional forms of oral communication organized around Sufi sheiks and mosque preachers. In a context where wearing clothes connoting religious notability was increasingly restricted, the People’s Preachers adopted a uniform representing a new type of notability associated with the state. By donning European-style clothing when addressing crowds on behalf of the Party, they became champions of the civilizational ideals promoted by the Republican leadership. Additionally, their attire allowed them to embody what is usually called “revolution” (*inkılâp*) in 1930s Turkey.

The 29 March 1934 issue of the satirical *Akbaba* magazine expressed the aspiration to replace traditional religious figures with new secular ones within the context of the Turkish “revolution.” On the cover, a middle-aged man in a Western-style suit and bowtie addresses a crowd energetically, suggesting the educational nature of his lecture. Since Recep Peker was delivering his Revolution Lectures at the same time at Istanbul and Ankara Universities, the cartoon likely referred to his lectures. The audience is depicted as a mass of individuals without distinct physical features, except for the visible Western-style hats worn by those closer to the focal point of the cartoon. Two men observe the lecture from behind a gate. The man on the left, wearing a turban and a jubbah, is identifiable as a religious dignitary. The man on the right, sporting a Panama hat and a black blazer, represents a secular figure. The secular-looking man invites the hodja to discuss the revolution as well. The hodja responds that such discussion

---

<sup>94</sup> “Kuşkusuz, zihinlerde mevcut olan tüm hurafeler tamamen yok edilecektir.” Mustafa Kemal’s Kastamonu speech, 30 August 1925. Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> “Efendiler ve ey millet iyi biliniz ki Türkiye Cumhuriyeti şeyhler, dervişler, müritler, mensuplar memleketi olamaz. En doğru ve en hakiki tarikat, tarikatı medeniyedir.” Mustafa Kemal’s Kastamonu speech, 30 August 1925, ibid.

is unnecessary because the audience, whom he refers to as the *cemaat*, already understands what the revolution entails.



Figure 14. Akbaba cover, 29 March 1934.

Revolution lecture:

- Hodja, why don't you come in and explain the revolution?
- No need, my child. Seeing this many people, it's already understood...<sup>96</sup>

It is challenging to position Akbaba within the political landscape of 1930s Turkey. While many cartoons in the magazine reflected the concerns of a particular Istanbul elite regarding the changes brought by the new regime, it generally endorsed republican values, including secularization. The founders and regular contributors of the magazine, Yusuf Ziya Ortaç and

---

<sup>96</sup> *İnkılâp dersi*: - Hoca, sen de girip inkılâbı anlatsana... - Hacet yok evlât, bu kadar cemaati görünce anlaşıyor... "İnkılâp Dersi," *Akbaba*, 29 March 1934.

Orhan Seyfi Orhon became CHP deputies after the 1946 elections. Ramiz Gökçe, the cartoonist who drew the examined cartoon, became critical of the CHP, especially after the 1946 elections. This cartoon illustrates the caricaturist's interest in the replacement of Islamic preachers' "community of the believers" (*cemaat*) with that of republican and secular university professors and preachers. Their attire, as well as those of the audience, was different from the traditional clothing that the party leadership wanted to change. Still, as the section has argued, there was often a clear distinction between the men and women of the state and the rest of the population when examining the photos sent to the CHP General Secretary.

### 6.3. The Performance

---

Whereas the directives contained recommendations concerning the setting and the purpose of the lectures, by the time preachers walked on their elevated platform, a significant part of the performance rested in their own bodies and voices. The People's Preachers were supposed to keep notebooks with the "principles" of their speeches. While they had the freedom to write down their speeches (*nutuklar ve hitabeler*) or speak freely, the General Secretary deemed "saying by mouth" (*ağızdan söylemek*) more efficient to "have an influence" on "people's feelings" rather than reading. Having an outline with the structure of the speeches on paper was, nevertheless, important since the speeches "without a precise subject" ran the risk of having an "opposite" impact. In sum, the preachers were supposed to memorize their speeches and perform before their audience.<sup>97</sup>

Aware of the risks involved in this practice, the party leadership planned measures to train the preachers. The People's Preachers' social distinction and familiarity with different forms of knowledge and educational institutions were necessary but not enough. The CHP created a mechanism of training and control between the party general secretary in Ankara and the provincial party sections. The general secretary sent orders using circulars for the training of the preachers, to which were attached textual resources such as printed party programs,

---

<sup>97</sup> "Fırkanın iyi hatiplerinin esasları kaydeden not defterleri bulunmalıdır. Nutuk ve hitabeler ya yazılı kağıttan okunur ve yahut ağızdan söylenir. Fakat halkın hisleri üzerinde tesir yapılmak istenen mevzuların okumaktan ziyade söylemek tarzında telkini muhakkaktır. Hatip bu tarzda söylerken madde başları yazılı bir nota bakabilir. Yazısız söylenen nutukların esassız ve mevzusuz olması çok fena ve mekûs bir tesir yapacağı daima akılda tutulmalı ve söylenenecek mühim esaslar ehemmiyetine göre ezberlenmelidir." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 9-10.

brochures, textbooks, and pamphlets. It monitored the press subscriptions on the premises of the Party's provincial organization, including the People's Houses (*Halkevleri*). These books included those published by the People's House members themselves and leading party members about history, literature, and more technical issues.<sup>98</sup> These documents instructed the party preachers on the "fundamental concepts" they should convey to their audience.<sup>99</sup> Additionally, public oratory courses were planned to prepare the selected preachers further. The party headquarters or provincial directorates appointed the instructors for these oratory courses.<sup>100</sup>

Since the inception of the founding document of the People's Preachers Organization, the training of preachers has been a priority for the Party. However, this training left scant traces in the party archives. From scattered application documents and other records within the party archives, we find evidence that some People's House directors, People's Preachers, or occasionally actors organized training sessions on the art of oratory. For instance, Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş, the director of the Gaziantep People's House from 1935, conducted sessions on oratory art in the lecture room of the People's House.<sup>101</sup> Kemal Emin Bara (1876-1957) a well-known actor renowned for his roles in films such as "Bloody Stones" (*Kanlı Taşlar*, 1948) and "The Paint that Won't Go Away" (*Dinmeyen Sızı*, 1949), reached out to the CHP general secretary in 1950 to express his desire to become a CHP deputy. In his application letter, Bara promoted himself by highlighting his "courses" on "guidance (*irşad*) and oratory art," as well as his "lectures" held at the People's Houses.<sup>102</sup>

The People's Preachers Organization directives did not discuss the duration of the speeches. The directives for People's Chairs and a lecture series organized in 1935 ordered provincial

---

<sup>98</sup> Books sent to the People's Houses, 19 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-19.

<sup>99</sup> "Merkezce hatiplere esas olacak bazı mefhumlar tanzim edilip göndereceğimiz gibi Fırka programımızın şerh ve izahı için de broşürler yapıp bunları da göndereceğiz." *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 10.

<sup>100</sup> "Bu kurslar evvelâ mühimlerinden başlanarak birkaç Vilâyetten ve sonraları tedricen diğer vilâyetlerimizden kendileri tarafınan seçilen veyahut merkezce uzaktan tanılıp tesbit edilen istidatlı zatlardan ve bu vazifeyi filen yaparken mahallerince liyakat ile temayüz eden arkadaşlar celb olunarak umumî bir surette yetiştirileceklerdir." *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>101</sup> Gaziantep Halkevi, *Gaziantep Halkevi Broşürü* (Halk Fırkası Matbaası, 1935).

<sup>102</sup> "Fırkadaki fa'aliyetim, Eminönü Halkevinde irşad ve hitabet dersleri, konferanslar, ve icab eden günlerde parti namına nutuklar vermekten ibarettir." Kemal Emin Bara's application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1420-1.

sections to avoid preparing speeches that would last more than an hour.<sup>103</sup> Since the largest and most systematically documented event was Language Day, the corpus of Language Day allows us to reflect on the duration of the speeches. Among the 217 speech transcriptions I could retrieve from the digitized archives of Language Day, the longest was the one delivered in Konya, Çiftemerdiven, by a primary school teacher, Sabit Günyay. This speech was 3800 words long. If the speaker had been loyal to the text he had sent to the CHP General Secretary, this speech would have taken between 25 and 31 minutes, depending on his speaking rate.<sup>104</sup> The shortest speech transcription was sent from Denizli and was 680 words long, which should have taken around five minutes.

The Party aimed to control the content of the speeches delivered by the People's Preachers as much as possible. For the decennial of the Republic, the Party sent a sample lecture but did not receive speech transcriptions. A series of Ankara-led lectures organized in March 1936 sent "Revolution lectures" delivered in Istanbul and Ankara Universities by the Minister of the Interior Recep Peker to give an idea of the common themes and required speech transcriptions from all provinces. Some lectures delivered by university professors at the Ankara People's House were published in booklet format and sent to the People's Houses as examples.<sup>105</sup>

The return of the speech transcriptions was not regular. The Party received speech transcriptions from only a few provinces for the Independence and Revolution lectures.<sup>106</sup> In 1936, the Language Reform was celebrated twice in the People's Houses (August and September). The Party General Secretary sent preparatory documents through the Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) and required speech transcriptions. Around two hundred speech transcriptions were sent back to the party headquarters. Again, in 1940, the Party ordered a lecture on the ongoing war called "The Situation in the World" (*Dünya Ahvali*,

---

<sup>103</sup> "Her bir konferans en çok bir saat sürecektir." Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17. *Cumhuriyet'in İlanı Yıl Dönümünde İstifade Edilecek Halk Kürsüleri Talimatı*.

<sup>104</sup> Speech transcription by Sabit Günyay, Çiftemerdiven, Konya, 26 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1163-105-3.

<sup>105</sup> Wilhelm Peters, *Sosyal Bakımdan Ruhî İnkışaf*; Nurettin Sevin, *Pedagojik Temsiller*. I could trace 27 booklets based on the lectures delivered at the Ankara People's House.

<sup>106</sup> Parti genyönkurulu, bu yıl bütün Partilileri, Halkevlerinde çalışanları ve bütün gücümüzü kullanarak – imkân altına alabilirsek – bütün yurttaşları bugünkü yeni Türkiye varlığının temeli ve dayanağı olan iki ana mefhum üzerinde aydınlatmağa karar verdi. Circular from the CHP General Secretary, signed by Kütahya deputy Recep Peker, 24 December 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-3-11.

literally “World Circumstances”). The circular letter concerning “World Circumstances” lectures did not reference a sample lecture or brochure. Yet, given these lectures often referred to wartime heroism and more practical aspects of parachutists and chemical weapons, it is possible that the speakers benefited from the books found in the People’s Houses libraries about these issues.<sup>107</sup> The provincial sections did not report this lecture systematically either.<sup>108</sup> Speech transcriptions were required and sent almost systematically after 1936. But it never reached the scope of the Language Day celebrations in its prime.

Despite the lack of lecture minutes or speech transcriptions, the General Secretary of the Party received celebration or lecture reports with short comments on the speeches’ efficiency and the number of participants. Following the Party’s order, some People’s Houses also informed the local and national press on the events they organized. As a result, the local and national press reported many lectures and celebrations, publishing the speeches delivered for these occasions. In December 1932, the Istanbul People’s House announced on *Son Posta* (The Last Post) the lecture’s delay in adopting European time, calendar, and units of measurement.<sup>109</sup> In January 1938, *Ulus* (Nation) reported a lecture in the Ankara People’s House on the environmental importance of planting trees.<sup>110</sup>

The party leadership had partial control over the speeches’ content and topic. While some topics required circular letters and framing documents such as sample speeches and brochures, others were left to the preference of the preachers or the local party organizations. The lecture reports other than those from Language Day were collected in separate files. Each file contained lecture reports roughly from 1932 to 1945. The size and scope of the files varied enormously, reflecting again the organizational disparities between provinces. Some provinces, such as Van, produced few documents while others, such as Istanbul and Izmir, did

---

<sup>107</sup> Mümtaz Özay, *Zehirli Gaz ve Hava Hücumlarından Korunma Çareleri* (Istanbul: Halk Basımevi, 1935); Hüsni Vural, *Muharebe Gazları ve Korunma Çareleri* (Istanbul: Cezaevi Matbaası, 1936). List of the books sent to the People’s Houses, 19 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-19.

<sup>108</sup> A great example of different individuals producing lecture reports can be found in the file documenting the organization of lectures on World War II in Kars., 1940, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>109</sup> “23/12/1932 cuma günü saat 15te Halkevi merkezinde yeni ölçüler hakkında verileceği ilan olunan konferans başka bir güne tehir edilmiştir. Konferans tarihi ayrıca tekrar ilan edilecektir.” “Konferans Tehir Edildi,” *Son Posta*, 11 December, 13.

<sup>110</sup> N. Baydar, “Halkevinin Yeni Halk Hatibi.”

so in hundreds. Speech transcriptions and summaries were occasionally sent to the party General Secretary, but they were not obligatory for all lectures.

The decennial celebration of the Republic stood out among the events organized by the CHP General Secretary. Yet, the most meticulously orchestrated were the celebrations of the Language Revolution in 1934 and 1936. But instead of sending sample speeches, the Party charged the Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) with sending explanatory brochures. In 1936, a circular letter ordered the organization of lectures on “Independence and Revolution.” For this lecture series, the Party prepared a booklet based on the university lectures of its general secretary.

From 1936 onwards, the rhythm changed. The flow of sample lectures ebbed, and the detailed directives, once abundant, grew sparse. The number of circular letters faded progressively until the start of the Second World War. The war’s onset stirred the party leadership into action, conjuring a new series of lectures about the war and the looming possibility of entry into a new conflict. Between 1936 and 1940, the People’s Houses had a relative latitude about the topics of their regular lectures. Except for the lectures for Language Day, Republic Day, and the Independence and Revolution, the People’s Houses and the provincial administrative committees of the CHP had certain leeway. They chose the topics themselves and sent lecture reports when they saw fit. Gaziantep organized more lectures on military victories and commemorations of local independence. Elazığ privileged the topics related to public health, such as the “dangers of alcoholism and other intoxicating substances.”<sup>111</sup> In 1940, Erzurum sent a letter to the CHP General Secretary on the topics that the Erzurum People’s House administration deemed necessary. The list of topics was a compromise between the general framework drawn by the People’s Preachers Organization and People’s Houses directives.

1. Lectures on miscellaneous and sanitary topics
2. Conferences on agricultural and sanitary issues of interest to villagers
3. Conferences in Erzurum, which is located in the zone of the earthquake, to propagandize the change of the housing construction site in accordance with science
4. Conferences to help promote local historical monuments, events, and personalities

---

<sup>111</sup> Report from the Education Inspector in Elazığ to the CHP General Secretary, Elazığ, 5 June 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1900-894-2.

5. Conferences to help introduce the great figures of various nations who have gained fame among nations closely and with their works
6. Conferences to introduce great Turkish figures together with their works
7. Conferences to facilitate the understanding of the nature and value of national days by taking benefit of national days.<sup>112</sup>

The samples examined above are significant for the study of the People's Preachers because they were produced as blueprints and impacted the content of other speeches delivered on other occasions, which will be analyzed in-depth in the following chapters of this dissertation. The decennial of the Republic was the first and only ceremony before which the party headquarters prepared sample speeches.<sup>113</sup> The tenth-anniversary commission ordered local sections to either use the sample speech to prepare a new one or read it directly to the public during the three days of the celebrations. The epigraph of the booklet, signed by the CHP General Secretary Recep Peker, also noted that the booklet should be kept in public reading rooms in villages or party facilities for further use.<sup>114</sup>

The speech sample-making also shows the intensity of the mechanisms of control for this particular celebration. The Party ordered one of its members to prepare these speech samples, and a superior from the "High Commission" corrected the samples, removing the parts deemed unnecessary or problematic. The first set of speeches was typewritten using the Latin Alphabet but contained manuscript modifications. Some parts had been crossed out by a third person using a pencil while spelling corrections were inserted with a pen (See Figure 13). The second set was hand-written using the Ottoman alphabet and then typewritten with the Latin Alphabet. Hence, the file containing the sample speeches provided different drafts.

---

<sup>112</sup> "1. Muhtelif ve sıhhi mevzular hakkında konferanslar 2. Köylüleri alakalandıran zirai ve sıhhi mevzulardaki konferanslar 3. Zelzele mıntıkasında bulunan Erzurumda mesken inşa sitesinin fenne uygun bir şekilde değiştirilmesi propaganda edecek mahiyetteki konferanslar 4. Mahalli tarihi abide, hadise ve şahsiyetleri tanıtmaya yardım edecek konferanslar 5. Milletler arasında şöhret kazanmış muhtelif milletlere mensup büyükleri yakından ve eserleriyle beraber tanıtmaya yardım edecek konferanslar 6. Türk büyüklerini eserleriyle beraber tanıtmaya yarayacak konferanslar 7. Milli günlerden istifade ederek, o günlerin mahiyet ve kıymetini anlamayı kolaylaştıracak konferanslar." From the director of the Erzurum People's House to the CHP General Secretary, 29 January 1940, Erzurum, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-895-2.

<sup>113</sup> This is at least the only occasion for which I found sample speeches in the archives. 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1150-35-2. For the two printed sample speeches for "peasantry" and the elite, see: 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/198-352-13.

<sup>114</sup> Epigraph of Recep Peker, "Onuncu Cümhuriyet Bayramında Köylülere Konferans I." BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/198-352-13.



The first six lectures were categorized according to their main topics. The first three were between ten and eighteen pages long. Each speech was meant to take around 30 minutes and was addressed to the more educated and esteemed part of the population, referred to as *münevvers* at the People’s Houses. Chapters 5 and 6 will examine this social category in more detail. This chapter’s key point is that this social category was considered both part of the potential audience and among the speakers. The 1933 preparations planned different speeches for different audiences. However, the reports sent to the General Secretary do not reflect any such distinctions in the speech content.

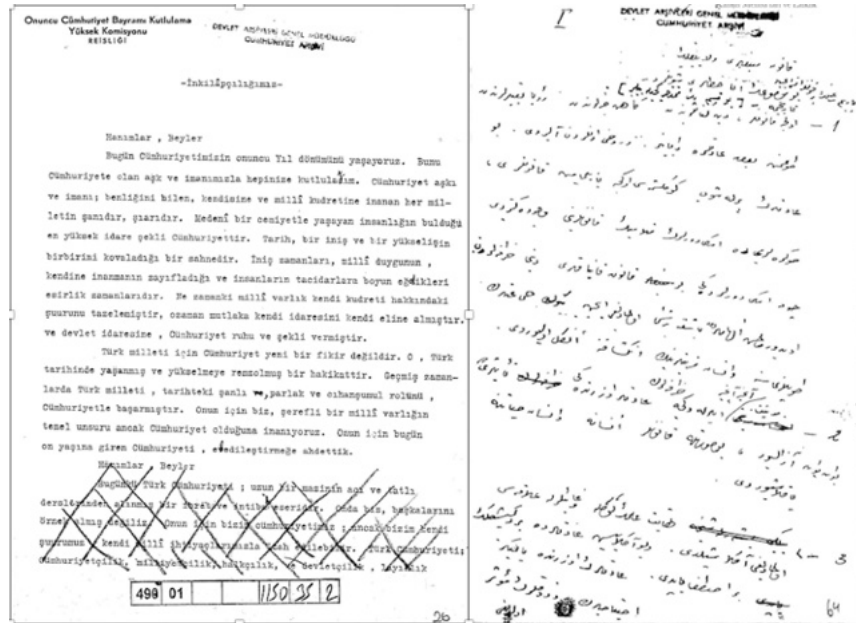


Figure 15. Sample speeches, Draft hand-written with Ottoman alphabet followed by the last version typewritten with Latin alphabet. 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1335-35-2.

Two of them were on “revolutionarism” (*inkılâpçılık*), and the third one was on “Turkish Statism” (*Türk Devletçiliği*). They were followed by two speech outlines on the “Origin of Laws and Secularism” (3 pages) and “Independence and the Future of Nations.” The commission published two more samples in a booklet and distributed it in all the provinces. The sample speeches illustrate the priorities of the party leadership concerning the topical organization of the lectures organized by the CHP. At first glance, the sample speeches underlined the key concepts for legitimizing the new republican and nationalist order. They employed the concepts of “nation,” “culture,” “history,” “revolution,” “independence,” and

finally “civilization” without moderation. In contrast, “democracy” or “Republic” were rarely used and only in passing. The pen corrections were concentrated on spelling mistakes, recurring even among the highly placed CHP officials because of the recent Alphabet and Language Reform. In total, six paragraphs were removed by a proofreader from the two sample speeches.

The sample speeches were divided into two according to the audience. This division represented how the CHP imagined the social configurations of the populations it ruled over. The high commission also circulated two more samples, this time in book format, for the decennial. One was reserved for embassies and literary “salons,”<sup>115</sup> and the other addressed the “peasantry.”<sup>116</sup> The two speeches differed in linguistic and intellectual sophistication at first glance. The first adopted a higher and more specialized language register and did not exclude references to philosophers or competing political movements worldwide.

Their censored sections show the strategies of persuasion that the Party frowned upon. Harsh criticism towards the Ottoman dynasty or defensive responses to reproaches the CHP received from its opponents were crossed out. Similarly, explicit references to competing political ideologies, such as “Communism” and “Bolshevism,” were barred even when they aimed to legitimize the order recently established by the CHP. Scholarly references deemed complicated or convoluted for a general audience were also barred. A paragraph referring to six philosophers generally known to those familiar with the history of political ideas, such as Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Augustin of Hippo, Hegel, and Fichte, was removed from the samples.<sup>117</sup> This was probably in response to the heaviness of this particular paragraph for a public not necessarily familiar with European philosophical references. In contrast, the only remaining sentence citing Immanuel Kant, “the great philosopher” (*büyük feylesof*), was kept in the sample.

Between 1934 and 1935, Recep Peker gave “Revolution Lectures” (*İnkılap Dersleri*) at universities in Istanbul and Ankara, which were later compiled into a booklet comprising nine

---

<sup>115</sup> Circular to provinces from the “High Commission,” 10 October 1933, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/198-352-13.

<sup>116</sup> “Onuncu Cümhuriyet Bayramında Köylülere Konferans I,” Hakimiyet-i Milliye Matbaası, 1933.

<sup>117</sup> 1933, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1150-35-2.

sessions. The first session, entitled “The Signification of the Revolution,” discussed topics such as nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Great War, using force in revolutionary movements, and the distinction between top-down and bottom-up (*halktan gelen*) revolutions. The second session focused on liberal revolutions in Europe and included secularization and class conflict. The third lecture covered the reactions to the class revolution and discussed the rise of Italian Fascism and the Third Reich in Germany as a reaction to the emergence of communist movements. The fifth session was about political parties and included a discussion of reactionary political parties, followed by a typology of complex political parties that mentioned social democrats, Christian democrats, Christian socialists, and radical democrats. The booklet was prepared by Peker himself and published in Ankara by Ulus Printing House (*Ulus Basimevi*) after reviewing notes taken by a student who attended the lectures.<sup>118</sup> The notes were then sent to People’s Houses and the CHP provincial and district administrative committees to be used as a directive to prepare the Independence and Revolution lecture series.<sup>119</sup>

Peker distinguished revolutions into two: liberal and class-bound revolutions. He also provided an organizational typology of the political parties in different political systems in “Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Britain, France, Switzerland, and the Balkans.”<sup>120</sup> Overall, Peker put more emphasis on academic debates and illustrated his arguments from case studies from primarily European countries. Additionally, since Peker’s lectures were published, they enjoyed a larger distribution. They risked being read by foreign audiences; Peker made disclaimers reminding people that examples stemming from other countries were there for analytic reasons. On page 10, for instance, he claimed: “I would like to point out one thing at this point in time: what I have said and will say about the policies and initiatives of states other than Turkey in the course of our lectures is merely to give examples in the context of a pure lecture. It is never our intention to criticize the policies, politics, and administrative doctrines

---

<sup>118</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları* (Ankara: Ulus Basimevi, 1935).

<sup>119</sup> Circular letter by Recep Peker, CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

<sup>120</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 90-103.

of any state. There is no scent of criticism in these words. Each state establishes and maintains its political regime under the conditions it deems appropriate for its own life.”<sup>121</sup>

The People’s Preachers did not read ready-made sermons that the General Secretary sent. While the Party sent many resources such as books, newspapers, magazines, and brochures to provide a general outline for the People’s Preachers, they wanted genuine speeches adapted to each local context and audience. For this reason, even in the most closely monitored festivities regarding the content of the speeches, such as Language Day, the speeches sent to the party headquarters are far from identical. They share talking points that the Party General Secretary sent, which are modified yearly. Still, the delivery of the main arguments varies considerably from preacher to preacher in all lectures organized with a centralized order. Similar to any communicative interaction, this diversity depended on the speakers and their addressees.

The limited flexibility in this situation makes the documentary record of the talks given by the People’s Preachers at the People’s Houses a valuable historical source, although repetitive, to understand how different intermediary actors justified the revolutionary era and the single-party rule established by the CHP in various local settings. While the CHP archives provide rich information about the state and staging of the lectures, the size and character of the audience remain unanswered. Who constitutes the audience of the People’s Preachers Organization? What insights can be derived regarding the attendees by examining the paper trail associated with the organization, including the size and composition of the audiences at their lectures?

---

<sup>121</sup> “Sırasını bulmuşken bir noktayı işaret edeceğim: dersimizi anlatırken Türkiyeden başka devletlerin politikalarına ve teşebbüslerine dair söylediğim ve söyleyeceğim şeyler mücerred bir ders anlatma vaziyeti içinde misaller vermekten ibarettir. Hiçbir devletin politika, siyasa ve idare doktrinlerine tariz etmek hiçbir vakit düşünmediğimiz şeylerdir. Bu sözlerde tenkit kokusu da yoktur. Her devlet kendi yaşayışına uygun gördüğü şartlar içinde siyasal rejimini kurar ve yaşatır.” Ibid., 10.

## 6.4. The Audience

---

The Party leadership was concerned about the number of participants. Therefore, they implemented control mechanisms to monitor the participation rates. A good example is the Independence and Revolution (*İstiklal ve İnkılap*) lectures organized in 1936. The Party General Secretary sent detailed instructions and required reports about these lectures. The instructions were as follows.

First, the district governors and directors of the People's Houses had to send reports to the General Secretary and include information on the number of participants and the degree of interest of the audience.<sup>122</sup> Second, the General Secretary did not want lectures to last more than an hour, worrying about boring the audience. Third, the provincial sections had to be well-organized, choosing the right moments in the day when the listeners could come easily and informing them well in advance. Lastly, the provincial sections had to go beyond merely announcing lectures. Instead, they were encouraged to try to “encourage” (*teşvik*), “guide” (*irşad*), and “lead people to desire” (*tergib*) to attend the lectures.<sup>123</sup> From the first line of the circular, the CHP General Secretary underlined that the Party will use “all its force” to “enlighten,” primarily Party and People's House members, but “if possible” (*imkân altına alabilirsek*) “all citizens” on the two fundamental concepts of New Turkey.<sup>124</sup>

The reports of the Independence and Revolution lectures were irregular. In February 1936, *Ulus* (Nation) reported that the lectures were delivered in Kırklarleli, İnebolu, Samsun, Akçakoca, Milas, and Uşak. According to the telegrams sent to the General Secretary, the

---

<sup>122</sup> “Konferansların sonunda, yerin Halkevi başkanı konferansların verildiğini, kaç kişi dinlediğini, yaptığı ilgi derecesini Genel Sekreterliğe bildirecektir.” Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

<sup>123</sup> “Her bir konferans en çok bir saat sürecektir. Konferansın zamanı dinleyicilerin gelebilecekleri vakit iyi hesaplanarak parti ve halkevi başkanları tarafından tesbit edilip vakitler uygun araçlarla halka duyurulacaktır. Bu konferansların mümkün olduğu kadar çok halk ve hele partililer tarafından dinlenmesi sağlanacaktır. Bu sebeple konferans gün, saat ve yerinin evvelden çok iyi düşünülerek değiştirilmeyecek tarzda belli edilmesi lüzumlu olduğu gibi: konferansın verileceğinin yalnız halka ilanı ile iktifa edilmeyerek çok dinleyici gelmesi için uygun teşvik, tergip ve irşatlarda bulunulacaktır.” Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

<sup>124</sup> “Parti Genelyönkurulu, bu yıl bütün Partilileri, Halkevlerinde çalışanları ve bütün gücümüzü kullanarak – imkân altına alabilirsek – bütün yurttaşları bugünkü yeni türkiye varlığının temeli ve dayanağı olan iki ana mefhum üzerinde aydınlatmağa karar verdi.” Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

lecture in Samsun had an audience of 1500 people, while the one in Uşak welcomed 600 people. All reports referred to the “enthusiasm” (*heyecan*) of their audience.<sup>125</sup>



Map 1. Independence and Revolution Lectures, Ulus, 1936

The information on the number of participants is non-existent, limited, or unreliable. The reports of some events synchronically organized in several localities include estimations of the number of participants. For instance, the archives of Language Day include estimations concerning the number of lecture participants. Since the organizers produced most reports, the participation rates were likely overestimated or exaggerated. Some reports include numbers like hundreds and thousands of people. Others mention “enthusiastic crowds” or “huge crowds” without further detail.<sup>126</sup> In Elazığ, for instance, the CHP provincial administrative committee claimed that each lecture was followed by hundreds of people.<sup>127</sup> A telegram from Amasya specified that the audience of the informative lectures organized about the Second World War was composed of military and civil servants of the state as well as members of the

---

<sup>125</sup> “İstiklal ve İnkılap,” *Ulus*, 19 February 1936.

<sup>126</sup> Hale Yılmaz talked about these estimations regarding the celebrations of Children’s Day. See: Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish : Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*, 192.

<sup>127</sup> Reports on the lectures organized in Elazığ Halkevi, 1936-1945,

Party and the People's House.<sup>128</sup> Another telegram from Amasya claimed that the lecture attracted so many people that there was not enough space in the lecture room of the People's House, and thousands of people gathered around the public gardens and squares to follow the lecture with the help of loudspeakers.<sup>129</sup>

The documents testifying to a lack of participation in the lectures and the potential indifference toward their content were rare. Overall, we do not have a lot of documents pointing to the reception of the People's Preachers' public lectures. One remarkable example is a letter sent from the party inspector from the Amasya region to the CHP General Secretary.

Personally, I was disappointed to find no one in the lecture hall other than 3-5 teachers and 5-10 civil servants. However, I had prepared for days to give a lecture on the tenth anniversary of the Republic despite the impossibility and lack of means. Again, in the lecture I gave on the subject of villages with the wishes and encouragement of the third General Inspector, the late Tahsin Uzer, I could not find any people other than civil servants and the higher classes who came with the orders of the Ministry of Education; hence whose attendance was official and compulsory. I regretfully observed that every lecture given in our community centers, where I have been working for many years (with some exceptions), was addressed to a limited and enlightened (*münevver*) group of people.

130

The party inspector recognized the importance of political and revolutionary matters to "increase the intellectual and educational level of people" (*halkın fikri ve terbiyevi seviyelerini yükseltmek*) yet proposed the Party General Secretary organizing lectures on more practical matters depending on the regional needs such as agriculture in order to increase the number of

---

<sup>128</sup> Telegram from the deputy of İçel Ferit Celal Güven to the CHP General Secretary, Amasya, 26 March 1941, "Dün Amasya Cumhuriyet meydanında parti müfettişimiz vali sivil ve askeri memurlar partili ve halkevi binlerce halkın huzurunda konferansımı verdim." BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1007- 886 – 1.

<sup>129</sup> "Yalnız halkevinde toplanan beş altı yüz kişi değil, bahçe ve meydanlarda hoparlörler önünde binlerce halk tenvir ve irşat edilmiş müsterih ve mutmain olarak ayrılmışlardır." From Amasya CHP administrative committee to the CHP General Secretary, Amasya, 19 June 1940, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1007- 886 – 1.

<sup>130</sup> "Şahsen cumhuriyetin onuncu yıl dönümünde mukayyesli bir konferans vermek üzere imkansızlık ve vesaitsizliğe rağmen günlerce çalışarak hazırlandığım halde konferans salonunda 3-5 muallimle 5-10 memurdan başka kimseyi bulamıyarak hayal kırıklığına uğramıştım. Yine köy mevzuu üzerinde üçüncü Umumi Müfettiş merhum Tahsin Uzerin arzu ve teşvikleriyle verdiğim konferansda halktan ziyade resmi ve mecburi şekilde iştirak eden memurin ve maarifin emriyle gelen yüksek sınıflardan başka halka tesadüf edemedim. Senelerden beri çalıştığım halkevlerimizde verilen her konferans (bazı istisnalar hariç) mahdut ve münevver bir zümreye hitap ettiğini müteessirane müşahade ettim." From the CHP Amasya Regional Inspector and Erzurum deputy Salim Altuğ to the CHP General Secretary, 8 December 1939, Amasya, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1007 - 886 – 1.

participants and go beyond the attendance of the civil servants.<sup>131</sup> The inspectors' observation about the elite and limited audience of the lectures organized by the Party was also reflected in the photos produced by the Party's regional organizations.

These photos allow us to examine the participation in the party-organized festivities, commemorations, or public lectures. Event photographs are scattered in the party archives. Because of their high cost and reduced accessibility, they are not systematically included in the lecture reports. Since it is not clearly stated in the circulars ordering to organize lectures, it depended on the People's Houses initiative to take photos. The Çorum People's House attached two photographs in 1936. The first showed the preachers standing against a blackboard, while the second was the audience. The lecture room of the Çorum People's House was quite crowded despite a couple of empty chairs visible in the photos. The audience was overwhelmingly male, all wearing formal men's jackets with a tie. Three unveiled women were discernible in the photographs. They all wore European-style clothing, including formal jackets and a beret.

The People's Preachers delivered lectures during national celebrations such as Youth and Sports Day, which celebrated the beginning of the "national struggle" with Atatürk's trip to Samsun. The Youth and Sports Day celebration in May 1937 in Elazığ showed a considerable number of school children wearing a white uniform in the audience. Their white uniforms indicate their participation in the celebration as the audience and the performers. These performances were probably organized by the People's Houses or the local schools. Schoolchildren with white uniforms made up the "crowds" in celebrating this national holiday, which echoes the estimations in celebration reports. Still, it is difficult to talk about free will

---

<sup>131</sup> "Her mahallin hususiyet ve icapları göz önünde alınarak halkın göreneklerine tadile, bilgilerini ve istihşalatını tezyide, netice itibarile mesailerinden azami randıman alarak iktisaden kalkınmalarını temine hadim konularda (mesela meyve muhitinde meyvecilik, pamuk mıntıkasında pamukçuluk, tütün yetiştiren yerlerde tütüncülük ve emsali işler üzerinde şerait ve imkanla mütenasip tatbiki nisbeten kolay usuller iraaası suretile vakaa ve rakkamlara müstenit) seviye ve ihtiyaçlarına göre konferanslar tertibinin daha isabetli ve faydalı olacağı kanaatindeyim." From the CHP Amasya Regional Inspector and Erzurum deputy Salim Altuğ to the CHP General Secretary, 8 December 1939, Amasya, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1007 - 886 - 1.



in their participation in these allegedly inclusive events since the photograph was taken in the middle of a local rebellion and its repression through mass violence.<sup>132</sup>



**Figure 12. Celebration of Language Day at Çorum People's House, 26 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-98-2.**



**Figure 13. Schoolchildren watching the parade of the military and the statesmen, Elazığ, 19 May 1937, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1072-1106-2.**

---

<sup>132</sup> While treating the children's participation in national celebrations in the early republican era, Hale Yılmaz underlines the inclusivity of these celebrations and joyful memories of her interviewees. See: Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish : Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*, 204.

The Party faced the problem of lack of participation in many localities. In 1935, a party deputy, Turgut Türkoğlu, reported from Alaşehir (Manisa) that the “People’s House is closed. The common folk are often seen in coffeehouses listening to Egyptian radio.” Türkoğlu added: “The situation is the same in other places I visited.”<sup>133</sup> People’s ignorance, neglect, and indifference towards cultural events the Party organized or party propaganda diffused through Ankara radio were concerns for the CHP deputies. A report from Manisa indicated that the locals also repurposed the party-owned material, such as the radio, for their entertainment: “The radio belonging to the Boğazlıyan section of the party was used in a coffeehouse until it was broken.”<sup>134</sup> A 1939 report from Elazığ complained about the lack of enthusiasm of the local people for its activities.<sup>135</sup> Still, in 1950, a motivation letter submitted by Ali Nusret Türker, a former member of the local People’s House, pointed to the lack of interest by the inhabitants of a town in the inner Aegean region of Anatolia (Eşme, Uşak).<sup>136</sup> The letter’s author claimed that “people used to not to come at all” to the lectures organized by the Party. Yet, thanks to his “propaganda” efforts by procuring a radio, organizing feasts, and waiting alone in the lecture hall of the People’s House with the director of the Party’s district section, he managed to “warm up people to the party organization.”<sup>137</sup>

The People’s Houses could have been the preferred site of sociability in small cities where the educated elites did not have many socializing options. Yet, in vibrant neighborhoods of Istanbul, “the youth had their own circles” and “did not go to the People’s Houses.”<sup>138</sup> Outside

---

<sup>133</sup> “Alaşehir Halkevi kapalıdır. Halk kahvelerde görülüyor. Radyo ile Mısır neşriyatı dinleniyor. (bu hal diğer gezdiğim yerlerde de böyledir.)” Report of Turgut Türkoğlu, Manisa, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>134</sup> “Boğazlıyan partisine ait bir radyo kahvede bozuluncaya kadar çalıştırılmıştır.” Sırrı İçöz, Emin Draman, Ömer Evcı, Report on Yozgat, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>135</sup> Yerli vatandaşların alaka ve devamının noksanı. Report submitted to the CHP General Secretary, 4 July 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.

<sup>136</sup> Ali Nusret Türker born in 1304 (1890), graduated from the School of Public Administration (Mülkiye) and worked as district governor (*kaymakam*) of Eşme in Uşak province.

<sup>137</sup> “En son bulunduğum Eşme kazasında ismi mevcut hiç kendisi olmıyan partiyi salon ve idare odası açmak ve aylarca yalnız parti başkanıyla o salonu bekleyerek envai propaganda yaparak radyolar te’min ve ziyafetler çekerek halkı ısındırdım. Partinin maddeten mevcudiyetini tanıttım. Evvelleri hiç gelmiyen halk şimdi her gece salonda oturacak yer bulamıyacak kadar geliyor.” Ali Nusret Türker’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>138</sup> “Nişantaşı ve Şişli gençleri kendilerine özel çevre yaptıklarından Halkevine gelmiyorlar.” Dr. General Hakkı Şinasi Erel, Selah Cimcoz, Sadettin Uraz, Yaşar Yazıcı, Ali Barlas, General Şükrü Gökberk, Hamdi Gürsoy, Pakize Öymen, Ziya Karamürsel, Report on Istanbul for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

of vibrant cities with various socialization opportunities, the “youth” had founded parallel structures because of various conflicts when attending the People’s Houses.<sup>139</sup> Besides the low participation rates, attending the events and respectfully listening to the lectures were among the concerns of the party leadership and members. Press articles and literature depicted situations where a state-party spokesperson or a nationalist intellectual addressed the crowds and expressed frustration over the audience’s disrespect, suspicion, or indifference. In May 1936, an article published by the magazine of the Elazığ People’s House referred to the disrespectful behavior of the audience during lectures.

“Imagine that there is a lecture being delivered somewhere. Maybe some do not like this lecture... But many like it and want to learn every utterance very well. Those who do not like this lecture or do not want to listen to it cannot speak rashly in front of everyone. They cannot make noise and [cause disturbance]. This is a civil duty and a debt of politeness and etiquette. Imagine that there is a good lecture. The preacher is saying beautiful things with all attention and determination; everyone is listening calmly and quietly, but someone is snapping his large-beaded tasbih with a loud ‘Snap! Snap! Snap!’ sound, which strikes like a hammer blow on the nerves of all the listeners and the speaker.”<sup>140</sup>

The article’s author talks about their experience at regular lectures. Describing the act of clicking the large beads of a tasbih and talking to other attendees in the room were specific examples drawn from the author’s experience at the People’s House. This article echoed Yakup Kadri’s famous novel published in 1932. When the nationalist protagonist of *The Stranger* (*Yaban*) sets out to tell the villagers about the national struggle, he sees the village headmen “dozing off” and another villager “carving a willow branch, and yet another “observing his goats” instead of listening. The only person who listened carefully to the harangue about the national resistance movement was a sergeant who wanted to learn if there would be a new war.

---

<sup>139</sup> “Kula Halkevindeki gençler arasında anlaşmazlık olmuş ve ilçe parti başkanı yerinde tedbir almadığından bir kısım gençler başka bir kurum yapmışlar. Alaşehirde de buna benzer bir durum var.” Yaşar Özey, Report on Manisa for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>140</sup> “Meselâ bir yerde bir konferans veriliyor. Belki de bu konferanstan hoşlanmayanlar bulunabilir lâkin hoşlananlar ve her sözü iyice kavrayıp kafasına yerleştirmek isteyenler de çoktur. Bu konferanstan hoşlanmayan veya dinlemek istemeyenler başkalarının dinlemek istemelerini düşünmeyerek ulu orta konuşamazlar. Gürültü edemezler, ses çıkartamazlar. Bu bir medenilik vazifesi olduğu kadar da bir nezaket ve muaşeret borcudur. Meselâ düşününüz güzel bir konferans verilmektedir. Hatip bütün dikkat ve dirayetile güzel şeyler söylüyor, herkes sakin ve sessiz dinliyor, lâkin birisi elinde kocaman taneli teşbihini şak! şak! şak! diye şaklatarak, bu ses bütün dinleyenlerin ve söyleyenin sınırları üzerinde bir (illegible word) darbesi gibi iniyor.” “Medeni Yaşayısta Medeni Gidiş,” *Altan: Elazığ Halkevi Dergisi*, 22 May.

<sup>141</sup> In summary, the CHP struggled to generate interest in its lectures, evident from the lackluster audience turnout and disengagement of attendees.

The information given about the audience of the People’s Preachers is overall ‘top-down.’ In a sense, it is more telling about the perceptions and representations of the CHP General Secretary or party inspectors – often deputies – sent to the provinces to examine the organizational difficulties of the Party’s provincial organization. Nevertheless, we have a relatively large body of documents on the People’s Preachers that I will analyze in the following chapter. I will specifically study quantitatively and qualitatively the lists of the People’s Preachers sent in 1931 and 1938 to reflect on the arrangements made to implement these ambitious plans throughout the early republican period.

---

<sup>141</sup> “Tam bu sırada bir baktım ki, muhtar uyukluyor. Mehmet Ali elindeki çakı ile bir söğüt dalını yontuyor. Salih Ağa, tâ uzakta, yamaçta, otlayan davarlarını gözetliyor. Yalnız, Bekir Çavuş biraz dikkat eder gibi göründü. – Efendi, tekrar savaş olacak mı? Dedi.” Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Yaban*, 26-27.

## 7. Social Distinction of the People's Preachers

---

The archives of the CHP contain a limited number of documents directly pertaining to the People's Preachers Organization. This lack of documents about the organization is attributed to the establishment of the People's Houses, which essentially replaced the organization by assuming similar responsibilities, such as addressing crowds at political celebrations or lectures. The directives of the People's Preachers Organization, circulated in September 1931 for the first time and analyzed in previous chapters, provided valuable information on their selection criteria. This information shed light on how the CHP leadership envisioned social hierarchies 'in the provinces' and which social assets were perceived to grant authority and legitimacy to speak in public. However, a quantitative analysis of the lists of selected preachers sent to the party headquarters in Ankara can give us a better understanding of the social characteristics that make a person respectable, persuasive, and potentially an "intellectual."

After the Party General Secretary sent the directives to the Provincial Administrative committees, they became responsible for selecting People's Preachers. Local party members were required to nominate five to fifteen "preachers" (*hatip*) for each province, including two to five for each district (*kaza*) and one to three for each sub-district (*nahiye*).<sup>1</sup> As specified in the directives, the provincial administrative committees had to send lists of selected preachers as soon as they were determined. This chapter will quantitatively analyze the lists of People's Preachers selected in 1931 and 1938 to provide an understanding of the social profile of People's Preachers, complemented by case studies on preachers with accessible biographical information. Before delving into the social and professional groups comprising the People's Preachers Organization, it is necessary to address some challenges their paper trail poses.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 14.

## 7.1. Identifying People's Preachers

---

From the moment the CHP circulated the directives for creating the People's Preachers (September 1931), the General Secretary required their complete lists.<sup>2</sup> The first set of lists was sent between 1931 and 1934. In 1938, the General Secretary sent a second circular letter to require updated lists of the People's Preachers. The party's provincial administrative board in each province prepared the lists in different forms. Most provinces sent a letter-headed table containing two columns. The first column was dedicated to the name, and the second to the "identity" (*hüviyet*) meaning "identity marker." Since the lists were prepared simultaneously in around sixty provinces in Turkey,<sup>3</sup> officers working in the CHP provincial direction filled the tables according to their understanding of "identity" (*hüviyet*). Others sent telegrams following the same rule. The name of the preachers selected was virtually always followed by a piece of information on their identity.

The identity information varied among preachers. Overall, the identity columns were left empty for around two hundred and fifty preachers. Most preachers were identified through their occupation (i.e., teacher, preacher, doctor, governor, mayor). The use of patronymic surnames (i.e., Sarializâde, Altaylızâde) was the second most common identification method in the lists prepared before the Surname Law of 1934. Lastly, the locality (city or village of origin) and social titles denoting notability, such as "notable" (*eşraf*) and "landowner" (*ashab-ı emlak*), were used to identify a small number of preachers. Moreover, the terms and levels of precision used for occupational and social titles varied. Some preachers were identified as retired mayors, commanders, or teachers, while others simply as "retired" (*mütekaid*). Concerning teachers, some provinces specified if they were primary, middle, or high school teachers, while others simply used the term "teacher" (*muallim, öğretmen*).

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> I do not give an exact number of provinces since the latter was often subject to change during the single-party rule. In 1929, two years before the creation of the People's Preachers Organization, the Republic of Turkey contained sixty-one provinces. In 1933, this number decreased to fifty-six when the government transformed some provinces (Artvin, Aksaray, Cebelibereket, Hakkari, and Şebinkarahisar) into districts (*kaza*). In 1936, some of these districts were transformed again into provinces (*vilayet* or *il* in Modern Turkish) and the total number of provinces reached sixty-two again.

Despite these variations, there were some regularities in the identification methods used in the lists of the People's Preachers. First, the four mentioned identification tools, namely occupation, patronymic surnames, locality, and social titles, were used in many provinces at the same time. In 1931, 283 out of 1360 preachers were identified by their patronymic surnames in around fifty provinces. The use of patronymic surnames as an identification tool disappeared in lists sent in 1938. Similarly, 86 preachers in total were identified by their village or town in around 20 provinces in 1931 and 1938.

The regularities in the identification methods used in those lists provide valuable information on how the CHP's provincial organization functioned during the single-party era on macro and micro levels. Since the party General Secretary did not provide clear instructions on how to fill out the preacher's lists, a quantitative analysis of the preachers' list can inform us on the bureaucratic modus operandi of the party members working in its provincial organization. Moreover, it allows us to translate concepts used in the directives, including likability, dexterity, and persuasiveness - into objective or objectifiable social characteristics. In so doing, it provides a general overview of the professional and social distribution of the People's Preachers.

The following section will explain the methods used to create a People's Preachers database to quantitatively analyze People's Preachers based on gender, social titles, and occupation. The educational credentials of the People's Preachers are rarely accessible through the archives. The statistical data produced by the database will allow us to circumvent the lack of data on the educational background of the People's Preachers. The chapter will draw a "social portrait" of the People's Preachers as a group of party members actively working to communicate the party's political message.<sup>4</sup> Concentrating on their social characteristics, such as gender, date of birth, occupation, and diplomas, runs the risk of flattening the differences between the motivations of individuals who became party members and the social networks that led them into the party in 1930s Turkey.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, comparing and contrasting the overview

---

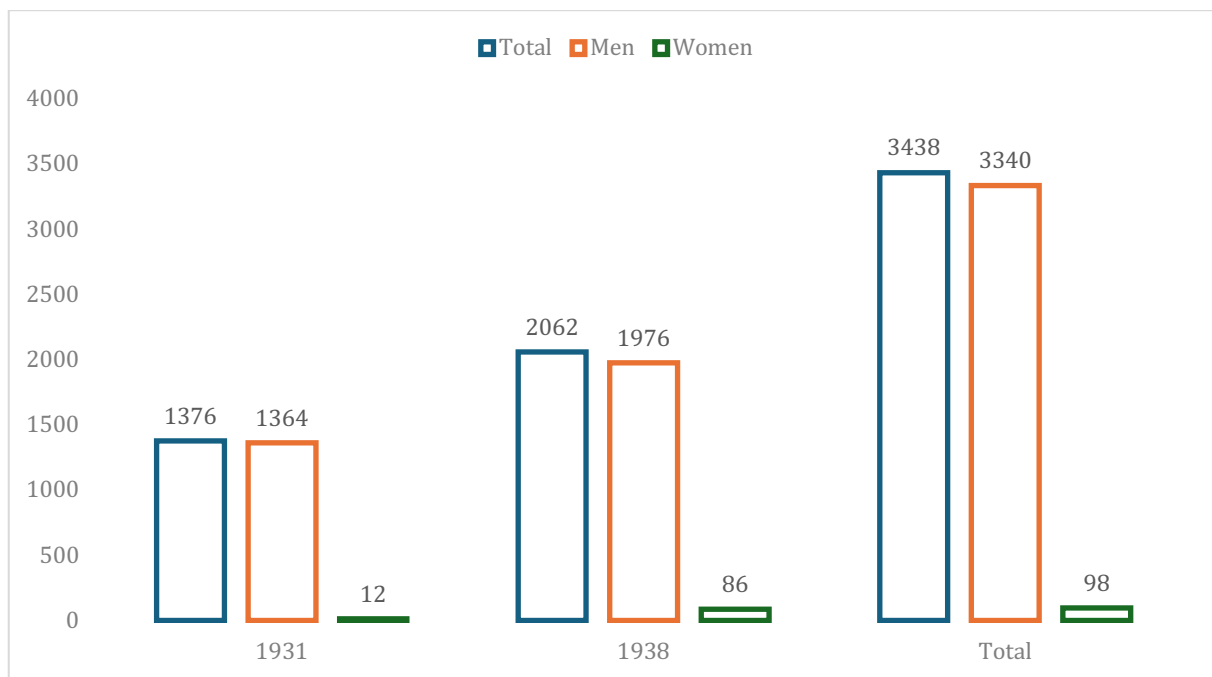
<sup>4</sup> Claire Zalc, "Prosopographie, quel outil pour comparer ?" 57-60.

<sup>5</sup> Along with the "profession of the father" which is most often inaccessible in the case of People's Preachers, these elements are "classical sociological variables." See Claire Lemerrier and Emmanuel Picard, "Quelle approche prosopographique ?" in *Les uns et les autres. Biographies et prosopographies en histoire des sciences*, ed. Laurent Rollet and Philippe Nabonnaud (Nancy: Presses universitaires de Nancy, 2011).

provided by the preachers list allows us to observe what is “normal” and what is “exceptional” concerning the recruitment of the preachers from region to region in their social trajectories and political careers.<sup>6</sup>

I created a database out of the 358-page file with all available information to make sense of this relatively large file in the CHP archives. This database is valuable because, in total, the provincial administrative boards selected 3438 preachers between 1931 and 1938, with a majority of men. In 1931, provincial sections selected 1337 preachers, while in 1938, 2028. While women were the minority in the People’s Preacher’s Organization, the percentage of women increased from one percent to four percent within the span of seven years.

**Table 1. The evolution of the number of People’s Preachers (1931-1938)**



<sup>6</sup> Christophe Charle, “5. La prosopographie ou biographie collective. Bilan et perspectives,” in *Homo Historicus* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2013); Claire Zalc, “Prosopographie, quel outil pour comparer ?.”



Each document contained the names of the preachers, their identity information, their province, and their activity district. Identity information was generally a single word, such as teacher. Sometimes, preachers were subject to a double or triple identification process. In 1931, Hasan Aydın Bey from Afyonkarahisar was identified by his patronymic surname, Aydınlızâde, and as a merchant (*tüccardan*). In 1938, Faik Ahmet Bey in Trabzon was both a lawyer and the director of the Bar Association. Mahmut Muhammer Yarabıyık was a merchant and member of the CHP provincial administrative committee in the same province. In Zonguldak, Akın Karauguz was identified as a journalist and director of the People’s House. In around 50 cases, preachers all from the same province (Balıkesir), birthplace and age were also included in the lists. Concerning gender, it was specified through the designations missus (*hanım*) and mister (*bey, efendi*) in the lists prepared before the Surname Law of 1934. When these designations were missing, I used first names as proxies to determine the gender of the preachers.<sup>7</sup>

### 7.1.1. Occupation

---

The most extensive body of variables found on the preacher lists was the identity information in a dedicated column in the ready-made forms. I created the database by copying the original “identity” information found in the lists in Turkish. This first list allowed me to see the number of preachers selected each year, in each province and district. Second, I categorized the identity information found on the preachers. The translation of the “identity” column from 1931 and 1938 from Turkish to English in itself resulted in a first phase of categorization because many occupational titles were replaced following the Turkish Language Reform. Hence, the first phase of categorization gathered “*muallim*” (teacher) from Arabic etymology with “*öğretmen*” with a supposed Turkic one.

The second categorization aimed to facilitate quantification by decreasing the number and variety of occupational and social titles. The occupation was the main tool used by the CHP provincial administrative committees to identify the People’s Preachers. Identification, here, implied clarifying the source of their social distinction. The majority of the filled identity

---

<sup>7</sup> Claire Lemerrier, Claire Zalc, and Arthur Goldhammer, *Quantitative Methods in the Humanities: An Introduction* (University of Virginia Press, 2019), 65.

columns contained the occupational titles of the preachers, such as teachers, school headmasters, education inspectors, doctors, and engineers. After observing the general statistical tendencies and the lack of systematized information about the types of teachers, for instance, I gathered primary, secondary, and high school teachers as well as school headmasters into the category of “teachers.” This choice was motivated by the fact that a considerable number of teachers were simply identified as “teachers” (*muallim* or *öğretmen*) and further information on the type of schools in which they worked was not systematically included. For similar reasons, I categorized as “doctors” government physicians (*hükümet tabibi*), chief physicians (*başhekim*), and other doctors working for public hospitals or operating through private practice. Whether they were retired or not, the category “military personnel” included different ranks since information about their current profession or role was absent. Similarly, I counted deputies, mayors, governors, and district governors as such, even when they were “former” or “retired” ones without complementary information.

Most importantly, civil servants (*memur*) working at localized (*yerinden*) administration, such as municipalities and village chieftains (*muhtarlık*) or provincial branches (*taşra yönetimi*) of the ministries, were all categorized as “officials” of provincial or local administration. As a result, officials working in domains ranging from the population registry (*nüfus müdürü*) to statistics (*istatistik müdürü*), to education were counted together. Moreover, middle and low-level civil servants from different ranks, such as education officials (*maarif memuru*), education directors (*maarif müdürü*), and school inspectors (*maarif müfettişi*) were also counted together as officials of the provincial administration, because they all worked for the provincial branch of the Ministry of Education. This categorization was followed by observing the general statistical tendencies during the input phase when making the datasets. Mid- and low-ranking state officers did not constitute a considerable amount if they were counted individually. For instance, there were in total seven registry officers (*nüfus müdürü*) selected as People’s Preachers: Musa Kazım Ulusoy (Kütahya), Arif Sayın (Muş), Osman Çebi (Ordu), İşref Bey (Diyarbakır), Esat Yurdakul (Ağrı), İlhami Aras (Erzurum), and Abdullah Tunalı (Kocaeli). Nevertheless, elected local administrators, such as governors and district governors, and appointed provincial administrators, such as governors and district governors, were counted separately.

### 7.1.2. Rank and Role within the Party Organization

In terms of number, those identified as civil servants or officials were followed by individuals identified through their rank and role within the party organization, as opposed to their occupation. They were identified, for instance, as party members (*parti azası*), party secretaries (*parti sekreteri*), party directors (*parti reisi*), or as members and directors of the party's provincial or district administrative committees (i.e., *CHP vilayet idare heyeti üyesi*). The People's Houses were not yet created, but the provincial sections determined the first cohort of the People's Preachers. The second cohort selected in 1938 comprised forty-eight (48) People's House members or directors. Since the People's Houses were part of the party's organization in the provinces rather than the center, I categorized party members of various ranks and People's Houses members as "CHP provincial organization."<sup>8</sup>

**Table 2. Preachers Identified Through Their Rank and Role within the CHP**

Rank and Role within the Party Organization	Number of Preachers
CHP Provincial Administrative Board	99
CHP District Administrative Board Member	48
CHP District Administrative Board Director	43
CHP District Organization	16
CHP Director	10
CHP Provincial Administrative Board Director	5
Merchant CHP Provincial Administrative Board	5
CHP Member	5
Director of the CHP District Administrative Board	4
Farmer CHP Provincial Organization	3
Surname (-zade, -oğlu) and CHP Provincial Administrative Board	3

---

<sup>8</sup> This is the emic distinction repetitively made by the CHP General Secretary. The General Secretary in Ankara formed the "center" of the party organization. At the same time, the whole of the provincial (*vilayet, il*) and district (*ilçe*) administrative committees constituted the "province" (*taşra*) of the party organization. This bureaucratic modus operandi is inherited by the centralized state administration of the Ottoman Empire.

CHP Secretary	2
CHP Former Director	2
Secretary of the CHP Provincial Administrative Board	2
Mayor CHP Provincial Administrative Board	2
Lawyer CHP Provincial Organization	2
Director of the CHP Provincial Administrative Board	2
Doctor CHP Provincial Organization	1
Farmer CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
Farmer CHP Provincial Administrative Board Director	1
Doctor CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
Director CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
People's House Başkanı CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
CHP Provincial Board Member	1
CHP Provincial Administrative Board Cultural Officer	1
Member of the CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
CHP District Administrative Board Director Pharmacist	1
Merchant, Factory Owner Member of the CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
Retired Military CHP Provincial Administrative Board	1
Director of CHP District Administrative Board	1
Former CHP Provincial Administrative Board Director	1
Total number of Preachers identified by Party membership	267

### 7.1.3. Surname and locality

Situating preachers identified by name and/or locality is more challenging. Around 30% of the preachers were identified with their patronymic name in 1931. Yet, this identification tool was abandoned in 1938 following the adoption of the Surname Law. In total, the lists identified three preachers as “*eşraftan*,” meaning “noble, honorable, reverend,”<sup>9</sup> “notable,”<sup>10</sup> or “religious dignitaries”<sup>11</sup> in Antalya and Çanakkale. At the same time, no other provincial party branch used this term to reference local spokespeople. In Lapseki (Çanakkale), Rüstem Bey was identified as a notable and by his patronymic surname: Fehmi Bey zâde. In the Arpaçay district of Kars, five preachers were identified by a locality. Still, contrary to all the other preachers who were called either “*bey*” or “*efendi*” in other districts and provinces, these five preachers were called “*agha*.”<sup>12</sup>

Six preachers were called “landowners” in Istanbul, Gaziantep, and Afyon. Those who were identified as “farmers” (*zürra*, *rençber*, or *çiftçi*) were most likely landowners rather than agricultural workers or peasants. Still, surnames were more regular than toponyms in 1931. Almost every province identified a handful of preachers by their surnames, ending with *-zâde* from Persian or *-oğlu* from Turkish, meaning “the son of,” hence denoting lineage. In total, 279 preachers selected were the “sons of” someone. This was the only information available on them. In contrast, using locality as an identification tool was rare. In the district of Kığı, which was administratively linked to the Erzincan province in 1931, all preachers were identified by a toponym except for lawyer Mehmet Ali Bey and Bilecikli Hasan Bey, who was a member of the CHP provincial administrative board. Nusret Bey came from Hoos, Arif Bey was from the town of Çam, and Süleyman, Kâmil, İbrahim, and Sabri Bey came from the town of Çerme.

Before the implementation of the Surname Law, the state would identify its citizens based on a combination of physical attributes and a full name, which is a more or less formalized combination of *isim* (first name), *mahlas* (pseudonym), and *lakab* (a title, surname or

---

<sup>9</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 120.

<sup>10</sup> Şemseddin Sami, “münevver,” 97.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Daştemur Ağa, İgnezor köyünden, Veli ağa, Kızıлтаş köyünden, Durdağı ağa, Ergine köyünden, Şerif ağa, Şubat Köyünden, Şahvelet ağa, Başgedikler. BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-1.

nickname).<sup>13</sup> Olivier Bouquet explored the multiplicity of *lakabs* used by Ottoman dignitaries and drew a typology of them: descriptive, honorary, ancestry, ethnic, and topo-biographic surnames. He also noted that the ancestry surnames and sharifian titles denote a given family's nobility.<sup>14</sup> Bouquet's reflection on the state's identification methods before the Surname Law, which standardized it only to some extent, provides some elements to analyze the lists of People's Preachers under scrutiny. Through a systematic analysis of the *sicil-i ahval* documents submitted by the senior government officials, Bouquet showed that state agents, and in his case, pashas, tended to omit what was already known by the state while filling out administrative papers.<sup>15</sup>

In 1931, as CHP provincial directors filled out the lists of preachers, they aimed to identify the preachers. Following Bouquet's insight on identification modalities within the state, they might also have filled the "identity" column with the most distinctive trait of the selected preachers. If the unique feature was the patronymic surname, as was the case for Keremzâde Etem Bey in Van, it was the only marker of identity used in those files.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, in the same area and in the same year, another preacher was identified by his professional title: *Muallim* (teacher) Remzi Bey. In the central district of Malatya, Saltzâde Vahap Bey was designated as a People's Preacher in 1931. The CHP provincials in Malatya only provided his surname in the "identification" column: "Salt zade."<sup>17</sup> Yet, in his short autobiography (*terceme-i hal*), which he wrote when applying to run for 1950 legislative elections, Vahap Bey summarized the last twenty years of his career on the administrative board of the Party and as a member of Provincial Assemblies (*Vilayet Umumi Meclisi*).<sup>18</sup> In his study on the provincial elites of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Ali Yaycıoğlu distinguished local powerholders from the "traditional imperial elite" or the "servants of the

---

<sup>13</sup> Olivier Bouquet, "Onomasticon Ottomanicum : identification administrative et désignation sociale dans l'État ottoman du xixe siècle," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 127, July (2010): 215.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 227-29.

<sup>16</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and the Provincial Administrative committees, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>17</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and the Provincial Administrative committees, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>18</sup> CHP Malatya Merkez Kaza idare heyeti reisi, Meclisi Umumi azasi, Belediye meclisi azasi, Vahap Salttürk's application form, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/312-1274-2.

state,” usually formed and socialized in educational and bureaucratic milieus in Istanbul. These local powerholders, large groups of agnatically related men, sometimes compared to clans, were usually recognized through their surnames ending with *-zâde* or *-oğlu*,<sup>19</sup> meaning literally “the son of,” but denoting broader lineage.<sup>20</sup> The social qualifications mentioned earlier, such as “*eşraf*” (members of Sharifian families), “*ashab-ı emlak*,” “*zürra*,” or “*tüccar*” (landowners, farmers, and merchants) coupled with the identification by family name were used to allude to provincial power-holders also referred to as “local notables.”<sup>21</sup>

When the patronymic surname was not enough to be recognized by party leadership for a given preacher, the professional title was the distinctive identity marker. The notables were not always identified through their professional designations. This was likely because their notability prevailed on their professional activity or because “whoever belonged to their class did not really work,” as Paul Veyne put it concerning Roman notabilities.<sup>22</sup> In the Ottoman Empire, too, “secular notables” took their power from military resources or “the control of agricultural production through the possession of malikanes.”<sup>23</sup> In the lists from 1931, patronymic surnames were used to identify some of the preachers because they were considered recognizable. When we examine the correlations between the preachers identified by patronymic name and those who were subjected to double identification, we see that most double-identified ‘sons of’ were either tradesmen, “farmers” or landowners, members of municipal assemblies, or simply “from the *eşraf*,” often used for descendants of the prophet, or other local notabilities based on land ownership and partnership with the state established

---

<sup>19</sup> Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 31; Olivier Bouquet, “Onomasticon Ottomanicum,” 221. Ali Yaycıoğlu, “Provincial Power-Holders and the Empire in the Late Ottoman World: Conflict or Partnership?,” in *The Ottoman World*, ed. Christine Woodhead (London: Routledge, 2012), 438.

<sup>20</sup> Olivier Bouquet, “Onomasticon Ottomanicum,” 221; Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 69.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1967); Philip Khoury, “The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* (1990); Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*.

<sup>22</sup> The translations are mine. « Quiconque appartient à cette classe ne travaille pas, car le travail veut dire travailler de ses mains (...) ou travailler pour autrui. (...) L’activité notable n’est pas une profession. » Paul Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 134.

<sup>23</sup> Albert Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” 48.

and maintained through provincial administration.<sup>24</sup> Members of notable families were often elected to the Provincial Assemblies and given executive powers after the 1913 reform.<sup>25</sup> In light of these elements, I deduced that the preachers identified through their patronymic surnames, by locality, as merchants, landowners, or farmers were potentially members of local notable families.

Upon performing the necessary groupings, we have found that despite the consolidation of certain categories, over seventy distinct social and professional categories remain. These findings have been documented in detail in Table 3, which provides a comprehensive breakdown of the identified categories and subcategories. Overall, CHP provincial branches selected People’s Preachers among teachers, members of the party’s provincial organization, potential notables identified through their surnames or locality, low-ranking civil servants, lawyers, farmers, doctors, merchants, mayors, employees of private enterprises, shopkeepers or artisans, and many other professions.

**Table 3. Number of preachers per occupation and identification methods**

Occupation	Number of Preacher
Teacher	907
CHP Provincial Organization	316
Surname	294
Low-ranking Civil Servants (Provincial Administration)	286
Blank	240
Lawyer	163
Farmer	137
Merchant	131

<sup>24</sup> For some key references on politics of notables in the Ottoman Empire, see *ibid.*; Philip Khoury, “The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited,” 221; Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*. For the continuation of the politics of notables in the early republican era, see: Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*.

<sup>25</sup> Seral Tuncer, “II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Bir İdari Refrom: 1913 İdare-i Umumiye-i Vilâyât Kanun-ı Muvakkatı I” (II. Türk Hukuk Tarihi Kongresi, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sadri Maksudi Arsal Hukuk Tarihi Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2016).



Doctor	113
Mayor	93
Locality	84
Private enterprise	65
Counselor-at-law	56
Shopkeeper and Artisan (esnaf)	56
Member of the Municipal Assembly	68
District governor	41
Pharmacist	39
Associations	35
Military personnel	30
Mufti	21
Chamber of commerce	19
University professor	19
Landowner	17
Village headman	18
Accountant	14
Judge	13
Veterinarian	12
Islamic Preacher	13
Writers and journalists	22
Public prosecutor	11
Engineer	10
Deputy	9
Bank officer	7
Dentist	7
Factory owner	7

Broker	5
Notary	5
Provincial governor	4
Contractor	3
Public scribe	3
University students, law faculty graduates	7
Athlete	2
Chemist	2
Director of printing house	4
Entrepreneur	2
High school student	2
Jurist	2
Librarian	2
Moneychanger ( <i>Sarraḥ</i> )	2
Retiree	2
Student	2
Landowner (ashab-ı emlak)	1
Architect	1
Notable ( <i>eşraf</i> )	1
Captain	1
Chamber of Agriculture	1
Commisary at an animal market	1
Member of a cooperative	1
Director of Museum	1
Editor-in-chief, newspaper owners, publishing venues	4
Gardener	1
Imam	1

Kadi	1
Museum worker	1
Total	3438

To streamline categories, I developed a typology based on sources of social distinction, focusing on educational credentials and other potential factors such as economic resources, political authority, and religious influence. Instead of relying on socio-professional categories from the 1935 population census, which prioritized economic sectors over educational levels, I devised a new classification system. In that census, individuals were grouped based on their employment sectors, such as “agriculture” or “industries and craftsmanship,” without regard to their rank or economic standing. Still, the table unexpectedly combined public administration employees with those in liberal professions.<sup>26</sup> The 1935 Directorate of Statistics’ professional classification did not provide a constructive framework for understanding the selection criteria outlined in the previous chapter. To address this issue, I categorized teachers and other low-ranking state officers as “civil servants.” I grouped professions requiring higher education, such as doctors, engineers, and lawyers, under “learned professions.” Although both groups consisted of secularly educated elites, “civil servants” held a distinct role in party leadership. Despite legal restrictions on their political involvement, the CHP viewed civil servants as integral to the party’s functioning during its single-party rule, referring to them as the “natural limbs of the party.”<sup>27</sup>

Applying the same logic, I grouped together owners or directors of printing houses, editors-in-chief, journalists, writers (*muharrir*), university students, and preachers distinguished by their higher education diplomas, such as “law school graduates” as “intellectual elites.” Despite the fluidity between these categories, particularly evident in Istanbul following the implementation of the Municipal Law of 1930, I distinguished between elected and appointed

---

<sup>26</sup> Concerning arbitrary categorizations in the 1930s France, see: Thomas Amossé, “La nomenclature socio-professionnelle : une histoire revisitée,” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 68e année, no. 4 (2013): 700.

<sup>27</sup> Cypher Telegram from the CHP General Secretary, 2 September 1930, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-4-10.

local administrators.<sup>28</sup> Tailors, shopkeepers (*esnaf*), dry-goods dealers (*manifaturacı*), and grocers (*bakkal*) were categorized as “artisans and shopkeepers.” Muftis, imams and Islamic preachers (*cami hatibi, vaiz*) made up the category of “religious elites.” Lastly, I grouped landowners, brokers, contractors, factory owners, merchants, and money changers together.

**Table 4. Preachers per socio-professional group**

Socio-professional category	Number
Teachers and Other Civil Servants	1193
Learned professions - <i>Bildungsbürgertum</i>	570
Potential notables	379
Party Organization including in the People’s Houses	316
Economic elites	305
Blank	240
Elected officials	187
Artisans and shopkeepers	56
Nominated high-ranking provincial administrators	45
Intellectual elites	37
Religious elites	35
Associations	35
Military	30
Students	4
Athlete	2
Retired	2
Political elites	1
Gardener	1

---

<sup>28</sup> According to the Municipal Law of 1930, Istanbul governor was at the same time the mayor of the city. “Belediye Kanunu,” *T.C. Resmî Gazete*, no. 1471 (14 April 1930): 8838.

The CHP provincial administrative committees selected a total of 3438 “People’s Preachers” in approximately sixty provinces between 1931 and 1938. The total number of preachers rose from 1410 to 2028 seven years after the creation of the organization.<sup>29</sup> Given that the most frequently mentioned information about the preachers was their profession, the overview will commence by analyzing the People’s Preachers Organization as a professional group.

Ministry of Education employees constituted the statistically dominant professional group in the People’s Preachers Organization. Overall, the largest professional group among the People’s Preachers was teachers working in primary, middle, or high schools (920 out of 3433). The teachers were followed by education officers, inspectors, directors (*Maarif memuru, müdürü, maarif müfettişi*), and school headmasters. All these occupational groups were affiliated to the Ministry of National Education and were therefore civil servants. Other low-ranking civil servants, among which accountants and municipal, population registry, land registry, or settlement officers figured, followed the employees of the Ministry of Education. If we also add high-ranking provincial administrators recruited by nomination such as governors and district governors to this group of state employees, they made up around forty percent of the People’s Preachers selected between 1931 and 1938.

Following civil servants, a significant number of individuals from learned professions such as doctors and lawyers predominantly featured among the People’s Preachers. For the numerous doctors, establishing their relationship to state service is challenging. While a few doctors were identified as “government physicians” (*hükümet doktoru*), and some veterinarians were also employed by municipalities, this information was not systematically included in the data on the People’s Preachers. While their overall relationship to state service cannot be determined, these positions required a relatively high level of education. These two socio-professional groups ultimately comprised almost half of the individuals selected as the party’s local spokespersons between 1931 and 1938.

The third statistically dominant group within the People’s Preachers Organization comprised individuals identified by their surnames, known locally as “notables” (*eşraf*) and

---

<sup>29</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and the Provincial Administrative committees, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

landowners, whom I categorized as “potential local notables.” There was a single person identified as “notable” in 1931 in the Lapseki district of Çanakkale. Notables disappeared from the 1938 lists. In the same manner, twelve preachers were identified as landowners in 1931 in Afyon, Çanakkale, Çorum, Gaziantep and Istanbul while only five in 1938. In the lists prepared in 1931, a considerable number of preachers were identified solely through their surnames (276 out of 1376). This practice was regular and not exceptional. In forty-two provinces, the provincial administrative committees identified their preachers solely by their surname. This figure corresponded to twenty percent of the total number selected in 1931. However, the number of preachers identified by their surname decreased to seventeen in 1938. The only other socio-professional group that filled the gap between the number of ‘sons of’ who disappeared from the 1938 lists were farmers. The number of farmers increased from 14 to 103 in 1938. Given the regular increase in the number of preachers selected from almost each socio-professional group, the statistical change concerning the number of sons is most likely to stem from the abandonment of this identification method rather than a rupture in the relationship between the party and the ‘sons of.’ The preachers who were identified by their surname also intersected with those who were farmers and merchants. Farmers, merchants, contractors, and money changers were categorized as economic elites. These groups likely intersected, since provincial administrative committees may have identified agricultural landowners or former notables who controlled “malikane” as “farmers,” and since some notables were also merchants.

The following categories, including elected and nominated local administrators and members of the CHP provincial organization, were also fluid. Individuals identified through their rank and role within the party organization largely intersected with other professional and status groups, ranging from teachers to district governors and governors. Provincial governors simultaneously served as directors of the party’s provincial administrative committees until 1938. At times, individuals who served as governors in one province moved to another and assumed the director role of a provincial administrative committee. For example, Zihni Orhon served as the head of the CHP administrative committee in Kars after working as Bitlis’s governor in the 1920s. Similarly, Hüseyin Talınlı served as the mayor of Kars between 1926 and 1930 and was a member of the provincial administrative committee of the party continuously from 1924 until the 1940s. Talınlı became the director of the People’s House of

Kars in 1935 but was the city's former mayor.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, Altaylızâde Hüsametdin was identified as a "merchant" in 1931 while already serving on the party's provincial administrative committee in Van. İbrahim Aydın was identified as a "party member" (*partici*) in 1938 while his original profession was "farmer" (*rençberlik*), and he later served as the mayor of Kars.<sup>31</sup> This lack of distinction between partisan and administrative positions, as well as between nominated and elected positions in 1930s Turkey, was one of the reasons why the early republican state was characterized as a "party state."<sup>32</sup>

These socio-professional categories are tailored based on the sources and inquiries of this chapter, aiming to strike a balance between the categories of practice primarily utilized by the party's provincial officials at the time and my analytical categories, which are informed - and potentially biased - by social historians working on similar topics, particularly in France and Germany.<sup>33</sup> They are arbitrary and limited analytical constructions developed through an iterative process between common sense and scholarly insights. Nonetheless, they offer a clearer depiction of the social groups within the CHP's provincial organizations and enable us to move beyond generalizations about their social status, such as "intellectuals," "urban intellectuals," or "provincial elites." The next section will elaborate on the statistical results from the People's Preachers database and discuss their contribution in terms of (1) sources of social distinction influencing the selection of the People's Preachers and (2) the impact of the socio-professional distribution of the People's Preachers in the provinces on state-society relations in 1930s Turkey.

## 7.2. Educated Provincial Elites as Party Spokespeople

---

The selection criteria outlined in the People's Preachers Organization directives emphasized a capacity for persuasion based on social and rhetorical qualities. In other words, party

---

<sup>30</sup> From Kars CHP Administrative committee director, Zihni Orhon to the CHP General Secretary, 26 November 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

<sup>31</sup> İbrahim Aydın's application file, Kars, undated document, 1945-50, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

<sup>32</sup> Gilles Dorransoro and Benjamin Gourisse, "Une clé de lecture du politique en Turquie," 201; Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 176-205.

<sup>33</sup> Charle distinguishes between economic and intellectual elites. Christophe Charle, *La naissance des "intellectuels", 1880-1900*. Werner and Kocka, for instance, categorize many professions requiring a certain level of education as Bildungsbürgertum based on their evolving political roles in the nineteenth century. Werner Conze et al., *Bildungsbürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert*, vol. 38 (Klett-Cotta, 1985).

provincials were instructed to select and nominate individuals whose words would be listened to as local spokespersons. Similarly, the primary selection criterion that comes to mind is the level of education, especially considering the partisan and press debates surrounding the responsibility of “enlightened” individuals to larger audiences composed of the general public, according to the People’s Preachers and other People’s Houses members who spoke on behalf of the party. Indeed, press debates around the *münevver*’s responsibility emphasized education in Europe, proficiency in foreign languages, mastery of canonical literary and philosophical references, along with the political responsibility of educating and enlightening the common people. Against this background, the quantitative analysis of selected public orators reveals a diverse group in terms of profession and sources of social distinction. What commonalities might exist between an elementary school teacher, a senior administrative officer, a former member of parliament, and the chief physician of a state hospital in their potential roles as party spokespersons?

### *7.2.1. Civil Servants Work for the Party*

---

Quantitative analysis of the lists sent to the CHP general secretary by its provincial branches revealed that civil servants formed the most significant group within the People’s Preachers. More than a third of them were teachers and other civil servants employed by various ministries in the provinces. In 1931, nineteen percent of the People’s Preachers selected were teachers or other civil servants (211). By 1938, this figure tripled to 908. This dramatic increase in civil servants was not due to recruiting more low-ranking employees of various ministries. Instead, it was primarily about the number of teachers, which tripled between 1931 and 1938 and doubled in proportion to the general increase in the number of preachers during that period. In other words, while teachers and other civil servants accounted for approximately 20% of the total in 1931, they constituted about 40% in 1938. This evolution in the number of civil servants among the People’s Preachers indicates that this professional group was among the primary targets of the CHP leadership and its provincial branches during those years. In other words, service for the state was an implicit selection criterion not overtly mentioned in the regulatory documents such as circular letters and the directives of the People’s Preachers Organization.



**Table 5. Number of Civil Servants within the People’s Preachers Corps (1931-1938)**

	1931	1938	Total
Other Civil Servants	70	212	282
Teachers	211	908	1189
Total	281	1120	1471

This ambiguity about the recruitment of civil servants was caused by the legal framework. Since 1926, *Memurin Kanunu* (The Law of Civil Servants) has regulated civil servants’ recruitment and working conditions. All civil servants except for the military and gendarmerie were bound to this law.<sup>34</sup> *Memurin Kanunu* determined recruitment criteria such as Turkish citizenship, age, education level, and “not being married to a foreign woman.”<sup>35</sup> It also regulated the economic activity of civil servants outside of their work for the state. Civil servants were strictly prohibited from participating in commercial and artisanal activities, just as they were forbidden from engaging in political activities.<sup>36</sup>

NINTH ARTICLE: Membership of civil servants in political societies and clubs, their interference in all kinds of elections, and their contribution to political publications and statements are prohibited. In case of proven violation, they will be subject to disciplinary measures. Officials authorized by deputies or by governors may make statements.<sup>37</sup>

The limitations on political activity were extensive, making it challenging to determine what constitutes a political “society” or “club.” One might question whether entities like the Turkish Hearths or the People’s Houses qualify as political societies. Given this legal framework, it is clear that the activity of the People’s Preachers was of an illicit nature. The People’s Preachers Organization worked under the provincial branches of the party organization. The directives

---

<sup>34</sup> “İşbu kanunun ahkâmı askerden maada bilûmum Devlet memurlarına şamildir. Ancak jandarma, hususiyetine göre, işbu kanunun umumî hatları dahilinde ayrıca bir kanuna tâbidir.” “Memurin Kanunu,” ed. TBMM (Ankara: Resmi Ceride, 31 March 1926).

<sup>35</sup> “Ecnebi kız ve kadınlarla müteehhil olmamak (Bu kanunun neşrinden evvel ecnebi kadınlarla teehhül etmiş bulunan memurin: Hariciye, Müdafaai Milliye ve Bahriye vekâletlerinde istihdam edilemezler.” Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> “Memurlar ticaret ve sınaatle iştigal edemezler.” Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> “DOKUZUNCU MADDE: Memurların siyâsî cemiyet ve klüplere intisap ve devamları, he nevi intihabata müdahaleleri ve siyâsî neşriyat ve beyanatta bulunmaları memnu ve bilmuhakeme sübutu halinde tartlarını muciptir. Vekillerin mezun kılacakları memurlar ile valiler ve onların salâhiyet verecekleri memurlar beyanatta bulunabilirler.” Ibid., 510.

of the People's Preachers Organization called for their participation in electoral campaigns and make statements in favor of the party's "ideals" and "principles." People's Preachers occasionally called themselves "party preachers" (*parti hatibi*). While the party leadership wanted to keep the People's Preachers Organization confidential between 1931 and 1933 and prohibit preachers from using this responsibility as a "title" publicly, the press articles in 1933 made the People's Preachers Organization public.<sup>38</sup> Against the background of press articles and public lectures in People's Houses about oratory art, it is difficult to imagine that being a People's Preachers remained confidential throughout the 1930s.

In this sense, being listed as a People's Preacher should violate the Law of Civil Servants. Given the context of 1930s Turkey, characterized by a lack of autonomy of state institutions vis-à-vis the party, the last sentence of the article virtually overruled the previous ones. If the provincial governor's mere authorization prevented disciplinary measures against civil servants engaged in partisan activity, the article forbidding their political activity was, in fact, obsolete because the provincial and district governors were, at the same time, the directors of the CHP's branches corresponding to the same administrative units. Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, for instance, was in the first list of the People's Preachers prepared in 1931-32. When he applied to run for legislative elections in 1950, he crossed the part of the form interrogating his date of enrolment to the party.<sup>39</sup> Other teachers such as Hamiyet Ülün and Nedime Alp registered 1935 and 1936 as their dates of enrollment to the party despite being civil servants.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, Enver Behnan Şapolyo gave his date of enrolment as 1926 to the party despite being a civil servant.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> "Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası hatibi ibaresini havi kart bastırmaktan veya halk hatipliğini bir sıfat ve unvan gibi kullanmaktan arkadaşlarımı tahzir eder ve bu cihete bilhassa ehemmiyet verilmesini tekrar ve muhabbetle rica eylerim." Circular letter from the CHP General Secretary, Recep Peker, 11 November 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/2-7-21.

<sup>39</sup> Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's application file, Gaziantep, 6 April 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1125-2.

<sup>40</sup> Nedime Alp's application file, no date, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-3; Hamiyet Ülün's application file, no date, Bolu, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/293-1180-2.

<sup>41</sup> Genel Sekreterliğin yazılı emrile C.H.P. Halk hatibi seçildim ve 42 meydan hitabesi verdim. Enver Behnan Şapolyo's short autobiography, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/289-1164-2. The document is undated but likely predates 1945, as forms for this type of application became standardized after that year.

C. H. Partisine ka- yıtli bulunduđu	İl :	
	İlce :	Memur
	Bucak :	
	Ocak :	

Figure 14. Yılmaz Dokuzođuz's note on his CHP membership, 6 April 1950.

While the Law of Civil Servants did not prevent an overwhelming number of male civil servants from becoming party spokespeople, it was used to limit the enrolment of women to the CHP. The Civil Servants Law of 1926 allowed women to work for state services.<sup>42</sup> As a result, women's public visibility increased considerably during the early republican era. From the People's Preachers Organization sample, an overwhelming majority of women preachers were teachers, hence civil servants (78 out of 88). After the promulgation of the Municipality Law in April 1930, it was formally possible for women to vote and participate in municipal elections. This increased the number of women who wanted to become a CHP member. Following an increasing number of solicitations by women to enroll in the CHP, the party general secretary felt the need to remind its provincial administrative committees that it was illegal to become a party member for civil servants, but it was not necessary to enroll to work for the party.

We found it convenient to accept the ladies who applied to become a member of our party. However, there are teachers among those, and because of the Law of Civil Servants, it is impossible for these ladies to become a member of any [political] party. In any case, since we consider all civil servants natural limbs of our party, it is not necessary for those

---

<sup>42</sup> "ALTINCI MADDE: Kadınların memur ve müsdahdem olmaları caizdir. Ne gibi memuriyet ve hizmetlerde istihdam edilecekleri her vekaletin memurlarına ait kanunlarında tesbit olunur." "Memurin Kanunu," 510.

to become members. I request, Gentlemen, that [you] communicate to ladies [who are teachers] our gratitude for their noble sentiment and the others for their membership.<sup>43</sup>

The Party General Secretary was satisfied with the women's rising interest in party membership. The only problem was that most women were, at the same time, civil servants. To abide by their own laws, the CHP General Secretary had to refuse the formal membership of women civil servants. Beyond the regulations concerning party membership, this cipher telegram showed how the Party leadership perceived civil servants: "natural limbs of the party" (*firkamızın tabii uzuvları*).

The CHP leadership considered itself the rightful owners of the state apparatus, including its salaried employees. Thus, service to the state became an implicit criterion for selection in the People's Preachers Organization. Moreover, the perspective of the People's Preachers Organization additionally highlights the extent of the confusion between the party and state apparatus during the CHP's single-party rule. Despite the prohibition of political activity for civil servants, the case of the People's Preachers Organization illustrates the depth of the CHP's affiliation with civil servants during the "heyday of Kemalism." It also underscores that understanding political engagement requires transcending mere party membership in the single-party era. Party membership did not necessarily entail "official enrollment" resulting in serialized identity documents from the enrollment process. Many civil servants were either unofficially enrolled in the party or functioned de facto within the party's provincial organization without official enrollment.

---

<sup>43</sup> "Firkamıza kaydolunmak üzere müracaat eden Hanımefendilerin Fırkaya kabulleri muvafık görülmüştür. Ancak bunlar meyanında muallim Hanımefendiler vardırki memurin kanunu dolayısıyla bu Hanımefendilerin hiç bir fırkaya girmeleri mümkün değildir. ve zaten bilim um memurini Firkamızın tabii uzuvları olarak telakki ettiğimiz cihetle bunların kayıt muamelesine lüzum da yoktur. Gösterdikleri necip ve asil hissiyata karşı sureti mahsusada teşekkür olunmasını ve diğer Hanımefendilere de Fırka azası olduklarına müteşekkür iblağını niyaz eylerim Efendim." Cypher Telegram from the CHP General Secretary, 2 September 1930, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1-4-10.

### 7.2.2. Education and Service for the State

The trends in preacher selection highlight the importance of educational level in the selection process. The largest number of People's Preachers were selected from among the learned professions because the CHP's Provincial Administrative committees regarded these individuals among the most persuasive in local communities. The party inspectors from the "center" reiterated the importance of co-opting provincial elites from learned professions. In 1935, when the party inspectors realized the weakness of the People's Houses, they advised encouraging "high school teachers and the college-educated" to work at the People's Houses."<sup>44</sup> The highlight of the "college-educated" reaffirms the pertinence of the educational level for becoming a party preacher.

Teachers and officers of the local and provincial administration depended on public law regarding employees of the state. As a result, their recruitment, dismissal, or assignments between different institutions linked to the same ministry were determined by public law. Since the 1926 Law of Civil Servants, it was required to have at least a secondary school diploma (*orta mektep*) to become a civil servant. Nevertheless, it was possible to recruit someone for state service without a diploma in case of a lack of applications with required educational credentials.<sup>45</sup> Primary school teachers were recruited among people with "at least five-year-long preparatory school education or its equivalents."<sup>46</sup> Middle school teachers were recruited among graduates of "middle"- and "high"-level Teachers Training Colleges (*Darülmuaallimin* and *Darülmuaallimat*), Universities (*Darülfünun*), or Higher Education Schools (*Yüksek ihtisas Mektepleri*). The last type of school included institutions such as the School of Public Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), School of Medicine (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye*), and School of Law

---

<sup>44</sup> "Halkevleri çalışma araçları arasında çok zayıf ve bütçeleri dar olduğundan geniş ölçüde iş beklemek kabil değildir. Uşak Halkevi şeker fabrikası memurlarından yardım görmekte ise de fabrikanın bu yıl kapanması Halkevi çalışmasına zarar verecektir. Lise öğretmenleriyle yüksek tahsil görmüş olanların Halkevleriyle yakından ilgilenmeleri için ilbayın gayretini istemişler." Ömer Dinç, Dr. Şakir Ediz, İbrahim Dalkılıç, Naşit Uluğ, Dr. Lütüf Kırdar, Mehmet Sümer, Kütahya, Report for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-01/725-484-1.

<sup>45</sup> "Dördüncü Madde: Laâkal orta mekteplerden mezun olmak (Bu şartı haiz olanlardan müteaddid talip bulunduğu veya talipler arasında orta mektep mezunları bulunmadığı halde müsabaka ile alınır." "Memurin Kanunu."

<sup>46</sup> "Bu kanunun neşri tarihinde muallim muavini sıfatını ihraz edenler arasında en az beş senelik idadiye muadil tâli veya âli derecede bir mektep tahsili görenler muallim addolunurlar." "İlk mektep muallim ve muvainleri hakkında kanun," *Resmi Ceride* (Ankara), 20 May 1926.

(*Mekteb-i Hukuk*). These schools trained high-ranking bureaucrats, doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, judges and public prosecutors who were among the dominant professional groups in the People's Preachers Organization.<sup>47</sup>

Following these requirements, the educational level of the People's Preachers should be high. Agâh Sırrı Bey [Levend], for instance, adhered to the prescriptions made by the party leadership. When he was selected as a preacher in Istanbul in 1931, he was a literature professor at Istanbul Boy's High School (*Istanbul Erkek Lisesi*) after graduating from the Literature Faculty at Istanbul University (*Dârülfünun*) in 1919.<sup>48</sup> On the other side of the Bosphorus, Niyazi Tevfik Bey [Yükselen] was chosen as a party preacher in the same year. Niyazi Tevfik Bey was also a teacher (*muallim*) and a graduate of the School of Public Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*) in 1903-4 [1319]. In addition to his training in the prestigious *Mülkiye* forming administrative elites, Niyazi Tevfik Bey went to Paris for his studies and attended courses at the Institute of Political Studies and Sorbonne University. He also worked as a Turkish instructor at the School of Oriental Languages in Paris and founded the Paris branch of the Turkish Hearths Association.<sup>49</sup> Emin Bilgen graduated from the School of Medicine (*Mülkiye Tıbbiyesi*) when he was selected as a preacher in Gaziantep in 1938.<sup>50</sup> Tarık Ziya Işıtman, who was identified as a middle school history teacher, in the same manner claimed attending history classes at Lausanne University after completing his studies at the Gazi Teachers' Training College (Ankara) in 1936.<sup>51</sup>

The educational paths of the five preachers are impressive and correspond to descriptions provided in the press debates mentioned in the previous chapter. These preachers stand out from the rest of society due to their educations at elite institutions, proficiency in foreign languages, and professional experience in education. The CHP leadership and their

---

<sup>47</sup> "Orta tedrisat mektepleri ile darülmualimin ve darülmualimat muallimleri, darülfünun, yüksek ve orta darülmualimin ve darülmualimat ve yüksek ihtisas mektepleri mezunlarından intihap olunur." "Orta tedrisat muallimleri kanunu," *Resmî Ceride* (Ankara), 14 March 1924.

<sup>48</sup> İsmail Ulçugür, *Agâh Sırrı Levend* (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, 1982).

<sup>49</sup> "Elsine-i Şarkiye Mektebi muallimliğinde bulunarak Balkan harbi esnasında bir çok fransız büyüklerine vatanım lehinde konferanslar verdirdim ve Paris Türk Yurdu müessislerindim. Paris'te Ulum-i Siyasiye mektebinde ve Sorbon Darülfünununda ikmalî tahsil ve malumat eyledim." Niyazi Tevfik Yükselen's application file, Istanbul, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/294-1186-2.

<sup>50</sup> Emin Bilgen's application file, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>51</sup> Tarık Ziya Işıtman's application file, Bolu, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/293-1180-2.

“intellectuals” who participated in debates through newspaper columns envisioned individuals like these preachers. However, it was rare to find teachers graduating from late Ottoman elite-producing institutions outside of Istanbul, Ankara, and a few important provincial centers. These three examples hardly represent the entirety of the People’s Preachers Organization.

Most teachers recruited after 1926 were graduates of Teachers Training Colleges, and their mobility between the provinces, not to mention worldwide, was limited. Rifat Kozan, who became a preacher in Yozgat, was born in 1901 and became a teacher after completing his education at the Kayseri Teachers’ Training College in 1923. Between 1923 and 1950, Kozan moved between Kayseri’s central district, Develi, and his hometown, Boğazlıyan, and moved only between village schools and schools located in the district center.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Tuğrul Aka, a preacher in Aydın, studied at the Afyon Teachers Training College and before starting to work in Aydın in the Aegean region.<sup>53</sup> Both Aka and Kozan qualified their “education level” (*tahsil derecesi*) as “secondary” (*orta*) in their application files. In contrast, the examples in the previous section qualified their education level as “high” (*âlî* or *yüksek*).

There were also striking examples when the preachers worked as a teacher without obtaining an equivalent diploma. Still, there was a discrepancy between the educational credentials the party desired and prescribed for its local members and reality. The educational requirements for recruiting teachers and other civil servants were not always met. Many teachers, for instance, were employed before the laws promulgated in the 1920s and kept their jobs. As a result, the percentage of graduates from the Teachers Training College, for instance, was considerably low until 1938.<sup>54</sup> Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, for instance, was born in 1888 in Kilis and worked as a teacher after graduating from the Preparatory School in Aleppo (*Halep*

---

<sup>52</sup> “Şimdiye kadar bulunduğum memuriyetler: 19-9-1323 den bu ana kadar Kayseri’nin Ağırnas köyü öğretmen, Develi, Akmadeni, Boğazlıyan kazaları mektep müdürlükleri, Bektaşlı, Çıkrıkçı köyleri başöğretmeği, Hasbey nahiyesi baş öğretmen ve nahiye müdür vekâleti, Boğazlıyan sıra öğretmenliği, hâlen Boğazlıyan kazasının Babayağmur köyü başöğretmeniyim. Partideki hizmetim: 1926 da Boğazlıyan C.H.P. kâtipliği, 1931 den bugüne kadar C.H.P. hatipliği, 1935-1940 vilâyet mümessilliği, 1938 de Boğazlıyan C.H.P idare heyeti azalığı ve Halkevi başkanlığı, beşinci büyük kurultay mümessilliğine seçildim çalıştım kurultayca malumu alinizdir.” Rifat Kozan’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1420-1.

<sup>53</sup> “Çıkarmakta olduğum ve 24 sayıdan ibaret olan birinci cildini sunduğum akış mecmuası ile de Partimizin prensiplerini ve Aydın gençliğinin fikir hareketlerini yaymağa çalıştım.” Tuğrul Aka’s application file, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1420-1.

<sup>54</sup> İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *Maarif İstatistikleri* (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1935). Cited by: Özden Barış Alp, “Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Öğretmenlik Mesleği ve Öğretmen Kimliği,” *Kebikeç*, no. 40 (2015).

*İdadisi*).<sup>55</sup> Nedime Alp was a teacher and headmaster after completing her education at Aleppo Middle School (*Halep Rüşdiyesi*). This was possible because she started to work as a teacher in December 1913 [15 Kanunusâni 1329], thirteen years before the promulgation of the law concerning the recruitment of teachers.<sup>56</sup> Münir Müeyyet Bekman identified himself as a “writer” (*muharrir*) in his résumé. He also claimed to teach in “foreign schools” (*ecnebi mektepleri*) in Istanbul. Still, he did not have a diploma. He attended High School (*Sultani*) without receiving a diploma. He filled the question about his education level by stating that his education was of a “private” (*hususî*) kind.<sup>57</sup>

Despite these differences, some People’s Preachers showed an expectation of a higher education level in their application letters when they wanted to move up within the party’s internal hierarchy. As mentioned earlier, Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz attempted to make up for his lack of higher education by stating that he is self-taught and can meet the requirements for parliamentary activity.

I would not claim that I completed higher education, but I am an autodidact. I know construction and the constitution and am completely capable of proposing draft laws, especially on the life-draining route tax. Six out of seven deputies of Gaziantep today are undoubtedly superior to me.”<sup>58</sup>

The scholarly trajectories examined through the case studies mentioned in the previous section demonstrate the primacy of educational credentials or “cultural capital” in selecting the People’s Preachers. Despite the party leadership’s emphasis on education, the educational backgrounds of the civil servants selected as People’s Preachers varied greatly. The People’s Preachers Organization included individuals with remarkable educational trajectories who received education from prestigious institutions in the Ottoman Empire or abroad and those

---

<sup>55</sup> Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz’s application file, Gaziantep, 6 April 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>56</sup> Nedime Alp’s application file, Gaziantep, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-3.

<sup>57</sup> “Esas mesleği: Muharrirlik İhtisası: Muharrirlik Son tahsilini bitirdiği okul: Ankara Sultanisinde okudum. Tahsil Derecesi: Hususî” Münir Müeyyet Bekman’s application file, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>58</sup> “Yüksek tahsilden ikmal edilerek mahsun kaldığımı ileri sürecek değilim, ancak kendimi oldukça yetiştirmişlerdenim ve hiç olmazsa bina, esasi vergileri hakkında beyanı mütalea ve ulusun ömür törpüsü olan yol vergisi yerine mükemmel bir kanun tasarısı sunabilecek kudretteyim. § Gaziantebin şimdiki milletvekillerinden 7 de 6 sı cidden benden üstün şahsiyetlerdir. Bunlardan Doktor Muzaffer Canpoladın, orta okulda talebem olması ve Ömer Asım Aksoy’la Partide Halkevinde birlikte çalışmış ve Cemil Aevlinin de yakın bir arkadaşım bulunmasıyla müfthirim. Beni Gaziantep, Kilis, Antep ve Bolu C.H. Partisinin eski ve yeni [illegible] çok iyi tanırlar. (...)” Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.



who only completed middle school (*rüşdiye*) in the final years of Ottoman history. Given the challenges regarding recruiting new and active members, individuals from these occupational groups, such as teachers and other civil servants, were particularly encouraged or inclined to engage in party activities. For instance, Cemal Gökçe, a high school headmaster and philosophy professor, mentioned in his application letter that he made efforts to gather students and colleagues around the People's House during his tenure as a high school headmaster in Edirne.<sup>59</sup> In any case, this diversity in their educational backgrounds highlights the pragmatic and flexible approach taken by the early republican leadership in selecting the People's Preachers.

However, civil servants, despite being the majority, did not constitute the entirety of the People's Preachers Organization. As mentioned in the overview of the preachers' lists, many farmers, merchants, and potential local notables figured in the organization and populated the CHP's provincial and district administrative committees throughout the single-party era. The following section will investigate other potential sources of notability that may have influenced the selection of the People's Preachers.

### *7.2.3. Gender-based Social Distinction*

---

Although the selection criteria directives sent to the provincial administrative committees did not mention gender, the organization mostly comprised of men. Only 2.7 percent of the preachers were women.<sup>60</sup> The underrepresentation of women in the People's Preachers Organization is unsurprising, as women's social and political visibility increased while the Organization was active. The lifespan of the People's Preachers Organization and the single-party rule coincided with a paradoxical period of emancipation for women that resulted in the valorization of educated women within the party organization.

Building on existing feminist movements in the late Ottoman Empire, including during the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the republican era marked a period of relative liberation.

---

<sup>59</sup> "Edirne'de bulunduğum müddetçe Halkevinin her sahadaki çalışmalarına mektebin bütün unsurlarını iştirak ettirmek suretiyle kudretim dahilinde olan bütün faaliyetleri gösterdim. Bu işlerde talebe ve arkadaşlarımı toplayarak nazım rolünü ifa ettim ve etmekteyim." Cemal Gökçe's application file, 1954, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

<sup>60</sup> I identify preachers as "women" when their name is followed by "Hanım" before the Surname Law, or when they have a first name typically attributed to women.

Elite Muslim women associated with nationalist organizations were highly active as public speakers in Istanbul during the armistice era. Notably, prominent feminist Nezihe Muhiddin established the Women's People's Party (*Kadınlar Halk Fırkası*, henceforth the KHF) in 1923, preceding the creation of the (Republican) People's Party (CHP). While the KHF did not achieve legalization, ongoing efforts by women's associations led to the right to participate in municipal elections following the promulgation of the Municipal Law in 1930. Additionally, in 1934, women gained the right to participate in legislative elections. Consequently, the Turkish Grand National Assembly had seventeen women deputies after the 1935 elections.

The evolution of women within the People's Preachers Organization reflected these new developments. Despite being a minority overall, their number and geographic distribution expanded considerably between 1931 and 1938. In 1931, only eleven women were appointed as People's Preachers, but by 1938, this number dramatically increased to 85. The initial cohort included women from Istanbul, Antalya, Diyarbakir, Çorum, Mardin, and Çanakkale. Istanbul had three women preachers, while predominantly Kurdish provinces like Diyarbakir and Mardin, where the party organization was weak, also had two women preachers each. Additionally, Çorum, Kütahya, and Antalya from central, western, and southern Anatolia selected a woman as a party preacher in 1931. However, the distribution of this small cohort of women preachers did not reflect any well-established geographical dichotomy, such as the one opposing the "center" to the "periphery" or the "West" to the "East" concerning the power and weakness of the party or state organization in early republican Turkey.

In terms of occupation, teachers comprised the majority of women who became People's Preachers in both years. Other professions requiring higher education became increasingly accessible to women throughout the 1920s. Consequently, doctors, and notably lawyers, judges, and law graduates were among the women serving as the party's local spokespeople. The first cohort included nine teachers, a law school graduate, a member of the municipal assembly in Istanbul, and a woman identified as the "wife of the chief physician" of a public hospital in Çanakkale.<sup>61</sup> The second cohort was considerably larger, with sixty-eight teachers from almost all Anatolian provinces selected as party preachers in 1938. Alongside teachers, a

---

<sup>61</sup> "Hikmet Hanım, Sahil Sıhhiye Sertabibi Hıfzı B. Refikası," Çanakkale, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

few law school graduates, judges, engineers, and members of the municipal assembly were selected in 1938. The high number of teachers, including school headmasters, among the CHP-affiliated women in Anatolia can be attributed to the fact that becoming a teacher was one of the earliest available and accessible professions for elite women following the establishment of the Teachers Training College (*Darülmüallimat*) for women in Istanbul in 1870 and its subsequent expansion into the provincial centers.<sup>62</sup>

#### 7.2.4. Property-based Social Distinction

---

Preachers identified as farmers or from prominent families have little documented information about their educational background, unlike teachers and other civil servants. The Surname Reform makes it difficult to trace biographies for many individuals solely known by their patronymic surname. Additionally, we find few records in the CHP archives of People's Preachers previously identified as farmers, merchants, or landowners among the application files. One exceptional case is that of Etem Menderes, listed as a CHP preacher in the province of Aydın in 1938, who later became a deputy of the Democrat Party and Minister of Defense (1954). Etem [sic] Bey [Menderes] was born in 1899 in Izmir. According to his short autobiography submitted to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Etem Menderes was both a lawyer and a farmer. He claimed to have started his political career with the Liberal Republican Party (*Serbest Fırka*) and joined the CHP after the party's closure. From that point onwards, he served on the party's provincial administrative committee in Aydın and later became the city's mayor in 1938 until he resigned in 1945 to join the Democrat Party.<sup>63</sup>

Adnan Menderes, who served as Prime Minister from 1950 to the 1960 military coup, was also from Aydın. Menderes did not appear on the People's Preachers' lists, most likely because he was already a CHP deputy serving in Ankara when the Organization was created. In his short autobiography dating from his first arrival to the Grand National Assembly as a CHP deputy, [Menderes] presented himself as a "farmer" (*çiftçi*) despite being a descendant of a

---

<sup>62</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, *Women in the Ottoman Empire: A Social and Political History* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2023), xiii; Suphan Kırımızıaltın, "Gender, Education and Modernization : Women School Teachers in the Late Ottoman Empire" (Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin, 2012).

<sup>63</sup> Etem Menderes, Çiftçi, CHP ilyönkürul üyesi, 1938, Aydın, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2. Etem Menderes, Tercüme-i Hal, TBMM Arşivi, May 1950, HT-1175-1-9.

landowning family of Aydın and a graduate of the American College Institute of Izmir and the Law Faculty in Istanbul.<sup>64</sup> Both instances illustrate how flexible the classification of “farmer” (*çiftçi*) is and the variety of interpretations that may be associated with it within the ranks of the CHP in different provinces.

Other case studies of People’s Preachers and People’s Houses members show the fluidity of “farmer,” “merchant,” and “landowner” as occupational titles. Cemil Göğüş was selected People’s Preacher in the central district of Gaziantep in 1938. Göğüş was the only preacher in the whole corpus who was identified as a landowner (*ashabı emlaktan*), a landownership that was linked to the economic aspects of the Armenian Genocide. Ümit Kurt identified Cemil Göğüş among the Muslim notables to whom Armenian property was distributed in Antep.<sup>65</sup> I could not find identity documents pointing to the educational background of Cemil Göğüş. Nevertheless, he likely had some formal or informal education since he was the first person to publish a newspaper in Turkish in the region. Nurettin Bozdoğan, in his biography of Ali İhsan Göğüş, another descendent of the same notable family who became a famous journalist, noted that his uncle, Cemil [Göğüş] started to publish *Mecla-yı Maarif* (Mirror of Knowledge), the “first Turkish newspaper published in Southeast Turkey” in 1903. The mere choice of name for his local newspaper implies valuing knowledge and education (*maarif*). In 1919, Cemil Bey published another newspaper titled *Antep Haberleri* (Antep News).<sup>66</sup>

Another member of the same family did not figure in the People’s Preachers lists but occasionally appeared in the People’s Preachers’ paper trail as a public speaker of the Gaziantep People’s House.<sup>67</sup> One of them, Muhtar Göğüş, became the director of the People’s House when its former director, Ömer Asım Aksoy, moved to Ankara to serve at the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Muhtar Göğüş claimed that his profession was “viticulture”

---

<sup>64</sup> Adnan Menderes’ *tercüme-i hal*, TBMM Arşivi, 1931, HT 779-1-4.

<sup>65</sup> Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*, 217, 348.

<sup>66</sup> U. Barlas, *Gaziantep Basın Tarihi 100. yıl* (Genel Dağıtım, 1972), 22. Cited by: Eyüp Nurettin Bozdoğan, “Bir Biyografi Denemesi: Gazeteci ve Siyasetçi Kimliğiyle Ali İhsan Göğüş” (MA İstanbul University, 2011), 44, 155.

<sup>67</sup> Muhtar Göğüş, Gaziantep, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 939-644-1.

(*bağcılık*), which implies agricultural landownership. He noted on his educational level as such: “My education is of private nature; I only completed *rüşdiye* (junior high school).”<sup>68</sup>

Nonetheless, there was also a correlation between old notabilities and access to private or institutionalized education. Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz mentioned his well-known family, Mantıkçioğulları, denoting potential lineage from a dialectician.<sup>69</sup> Sabahat Göğüş, whose great uncle was identified as a landowner (*ashabı emlaktan*), for instance, was a college student when she delivered a speech at the Gaziantep People’s House (1936). She later became one of the first women to become an archeologist in Turkey and founded the Archeology Museum in her hometown, Gaziantep.<sup>70</sup> Sabahat’s father, Muhtar Göğüş, worked as an education secretary, education inspector, and teacher at a junior high school (*rüştiye*) and several high schools (*idadi*) despite his lack of educational credentials.<sup>71</sup> Thanks to his private education, he could “make sense of Arabic and Persian” and “spoke French.”<sup>72</sup>

Whether the term “farmer” referred to owners and managers of agricultural land or individuals who cultivate land, crops, or raise animals, the sources of notability for farmers—in the literal sense of being worthy of attention—were not their educational credentials, but their economic standing. Unlike the two Menderes examples, other “farmers” and “merchants” who worked in the party’s provincial section, for example, under the direction of the People’s Houses, described their education level as “rudimentary” (*az, iptidai*). The individuals whose short autobiographies will be examined shortly did not appear in the People’s Preachers lists. Yet, they became directors of People’s Houses in Kars when the boundaries between both institutions were ambiguous. As mentioned, many People’s Preachers were also members or directors of People’s Houses, and vice versa. For instance, Miktat Kaya, who became the director of the Kağızman People’s House (Kars) in 1938, self-identified as a “farmer” (*ziraatçı*)

---

<sup>68</sup> “Tahsilim hususidir. Yalnız rüştiyeden izinliyim.” Muhtar Göğüş’s registry file, no date [1935-1939] Gaziantep People’s House, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

<sup>69</sup> Marc Aymes, “La tâche de l’interprète, 1934-2023: Histoire linguistique pour petits et grands.”

<sup>70</sup> Cite Language Day in Gaziantep for Sabahat Göğüş and Cemil Görüş.

<sup>71</sup> “Devlet teşkilatında bulunduğu vazifeler ve bu vazifelerden ayrılış sebepleri: Maarif katipliğinde, sonra müfettişliğinde, Rüştiye ve Aynülmaarif idadisinde muallimlikte bulundum.” Muhtar Göğüş’s registry file, no date [1935-1939] Gaziantep People’s House, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

<sup>72</sup> “Yabancı lisanlardan hangisini bilir, eserleri var mıdır: Arapça ve Farsçadan mana çıkarırım. Fransızca’yı bilirim.” Muhtar Göğüş’s registry file, no date [1935-1939] Gaziantep People’s House, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

and stated that he only completed primary education (*ilk*). Kaya had been a CHP member since its foundation and had already served as a mayor between 1920 and 1937 before becoming the director of the People's House of Kağızman.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Cemal Yıldırım who became the director of the Ardahan People's House in October 1939, was described as a “baker” (*fırıncı*). He also stated his level of education as “rudimentary” (*az*) in one document and as “literate” (*okur-yazar*) in another.<sup>74</sup> Mikat Kaya, despite his rudimentary education, claimed to speak Russian like most People's Preachers of this province who grew up under the Russian Empire. Cemal Yıldırım, on the other hand, did not speak any other languages.<sup>75</sup>

Nevertheless, it is also possible that selecting farmers, merchants, and shopkeepers with low educational levels as party spokespersons was not a deliberate choice, but an adaptation in order to find members to participate in cultural activities. The directors of the People's Houses in various districts of Kars became increasingly educated throughout the 1930s. By the early 1940s, most directors were teachers, doctors, and civil servants born and raised in other provinces.<sup>76</sup>

### 7.3. Combining New and Old Notabilities

---

This chapter focuses on the lists of People's Preachers sent from the CHP provincial and district administrative committees to the party general secretary in Ankara between 1931 and 1938. The quantitative analysis of these lists for this chapter was confined to the “identity” (*hüviyet*) column and aimed to investigate the sources of social distinction that played a role in their selection process. Additionally, the chapter sought to counterbalance the limitations of the quantitative analysis of the preacher lists by compiling identity documents found in the party archives for a limited number of individuals who applied to run for legislative elections from the party's lists or became People's House directors. This cross-analysis demonstrated

---

<sup>73</sup> Among his services for the party Mikat Kaya specified that he worked as a mayor until a parliamentary decision merged mayorships with the district government in 1937. Mikat Kaya's identity documents (*sicil sureti*), 21 March 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

<sup>74</sup> Cemal Yıldırım's identity documents, 4 July 1939 - 22 October 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

<sup>75</sup> Cemal Yıldırım responded to the form regarding his educational background by stating, “I don't know any of them.” (“Hiç birini bilmiyorum.”) Cemal Yıldırım's identity documents, 4 July 1939 - 22 October 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

<sup>76</sup> Identity documents of the People's House directors in the province of Kars, 1931-1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

the significance of education level in the recruitment process of the People's Preachers. While education, in general, was important for selecting the republic's teachers, it is not comparable to what is expected from the "münevvers" explored in the previous section.

The People's Preachers Organization comprised individuals with relatively high levels of education that were not always formalized and, therefore, did not always result in diplomas. While some People's Preachers may have fit the *münevver* category outlined by Reşat Feyzi as graduates of prestigious schools, many held positions, particularly in public administration.<sup>77</sup> A form of "private" education, common among descendants of provincial notables, provided access to certain administrative positions for individuals born in the late nineteenth century. The case of the People's Preachers also illustrates how access to literacy, enabling individuals to read the press and party brochures, was sometimes sufficient for them to become local spokespeople. The People's Preachers Organization case study highlights civil servants' dominance within the CHP during the single-party era. Despite legal restrictions on civil servants' political activities, which will be further explored in the next chapter, civil servants from provincial sections of various ministries overwhelmingly constituted the People's Preachers Organization.

In a famous article published in 1967, Albert Hourani wrote about "politics of notables" as a style of government of the "provincial centers," implying what the Ottoman and republican statesmen called "*taşra*."<sup>78</sup> In the 1980s, historians explored the "notables paradigm" and showed the professional and statutory groups making up the local notables and their conflicts and collaboration with the imperial state apparatus. The power of notables stemmed from different sources, ranging from descent from illustrious ancestors (*eşraf*) to "landownership" through inheritable tax farms (*malikane*) or the control over pious foundations (*evkaf*).<sup>79</sup> Philip Khoury showed the transformation of notables' political role evolving to a situation in which notables were "completely drawn into the state administration" as a "provincial aristocracy of service" by concentrating on the case of Damascus.<sup>80</sup> Ali Yaycıoğlu reiterated the "local

---

<sup>77</sup> Reşat Feyzi [Yüzüncü], "Münevver Kime Denir?."

<sup>78</sup> Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables."

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 54; Philip Khoury, "The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited," 215.

<sup>80</sup> Philip Khoury, "The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited," 217.

notables paradigm” claims by showing how the partnerships were established, transformed, and maintained between the state and provincial magnates in many Ottoman provinces from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup> Johann Büssow’s study on Hamidian Palestine complicated the narrative about the “notables,” showing how different types of provincial elites (landowners, religious scholars, merchants, and administrators) were considered among the political elites in the district of Jerusalem.<sup>82</sup> Instead of “notables,” Büssow noted that local political elites were defined as the “actors who occupied the most influential positions or roles relevant to local political life.”<sup>83</sup>

Many scholars acknowledged the notables’ role in the early republican era. In another famous article published in 1973, Şerif Mardin postulated that the early republican leadership continued to depend on notables in the “periphery,” used similarly to the emic term “*taşra*” (province) in the sense of the regions outside of the political center, the capital or large metropolitan centers.<sup>84</sup> Mardin explained the persistence of the “politics of notables” by the priorities of the early republican leadership. According to Mardin, strengthening the state by maintaining the dependence on notables was easier than working on peasant mobilization.<sup>85</sup> This dependence on notables did not start with the single-party regime. Ali Yaycıoğlu underlined the role of provincial powerholders in organizing the nationalist resistance movement after the loss of the First World War in Anatolia despite the efforts of the official historiography developed in the 1930s to erase their role.<sup>86</sup> When the Committee of Union and Progress came to power and established the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908, they relied on provincial elites, including religious dignitaries, to widen popular support for their Party.<sup>87</sup> Meeker showed, through the case study of Trabzon (Of), how a single notable family’s relationship with the state remained intact from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s. The

---

<sup>81</sup> Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*, 67.

<sup>82</sup> Johann Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem 1872-1908* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2011), 310.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 312.

<sup>84</sup> Şerif Mardin, “Center-Periphery Relations: A Key To Turkish Politics?,” 183.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*, 247. See also: İlker Turan, “Continuity and Change in Turkish Bureaucracy,” in *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), 106-13.

<sup>87</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 95, 148.



continuity of the partnerships with the local notables consisted of notables collaborating with the regime in exchange for local administrative positions as retribution.<sup>88</sup> The persistence of the “notables paradigm” is well-studied concerning the Ottoman Empire. Concerning the situation of provincial elites, the case of the People’s Preachers demonstrates how their status was maintained despite the radical reforms of the early republican era, which formally opposed inherited privileges. Provincial powerholding families participated in the CHP’s Provincial Administrative committees and the People’s Preachers Organization. They pledged an alliance with the new regime through the People’s Preacher’s Organization.

Cross-referencing a quantitative analysis of the People’s Preachers Organization with biographical case studies, including former preachers’ educational and professional backgrounds, reveals the interconnection and fluidity between social and professional titles. The cohort of People’s Preachers amalgamated traditional notables rooted in religious education and, significantly, landownership transitioning from agricultural control. Conversely, it also incorporated those with secular education and state service. Overall, the party selected People’s Preachers primarily from their local social circles, often comprising elites with inherent ties to the state. Schoolteachers typically held civil service positions, while provincial administrators occupied elected or appointed roles within the state administration. Essentially, most preachers likely occupied top positions within local social hierarchies, either as part of administrative or educated elites distinguished by their level of education. The Organization encompassed both ‘men of state’ and ‘men of place.’ Its composition included numerous state employees and local notables, whose interchange between roles in teaching, public administration, and private enterprise illustrated the fluidity of boundaries between these categories during the single-party era.

---

<sup>88</sup> Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*, 5-40.



## 8. Motivations and Rewards of Preaching

---

This chapter will focus on application letters and identity documents to scrutinize the self-narratives and “political careers” of the People’s Preachers. It will investigate the role of serving as a People’s Preacher within the typical trajectory of party members while also reflecting on the motivations behind numerous individuals committing to partisan activity. Examining the social and political trajectories of the People’s Preachers will provide additional insights into the relationship between the state and society during the early republican era, characterized by the blurred boundaries between the party and the state apparatus.

Beyond its quantitative outcomes, the database of the People’s Preachers, examined in the previous chapter, allows us to trace individual actors. The lists prepared in 1931, prior to the Surname Law, do not include the surnames of the preachers. The subsequent lists (1938) contain surnames and additional information about their occupation and social titles. If a preacher did not change his or her residence between 1931 and 1938, he or she would appear in both lists. Their professional title and city of activity allow us to identify several preachers and trace their biographies through the party archives.

This chapter utilizes identity documents from three distinct contexts to investigate the motivations and rewards of preaching for the CHP during its single-party rule. The primary source of these documents comes from the pre-parliamentary application process within the party structure. Former preachers submitted application letters to the party’s General Secretary to run for legislative elections between 1939 and 1950. Specifically, applications in 1939 and 1943 were aimed at participating in legislative elections, while applications in other years were made to fill vacant seats left by the death or resignation of a member of the parliament. These application files are housed in the party archives, organized separately by province for legislative elections and collectively for vacant seats. Each file typically comprises between five to 150 documents.

The second type of identity document pertains to when a People’s Preacher assumes a role on the party’s provincial administrative board or becomes a director of a People’s House. These documents were generated after the conclusion of the selection process. They served the purpose of enabling the party General Secretary to verify the consistency of the selected

People’s House directors’ partisan trajectories.<sup>1</sup> Due to the extensive volume of documents in each file and the logistical challenge of physically accessing the archives to retrieve entire files, I opted to focus on several provinces. In these provinces, I conducted a cursory review of the files to identify former or current People’s Preachers. This approach allowed me to access identity documents such as “*tercemei hal*” or “*sicil dosyası*” for approximately thirty preachers whose names matched exactly with those on record.

The document is a membership application form for the CHP. It features a small portrait of a woman in the top left corner. The header includes the CHP logo and the text 'MEMERLİK TALEBNAMESİ'. The main body of the form is a table with handwritten entries in Ottoman Turkish script. The table is organized into several columns and rows, covering personal information, education, and professional experience. Below the table, there is a large section of handwritten text, likely a declaration or a letter of recommendation, also in Ottoman Turkish script. The document is dated and includes a stamp from the CHP General Secretariat.

Figure 15. Hamiyet Ülün’s application file

The CHP General Secretary prepares the form (*sicil formu*) and sends it to the provincial directorates. Hamiyet Ülün seems to have filled it out herself in her own handwriting. According to the form, Ülün was born in Kavala in the province of Thessaloniki in 1897/98 [1315]. She graduated from the Istanbul Teachers’ Training College for Girls (*Istanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi*) on 29 August 1917 [“August” written in Ottoman script]. She started working as a Turkish teacher at a middle school in Ortaköy, Istanbul, in 1918. Later, she worked in various schools in the Adapazarı region as a Turkish teacher and headmaster. She also worked at the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) before their closure for the opening of the People’s Houses. She enrolled in the CHP in 1934-35 after the electoral franchise for women. In addition to her party membership, she listed many associations, such as the Teachers’ Union (*Muallimler Birliği*) and the Turkish Red Crescent (*Kızılay*), since their early days.

<sup>1</sup> Claude Pannetier and Bernard Pudal, “Questionnement biographique communiste en France (1931-1974),” in *Autobiographies, autocritiques, aveux dans le monde communiste*, ed. Claude Pannetier and Bernard Pudal (Paris: Belin, 2002), 124.

The identity documents submitted to apply to run for legislative elections are serialized. They come from forms sent by the CHP General Secretary to the party's provincial branches to learn about the background of party members. They all contain an identity photo, the full name of the applicant, their birthplace, birthdate, current occupation, original occupation (*esas meslek*), education level, last graduated institution, diploma number and date, full address, and the date of their first enrolment to the party. These fields were often followed by a half-page long section in which the applicants were supposed to write down their "occupations up to this date, honorary services, and active roles played within the party structure." The applicants often used this field to showcase their professional qualifications, associative activities, and sometimes, their military roles during the most recent wars, namely the First World War and the Turkish "War of Independence." Despite the existence of serialized or serializable data on these application forms, they are analyzed qualitatively, given the small number of documents of this type (34).

To apply to become a People's House director, applicants had to complete a form of two sections dedicated to working for the party and one dedicated to working within the state organization. Similarly, the forms prepared for candidates for legislative elections followed a similar structure, allocating a larger section for "state service" (*memuriyetler*), "honorary services" (*fahri hizmetler*), and "party service" (*parti teşkilatı içinde deruhte ettiği faal vazifeler*). In the first series of forms, applicants distinguished between their work for the state—in its strict sense as "civil service"—and their work for the party. However, the second type of form, intended for legislative elections, was completed more freely, sometimes without clearly distinguishing between state service and party service, and occasionally favoring one over the other.

## 8.1. Sermons as Sway: Preaching as a Political Opportunity

---

I became part of our revolution in its early days and grew up nourished by the fire of our national struggle and our lofty and creative spirit. During those bitter days, I served as a militia soldier among the national forces, carrying ammunition to İnönü and Sakarya with my own bloody arms. I hold these services as an endless memory, preserving the letters written by our national chief, İsmet İnönü, at that time. When the People's Party was formed, I was registered as number 17. Until today, I have served as a member of district and sub-district administrative committees [of the party]. For years, I have been Ankara's second voter (*müntehabı sani*). I served as the head of the language, history, and literature branch in the People's House for six years. Additionally, I worked for a long time in the press office (*matbuat bürosu*) of the party General Secretary. On national occasions, I have delivered 42 speeches in public squares (*meydan hitabesi*) on behalf of the People's Party. I have also given lectures on our revolution in Kayseri, Denizli, and Adana People's Houses. Alongside these activities, I have been teaching history for twenty years at various military and civilian schools, including the Kuleli Military High School, Gedikli Junior Officer School, Aviation School, Istanbul High School, Vefa, Konya, and Ankara High Schools. Currently, I am teaching at Gazi High School and the Ministry of Education, working to instill national morality by teaching our national history. While teaching on one hand, I continued writing on the other, contributing various articles to daily newspapers and magazines. I have prepared about fifty volumes of work, most of which have been published. I am currently employed at the language institute, where I have prepared historical dictionaries. I have adopted as an ideal the principle of not deviating from the path of my leaders. I sincerely ask for permission from my leaders to work under your command by joining your ranks and to be elected as a deputy from Adana or any other place where vacancies are available. Respectfully, I extend my regards.

History Teacher at Gazi High School Enver Behnan Şapolyo <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> “İnkılabımıza milli mücadelenin ilk günlerinde karışarak aramızda yüksek ve yaratıcı ruhumuzun ateşile beslenerek yetiştim. Bu acı günlerde milli kuvvetler arasında bir milis nefer olarak çalıştım. İnönü ve Sakaryaya kanı kollarile cephaneye taşıdım. Bu hizmetlerimi milli Şefimiz İsmet İnönü'nün o zamanlar yazmış oldukları mektuplarını sonsuz bir hatıra olarak saklamaktayım. Halk Partisi teşekkül ettiği zaman fırkaya 17 numara ile kayıt edildim. Bu güne kadar ocak, nahiye, idare heyetlerinde aza olarak çalıştım. Senelerden beri Ankara müntehabı sanisiyim. Halkevi dil tarih edebiyat kolunda altı sene reislik yaptım. Parti genel sekreterliği matbuat bürosunda uzun bir zaman emrinizde çalışmaktan geri dönmeden halk partisi namına milli günlerde şimdiye kadar 42 meydan hitabesi verdim. Kayseri, Denizli, Adana halkevlerinde parti namına inkılabımıza ait konferanslar verdim. Bunlarla beraber yirmi seneden beri tarih öğretmenliği yapmaktayım. Kuleli Askeri Lisesi, Gedikli Küçük zabıt, havacılık okulu, İstanbul lisesi, vefa, konya, Ankara liselerinde şimdi de Gazi lisesi ve maarif kollarında hocalık etmekteyim. Milli tarihimizi öğretmek için millî bir ahlak yaratmayı bir hedef ederek çalıştım. Bir yandan hocalık ederken bir taraftan da muharrirliğe devam ettim. Gündelik gazetelere ve mecmualara muhtelif makaleler yazdım. Şimdiye kadar elli cilt kadar eser hazırladım. Çoğu matbudur. Şimdi de dil kurumunda çalışıyorum. Tarih lügatlarını hazırladım. Bir kere aranızda karışarak emrinizde çalışmaklık müsaadesini ve yolundan ayrılmamaklığı ideal edindiğim şeflerimden diliyorum. Münhal olan Adana veya diğer bir yerden mebus seçilmeliğime müsaadelerini candan diler saygılarımı sunarım. Ankara müntehabı sanisi ve Gazi Lisesi Tarih Öğretmeni Enver Behnan Şapolyo” Application letter by Enver Behnan Şapolyo, 19 February 1942, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

Enver Behnan Şapolyo submitted this short autobiography on 19 February 1942 to the CHP General Secretary to fill an empty seat in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. His autobiography, outlining his works for the party, presents an ambivalent representation. He had been a CHP member since 1926, like many other People’s Preachers, and was an authorized public speaker of the party. In 1938, he became one “with the written order of the General Secretary in Ankara.”<sup>3</sup> A teacher, he belonged to the dominant professional group within the People’s Preachers Organization. Like most preachers aspiring to become a CHP deputy, he mentioned his role in the national resistance movement as part of his work for the party. He was born in Istanbul in 1900 to a family of high-ranking bureaucrats, with his father working in the Grand Education Assembly (*Meclis-i Kebir-i Maarif*). Şapolyo had an overwhelming number of publications, ranging from children’s books to a history of philosophy. He published so much that the CHP forms did not suffice to mention all his publications, necessitating the addition of a separate document with his bibliography.

Interestingly, he became a People’s Preacher not by order of the party’s provincial or district administrative committees but by the General Secretary’s written order. In one of his application letters, he referred to his role as a “central preacher” (*merkez hatibi*).<sup>4</sup> Spending his entire career as a teacher and, hence, a civil servant, Şapolyo moved between cities following his successive appointments. He was a devoted member of the CHP, attending People’s Houses in each city where he worked and contributing to the party’s provincial and district administrative committees. However, despite his dedication and long-term efforts for the party, Şapolyo never made it to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and his numerous publications never entered the national literary canon established during his active years as a civil servant, writer, and local spokesperson of the CHP.

All application letters were directed to the party’s General Secretary. For former People’s Preachers, composing these “party autobiographies” meant selecting their most relevant experiences to present themselves favorably to the party’s leadership. Claude Penetier and Bernard Pudal have explored similar documents within the French Communist party, providing

---

<sup>3</sup> “Genel sekreterliğin yazılı emrile C.H.P. halk hatibi seçildim ve 42 meydan hitabesi verdim.” Application letter by Enver Behnan Şapolyo, 1946, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/289-1164-2.

<sup>4</sup> Enver Behnan Şapolyo’s application file, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

a framework for studying “party” or “institutional autobiographies” that reveal how party members position themselves sociologically in alignment with their institution’s expectations.<sup>5</sup> The party autobiographies submitted by former People’s Preachers offer insights into their perceptions of which social assets and political actions would be valued by the party’s General Secretary. Written during the later years of single-party rule, these documents also shed light on the role of preaching in their political careers. Some autobiographies subtly referenced influential figures or senior party members (“*büyüklerimiz*”), such as CHP deputies from their region, whom applicants believed were well-known in Ankara’s political circles. These identity documents or “party autobiographies” provide a deeper understanding of the environments in which People’s Preachers operated and the potential rewards they anticipated based on the various social assets they possessed.

Like Enver Behnan’s statement of purpose, many former preachers mentioned working as a People’s Preacher to gain recognition from the party leadership as they aimed for advancement within the party hierarchy. This included assuming roles such as People’s House director, provincial section director, or CHP deputies at the Grand National Assembly in Ankara. The mere existence of these identity documents suggests that they considered their preaching a step in their political careers. The following section will examine how former and current preachers present their work for the party in their statements of purpose (*tercemei hal*), reflecting on their motivations for working for the party and the role of public speaking in their partisan endeavors.

Enver Behnan’s statement of purpose had some exceptional characteristics. He was the only preacher who not only explicitly stated his belonging to the People’s Preachers Organization but also precisely enumerated the number of public speeches he delivered “in the party’s name” in each application letter. Moreover, he added a complete bibliography listing all his actual and projected publications. In a sense, Enver Behnan played all his cards to increase his chances of becoming a CHP deputy throughout his three applications. For other former preachers, like Baki Tümtürk, the public speaking they accomplished in the party’s name was highlighted but not in the same manner. Tümtürk promoted his long-term efforts for the party,

---

<sup>5</sup> Claude Penetier and Bernard Pudal, “Questionnement biographique communiste en France (1931-1974),” 123.



starting with the national resistance movement and the party's provincial organization. At the end of his letter, he stated that he had been a People's Preacher since he enrolled in the party.<sup>6</sup> Mehmet Ali Suner, a lawyer active in Çanakkale, mentioned his enrollment date to the party (1928) and that he became a People's Preacher in 1936.<sup>7</sup>

These application letters also provide valuable insights into the selection process of the People's Preachers, revealing details that were not evident in their foundational documents. For instance, Enver Behnan and Nedime Alp, a People's Preacher from Gaziantep selected in 1938, emphasized that they became preachers following the "orders of the General Secretary" in Ankara.<sup>8</sup> Despite the prohibition against teachers and other civil servants becoming party members, these references to directives from the party General Secretary indicate that the party organization still compelled civil servants to work for the party.

They also show the relationships between the People's Preachers Organizations and other institutions and organizations affiliated with the party, such as associations and charitable institutions. Before becoming a People's Preacher with the alleged order of the CHP General Secretary, Nedime was a member of the "Literature-Language and Library" branch of the People's Houses. Organizing public lectures was one of the main activities held at the People's Houses.<sup>9</sup> Hence, there was a continuity in Nedime's career. Apart from working as a teacher for thirty years without interruption – which she perceived as "service to the state" (*memuriyetler*), her volunteer work at the Turkish Red Crescent and the Child Protection Institute – which she perceived as "honorary services," her work within the party consisted of giving lectures both as a member of the People's Houses and as a People's Preacher.

The preachers' autobiographies found in the application letters also allow us to trace the partisan efforts to institutionalize spokespersonship before the foundation of the People's Preachers Organization. Ziya Işıtman, a history teacher and preacher from Bolu, did not use the term People's Preachers in his application letter but emphasized his consistent involvement

---

<sup>6</sup> "C.H.P nin 4üncü büyük kongrasına Kastamonu delekesi olarak iştirak ettim. Girdiğim günden beri partimizin halk hatibiyim." Baki Tümtürk's application letter, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

<sup>7</sup> "1928den beri partili, 1936dan beri halk hatibi." Mehmet Ali Suner's application file, Çanakkale, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/294-1186-2.

<sup>8</sup> "Genel Sekreterlik emi ile Halk Hatibi." Nedime Alp's application file, no date, Gaziantep BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-3.

<sup>9</sup> Halkevleri Broşürü.

in “oratory and lecture affairs” in every city he was appointed to, claiming to have delivered over one hundred “public speeches” (*hitabe*) on “national revolution and patriotic causes” and over fifty “lectures” (*konferans*) on “national issues” in the past decade.<sup>10</sup> Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, preacher of Gaziantep and a private accountant based in Bolu at the time of his application, mentioned “his oratory and his lectures (*hitabet*) at the People’s Houses.”<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Cemal Gökçe was the headmaster of the Edirne High School when he first appeared on the People’s Preachers’ list. Yet, in his application letter submitted in 1950 to the party General Secretary, he started the genealogy of his oratory work for the party to 1928-1929, when the party organized “a lecture series on the various fronts of the Turkish revolution.” Hence, Gökçe’s career as a party orator did not start with the People’s Preachers Organization. His résumé also showed a continuity between the lecture series organized for the party in Sivas at the end of the 1920s and those organized at the People’s Houses in the 1930s. Gökçe moved between Gümüşhane, Kastamonu, Sivas, Ankara, and Diyarbakır between 1922 and 1937 within the framework of his civil service as a teacher and school headmaster. In each and every city he worked, Gökçe claimed to frequent the People’s Houses and work for the “lecture affairs.”<sup>12</sup>

The former party preachers focused on lectures and eloquence rather than directly mentioning the People’s Preachers Organization, which relativized the importance of this organization. The fact that former preachers did not systematically state that they worked as

---

<sup>10</sup> “Lise ve yüksek tahsil hayatım devamınca Bolu, Balıkesir, Bergama ve İzmir Halkevlerinde bilfiil yurt ve inkılap vazifelerinde hitabet ve konferans işlerinde durmadan çalıştım. (...) Milli inkılap ve yurt davalarında on seneden beri yüzden fazla (Hitabe) ve ekseri milli mevzular üzerinde elliden fazla konferans vermiş bulunuyorum.” Ziya Işıman’s application letter, no date, Bolu, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/293-1180-2.

<sup>11</sup> “C.H. Partisinde Kilis ve bilhassa Gaziantep’te oldukça emeklerim var. Halkevlerindeki hizmetlerimle ve hitabet ve konferanslarımla beni oralarda tanımayan yok gibidir.” Dokuzoğuz’s application letter, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>12</sup> “1928 1929 yıllarında Sivas’ta parti adına Türk inkılabının muhtelif cephelerine ait seri halinde konferanslar tertip edilmişti. Bu faaliyetlere iştirak ile müteaddit konferanslar verdim. 1930 ve 1931 yıllarında aynı faaliyete Kastamonuda devam ettim. Yine orada 932 den itibaren Halkevi faaliyetlerine iştirak ederek Dil-Tarih ve İçtimai Yardım kollarında başkan ve üye olarak çalıştım. Diyarbakırda müdür olarak bulunduğum üç yıl içinde muallim arkadaşlarımla birlikte ora halkevinde canlı bir faaliyet yarattık. 933 de başkanlığım altında halkevi reisinin de iştirakleriyle, muhitin hususiyeti göz önüne alınarak bir konferanslar serisi tertip ettik, bu suretle hem inkılabın hem de milli ruhun yayılmasına çalıştık. Bu hareketlere orada kaldığım üç yıl içinde faal bir suretle iştirak ettim ve orada bulunduğum müddetçe çocuk esirgeme kurumu başkanlığını yaptım. Ankarada mektebimi halkevine sevkettim. Edirne’de bulunduğum müddetçe Halkevinin her sahadaki çalışmalarına mektebin bütün unsurlarını iştirak ettirmek suretiyle kudretim dahilinde olan bütün faaliyetleri gösterdim. Bu işlerde talebe ve arkadaşlarımı tophıyarak nazım rolünü ifa ettim ve etmekteyim.” Cemal Gökçe’s application file, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

party preachers in their application letters shows, on the one hand, that they did not give specific importance to being listed as a People's Preacher at some point in their political career. What mattered was that they worked for the party wherever they were.

## 8.2. Preaching as a Thread amongst Partisan Ties

---

Several former preachers highlighted their role as People's Preachers during their tenure with the party. However, some did not explicitly reference their position as "People's Preachers" or their involvement in party lectures. Instead, they emphasized other forms of service within the party networks. By examining these additional party networks referenced in application files alongside the People's Preachers Organization, we can better evaluate the organization's position within the broader party and state networks.

Civil servants were the most represented group within the People's Preacher's Organization. Some civil servants who later became People's Preachers enumerated their jobs, putting forward their service to the state. Instead of mentioning their activities within the party or other party-affiliated organizations such as the People's Houses, Turkish Aeronautical Association, and Red Crescent, they listed different jobs they held within the public service. This followed a common tendency in the application documents, high-ranking bureaucrats, militaries, judges, doctors, or some university professors – hence, people with more remarkable educational backgrounds sometimes contented themselves with displaying their academic and professional credentials.

The inclination to highlight educational accomplishments rather than party work can also be attributed to the autobiographical forms required for applying to these positions. These forms placed a premium on educational credentials, with sections dedicated to education level (*tahsil derecesi*), primary profession (*asil meslek*), specialization (*ihhlas*), proficiency in foreign languages, date of diploma attainment, last school attended for the final diploma, and publications. The responses to these questions sometimes repeated themselves, prompting applicants to review their educational backgrounds. Due to the structure of the forms, those with an education level around or below the average of the period emphasized their activities in affiliated institutions, while it led those with already high education levels to simply highlight their diplomas and academic achievements.

One such example was Emin Bilgen, a preacher from Gaziantep. Bilgen had other, more notable elements in his biography to self-promote before the party leadership. He began his short autobiography by mentioning his remarkable educational trajectory, starting with his graduation from the School of Medicine (*Tıbbiye*) in 1909, his specialization in surgery in Thessaloniki, and his work in Cerrahpaşa Hospital in Istanbul. After enumerating his position as a surgeon, Bilgen mentioned his involvement in the successive wars of the late Ottoman Empire, including the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-1912 (Trablusgarp), the Balkan Wars, and the First World War on the Caucasian Front. All his wartime engagements involved working as a military surgeon in hospitals and the Ottoman Red Crescent Society (*Hilal-i Ahmer*, then *Kızılay*).<sup>13</sup>

From how Bilgen filled the form, it was clear that the hierarchization of his past endeavors placed his military and medical achievements first, while his contribution to the creation of the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) in his hometown, Kilis, was a mere detail mentioned only in passing. Despite his significant achievement of being listed as one of the People’s Preachers from Kilis, where he held the position of chief physician in the public hospital, he chose not to mention it in his application letter. Bilgen decided that other accomplishments and

---

<sup>13</sup> “(1886) tarihinde Kilis’de doğdum. İsmim Mehmet Emin, soyadım (Bilgen), babamın adı Ahmet, meslekim doktorluk, ihtisasım operatörlüktür. İlk ve lise tahsilimi bitirdikten sonra Tıp Tahsiline girdim. (1909) senesinde Mülkiye Tıbbiyesinden doktor olarak mezun oldum. Cerrahi ihtisas yaptım. Asistanlığımı Selanik Memleket hastanesinde bitirdim. Ondan sonra İstanbul Cerrahpaşa hastanesi operatör ve baştabib muavinliklerinde, sonra operatörlüğünde bulundum. Millî mücadele esnasında bir sene müddette Ankara sağlık ve sosyal yardım müdürlüğünü ifa ettim. (21) sene de Kilis memleket Hastanesi baştabipliğini ve operatörlüğünü yaptım. Cemien\* (36) sene resmî Devlet hizmetinde bulunduktan sonra (1944) senesinde emekliye ayrıldım. § Kırk seneden beri memleketimizin giriştiği harplere iştirak ettim ve çeşitli milli teşkilatlarda çalıştım: Doktor olduktan ve ihtisasımı yaptıktan sonra bir Kızılay hey’etiyle ve gönüllü olarak Tarablusu-garp harbine iştirak ederek başından sonuna kadar orada çalıştım. Sonra sırasıyla Balkan harbinde yine Kızılay Hastanesinde operatörlük yaptım. Birinci Cihan harbinde askerlik ödevimle harbin başında umumi mütarekeye kadar Kafkas cephesinde ordu emrinde ve yine Kızılay hastanesinde çalıştım. Millî mücadelede evvela İstanbuldan Fransızların işgalinde bulunan Gaziantep şehrine gönderilen dokuzuncu imdadı sıhhi hey’eti gaziantebe getirdim. Bu hizmetim bittikten sonra, yani milli mücadelenin son senesinde Ankara sağlık ve sosyal yardım müdürlüğüne tayin edildim ve milli mücadelenin sonuna kadar bu vazifeyi ifa ettim. Ondan sonra (21) sene de Kilis memleket Hastanesi baştabip ve operatörlüğünü ifa ettim. (6) sene evvel buradan emekliye ayrıldım. O zamandan beri Kilis’de serbes olarak sanatımı icra etmekteyim. § Aynı müddet içinde çeşitli milli teşekküllerde çalıştım: Kilis Türk ocasını kurarak ocakların lağvi kararına kadar bu ocağın başkanlığını yaptım. § Tam kırk seneden beri Kızılay derneğinin üyesi olarak, harpler esnasında bizzat ve bilfiil hastanelerinde operatörlük ve baştabiplik yaptım. Harplerden sonra da Kilis mezkûr dernek şubesinin uzun senelerden beri başkanlığını ifa etmekteyim. Bu derneğin onursal üyelerindenim. § (25) seneden beri C.H. partisi üyesiyim. Devlet hizmetinden emekliye ayrılarak serbesledikten sonra, iki seneden beri de Kilis C. H. Partisi idare kuruluna seçildim, halen bu sıfatla partimize hizmet etmekte ve candan çalışmaktayım.” Emin Bilgen’s application file, 10 April 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

qualifications were more relevant to the position he was applying for and highlighted those ones accordingly. The case of Emin Bilgen sheds light on the subordinate position of the People's Preachers Organization within the career path of a CHP member or affiliate.<sup>14</sup>

Many former preachers excluded their public speaking services from the party, possibly because they believed other accomplishments were more relevant to their political careers. Academic and professional credentials were the most significant, followed by different roles and activities that the applicants deemed more valuable. These accomplishments included more prestigious positions within the party structures, social networks built with prominent party members, or volunteer work within the party-affiliated associations.

Niyazi Tevfik Yükselen, for example, emphasized his significant role in the organization of the party organization in Kadıköy (Istanbul) during the transition of the Society for the Defense of Rights into the People's Party in 1924 rather than highlighting his work as a People's Preacher. He spoke about his role as the party's district manager in Caferağa and Yeldeğirmeni (Kadıköy), as well as his election to the municipal assembly.<sup>15</sup> The fact that Niyazi Tevfik spent more time detailing his role in the party's local organization or representative roles he took for the party in the local administration (municipal assembly) implied that he deemed these responsibilities more valuable than his role as a People's Preacher.

Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, a multi-skilled bureaucrat and a devoted party member, mentioned not one but four people he considered to be known by the CHP leadership, starting with a hero of the Independence War who organized the resistance in the Cilician region. Naming high-ranking CHP members, mostly deputies, was a way of putting forward their social connections.

I am proud that I worked at the party and the Gaziantep People's House with Ömer Asım Aksoy. Doctor Muzaffer Canpolat was my middle school student. Another deputy

---

<sup>14</sup> Many People's Preachers were not officially CHP members because of the prohibition to become a party member for the civil servants. See: "Memurin Kanunu.."

<sup>15</sup> "İstanbulda Müdafai Hukuk cemiyetinde ve bu cemiyetin Halk Partisine inkılabı üzerine 1924 de Kadıköy teşkilatında memur oldum evvela Caferağa ocağına, Yel değirmeni Nahiyesine bilahare Kaza Mutemetliğine seçildim. Uzun müddet Mutemetlikte, parti riyasetinde bulunduğum gibi Partinin Üsküdar vilayeti hey'eti idare azalığı ve kongre riyasetini ifa eyledim, ve Partinin namizeti olarak 1936 da Cemiyeti Umumiye Belediye ve Bütçe encümeni azalığında bulundum. Partinin kuruluşundan bu güne kadar Vilayet kongresinde Kadıköy murahhası sıfatile bulunuyorum." Niyazi Tevfik Yükselen's application file, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/294-1186-2.

from Gaziantep, Cemil Aevli, is a close friend. Party members in Kilis, Gaziantep, and Bolu know me very well.”<sup>16</sup>

Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz mentioned his local connections in his application letter, including former student Ömer Asım, former People’s House director Muzaffer Canpolat, a former student, and Cemil Aevli, the former director of the Chamber of Commerce in Gaziantep. All three men had connections with Dokuzoğuz in Gaziantep. While Aksoy directed the People’s House, Dokuzoğuz was an active member. Canpolat, who was nineteen years younger, attended Dokuzoğuz’s classes as a middle school teacher. Aevli was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, where Dokuzoğuz was the secretary.<sup>17</sup> Despite being slightly younger than Dokuzoğuz, all three men became CHP deputies.<sup>18</sup> Dokuzoğuz’s mention of these influential men was a typical demonstration of “social capital.” By referencing their names, Dokuzoğuz aimed to document his belonging to a “group” of provincial party elites, hence his suitability to become a CHP deputy.<sup>19</sup>

Lastly, many preachers – and other applicants – mentioned their volunteer services to non-governmental organizations, including charitable associations, in their statements of purpose. Within the lists of the People’s Preachers sent in 1931 and 1938, thirty-five preachers were identified as workers of various charitable organizations and non-governmental associations. These organizations included the Turkish Red Crescent (*Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*), founded in 1868; the Child Protection Agency (*Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti*), founded in 1921; the Turkish Aeronautical Society (*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*) was the most represented one, which became the Turkish Aeronautical Institute (*Türk Hava Kurumu*) in 1935. Twenty-five out of the thirty-five preachers under scrutiny were identified as directors, members, accountants, or secretaries in the Turkish Aeronautical Association provincial and district branches.<sup>20</sup> The Turkish

---

<sup>16</sup> “Binbaşı Ratıp Bey zamanında İttihat ve Terraki Cemiyetinin Halep komitasında 81 numarasında kayıtlı idim. “Mantıkçı oğulları” diye ünlenen ailemin öz türklüğü 5-6 nesle kadar sayılabilir. (...) Gaziantep’in şimdiki milletvekillerinden 7 de 6 sı cidden benden üstün şahsiyetlerdir. Bunlardan Doktor Muzaffer Canpolatın, orta okulda talebem olması ve Ömer Asım Aksoy’la Partide Halkevinde birlikte çalışmış ve Cemil Aevlinin de yakın bir arkadaşım bulunmasıyla müftehirim. Beni Gaziantep, Kilis, Antep ve Bolu C.H. Partisinin eski ve yeni [illegible] çok iyi tanırlar. (...)” Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>17</sup> Cemil Aevli’s statement of purpose (tercüme-i hal), TBMM Arşivi, August 1946, HT\_1394\_1\_8.

<sup>18</sup> See Muzaffer Canpolat’s statement of purpose (tercüme-i hal), March 1943, TBMM Arşivi, HT\_1221\_1\_7.

<sup>19</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Le capital social,” 2.

<sup>20</sup> List of People’s Preachers, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

Aeronautical Association was founded on 25 February 1925 under Mustafa Kemal's supervision. It promoted investment and research in aviation matters in an interwar militarist mindset that granted the military superiority obtained by aviation.<sup>21</sup> The association was formally non-governmental, and it aimed at collecting funds – through the organization of lotteries, for instance – to support the state's efforts to develop both civil and military aviation in Turkey.

The number of People's Preachers identified solely through their role at the Turkish Aeronautical Association was remarkable. This was exacerbated by the People's Preachers volunteering at the party-state affiliated associations in addition to their lectures for the party. Niyazi Tevfik Yükselen, for instance, mentioned his “honorary” (*fahri*) contributions to the Aeronautical Association along with the Poor Relief Association (*Fukaraperver Cemiyeti*) and the Turkish Red Crescent at the end of his services.<sup>22</sup> In sum, Yükselen had significant academic credentials: a People's Preacher, a regular attendant of the People's Houses, an essential member of the party's local section, and a volunteer for two associations.

Examining the role of preaching in party autobiographies revealed the significance of the People's Preachers Organization within the broader party networks. For some individuals, the Organization was a crucial step in their militant careers, while others considered it less important than other activities within the party hierarchies. The CHP leadership and intellectuals of the period emphasized the importance of education, and the party considered itself an enlightening role in this ‘revolutionary’ era. As a result, academic and professional credentials held great significance in the autobiographies of the party preachers. The party asked precise questions about diploma dates and numbers, professions, and educational levels, and former People's Preachers were influenced by the social value of their credentials within the party networks when filling out their application forms. Becoming a People's Preacher was

---

<sup>21</sup> “Re’is-i cumhur gâzi Muştafa Kemâl Paşa hazretlerinin himâye-i ‘âliyyelerinde teşkîl edilen ve ‘İşmet Paşa hazretlerinin fahrî riyâsetleri altında bulunan Türk Tayyare Cem‘iyeti, memleketimizde tayyareciliğîñ ‘askerî iktisâdî, fennî, ve şina‘î sahalarda tekâmül ve terakkîsi gâyesini istihdaf eden, bu gâyeye doğru atılacak hatvları teşvik ve tanzîm eden milli bir teşekküldür. Bunu içindir ki cem‘iyetin teşkil haberi vatandaşın her sınıf halkı tarafından ‘umumi bir ‘alâka ve memnuniyetle karşılanmıştır.” *Türk Tayyâre Cemiyeti nizamnâme-i esâsisi*, (Ankara: Ankara Matbaası, [1341], 1925).

<sup>22</sup> “Kadıköy kaza Kızılay ve Fukaraperver cemiyeti ve Tayyare cemiyeti riyasetlerinde senelerce fahriyen ifayı hizmet eyledim.” Niyazi Tevfik Yükselen's application file, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/294-1186-2.

just one step among many in the political career of a CHP member or affiliate. Work within the party's provincial and district administrative committees, social networks with current deputies, and associative work were sometimes considered more valuable than the work within the People's Preachers Organization.

In sum, this section showed the role of preaching in "party autobiographies" within the broader framework of partisan work within the CHP between 1930 and 1950. Despite the fact that belonging to the People's Preachers Organization did not play a fundamental role in these proclaimed trajectories, all individuals traced in its archives remained dedicated "members" – or in cases in which the prohibition of civil servants to enroll in a political party was respected – "affiliates" of the CHP during the period known as the single-party rule. As such, analyzing their social and political trajectories provides valuable information about the party's history from some sort of "below."

### 8.3. Beyond Currency: Professional and Symbolic Rewards

---

As argued in Chapter 7, the number of people from various social origins recruited as People's Preachers or charged with delivering lectures on political matters at the People's Houses was outstanding. Daniel Gaxie, in an article published in 1977, questioned "partisan economies" by taking seriously the role of politicians as "political entrepreneurs" and reflecting on how they convince and mobilize individuals at the grassroots level to work for a political venture. Within this framework, active party members would obtain some material and symbolic rewards in return for their militant work for the party.<sup>23</sup> These "rewards of militant work" or "retributions" would take the form of monetary retribution, "jobs in the party's discretion," or other symbolic rewards.<sup>24</sup> The People's Preachers case is fruitful in analyzing the rewards of militancy for street-level politics because of their relative subalternity within the party hierarchy. An article by Hakan Uzun published in 2010 cites a document I could not verify and states that a differential salary was fixed for ninety-five preachers in total

---

<sup>23</sup> Daniel Gaxie, "Economie des partis et rétributions du militantisme," *Revue française de science politique* 71, no. 1 (1977): 123-24.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.



in 1941.<sup>25</sup> Despite this finding, which dates from 1941, ten years after the first creation of the organization, I could not find any document dating from 1931 to 1941 about the remuneration of the People's Preachers.

A preliminary cross-analysis of the preachers' biographies shows that the rewards of their preaching for the party, the type of symbolic, statutory, or financial benefits, depended not only on their commitment to the party, say by enrolling in the People's Preachers Organization, but also on their point of departure, hence other social assets such as gender, education level, symbolic or social capital. As a result, different social groups within the People's Preachers Organization obtained – or did not obtain – various rewards due to their work for the party.

The following section will examine application files submitted between 1943 and 1950, focusing on the political prospects of the People's Preachers. It aims to answer the question: What are the rewards of the People's Preachers' work? What material or symbolic rewards could be obtained thanks to the different experiences and social assets linked to their militant action?

### *8.3.1. Teachers and other Civil Servants*

The largest group within the People's Preachers Organization comprised teachers and other low-ranking civil servants ([Chapter 7](#)). As previously noted, many preachers originally occupying low-level bureaucratic functions and acting through the provincial sections of the CHP took a chance in applying to run for legislative elections. I set up a sample to study the rewards of activism for People's Preachers by scanning ten files containing an average of forty documents.<sup>26</sup> I could trace thirty-one former preachers (found on the lists studied in the previous chapter), including people I included among the 'party preachers' because they delivered lectures regularly at the People's Houses. Half of the applicants worked as teachers

---

<sup>25</sup> “Yine aynı belgede 15 hatip için ayda 100, 20 hatip için ayda 30, 60 hatip için ise ayda 20 lira ödeneceğinin belirtilmiş olması da, hatiplik işinin sadece gönüllülük esasına dayanmadığı ve bu işin bir bedel karşılığında yapıldığını göstermektedir. Paraların miktarında da bir tasnife gidilmiş olması ayrıca dikkat çekicidir. Bu gruplandırmanın hangi ölçüye göre yapıldığının belirtilmemiş olmasına karşın, bunun şehir, ilçe ve köylerde görev yapacak hatiplere göre yapıldığı ve buna göre, illerde görev yapan hatiplere 100, ilçelerde görev yapan hatiplere 30, köylerde görev yapan hatiplere de 20 lira ödenmesinin düşünüldüğü ileri sürülebilir.” Hakan Uzun, “Bir Propaganda Aracı Olarak Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı,” 103.

<sup>26</sup> I scanned the application files submitted for Erzurum, Elazığ, Kastamonu, Malatya, Yozgat, Ankara, Bitlis, Bolu, Urfa, Antep, and Kars along with a one called “applications from available cities” (*münhal iller*).

at one moment or another in their professional lives. Seven of the thirty-one applicants became CHP deputies between 1935 and 1957.

For instance, Mehmet Ali Suner, preacher of Çanakkale, was a Turkish teacher at the local Jewish School (*Musevi Mektebi*) between 1928 and 1931. Therefore, he was a teacher when he was selected as a preacher in the Gallipoli district. Still, he enrolled in the Law School of Istanbul in 1931, graduating in 1934. He worked as a lawyer in his hometown, Gallipoli, for two years and continued his activities as a People's Preacher. In 1936, he became a municipal assembly member in the same town. In 1938, he became the director of the Gallipoli People's House. He applied to run for legislative elections between 1946 and 1950, listing all his partisan work, regional mobility, and professional ascension.<sup>27</sup> Mehmet Ali Suner could not become a CHP deputy.<sup>28</sup>

From Gaziantep, Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş was a teacher before becoming a potential war criminal. In his registry file composed to become the new director of the Gaziantep People's House, Göğüş stated having worked at Gaziantep High School (*Aynülmaarif İdadisi*) and some secondary schools.<sup>29</sup> A dedicated member of the CUP, Göğüş had been elected to parliament in the 1919 elections. He could not join the assembly since he had lost his wife and his two children due to a French cannonball. In the following years, Muhtar Göğüş's political career was limited to Antep. From 1931 onwards, he was on the permanent council of the provincial assembly.<sup>30</sup> After the former director of the Gaziantep People's House, Ömer Asım Aksoy, left the city to join the parliament in Ankara, Muhtar Göğüş became the director of the People's House. This position at the provincial level was often coupled with a seat on the party's provincial administrative committee.

---

<sup>27</sup> The document is undated, yet the forms used are the same as those used between 1946 and 1950. Before 1946, applicants wrote their application letters on their own paper, not in "registry documents" sent by the party General Secretary.

<sup>28</sup> I checked the success or failure of applications to become a deputy at the Turkish Grand National Assembly archives in a fund dedicated to registry documents of former and current deputies. TBMM Arşivi, Tercüme-i Haller.

<sup>29</sup> "Maarif katipliğinde sonra müfettişliğinde, Rüşdiye ve Aynülmaarif idadisinde muallimlikte bulundum." Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş's identity file, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

<sup>30</sup> "931 senesinden beri umumi meclis daimi encümen üyesiyim." Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş's identity file, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

For the past 12 years, since the day I entered the profession, I have taken great pleasure in serving our nation and government by striving to instill the high principles of our party into the consciousness of our people through my membership and presidency in the Language and Literature Branch of the People's Houses and by continuously giving lectures at the People's House along this path, aiming to carry out beneficial tasks.<sup>31</sup>

Ratip Akdeniz was born in 1911 in Nicosia, Cyprus, during the British protectorate. His early years were shaped by British colonial rule in Cyprus, likely exposing him to or involving him in anticolonial struggles while studying at the "Turkish High School" on the island. Educated in a communitarian high school in the late 1920s, he sympathized with Turkey's nation-building process early on.<sup>32</sup> His biographer, Yüksel Yıldırım, a historian at the "Institute for the History of Turkish Revolution" (*Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü*) in Ankara, conducted oral history interviews with his surviving family members and consulted his private archives. Yıldırım, in a recently published book, reported that Akdeniz was already integrated into Turkish nationalist circles in Nicosia.<sup>33</sup> Akdeniz does not elaborate on his motivations for moving to Turkey in 1932, shortly after the British violently suppressed the anticolonial and pro-Greek revolts. Nonetheless, his immediate trajectory upon arriving in Turkey indicates his involvement in nationalist circles.

In 1932, Akdeniz moved to Turkey and obtained Turkish citizenship. That same year, he enrolled at the Gazi Teachers' Training College, established in 1926, to centralize and formalize teacher training in the republican era. Attending a school founded in the early years of the republic to train a new generation of teachers of the new regime politicized him in a certain manner. The government of 1930s Turkey expected teachers to be ready to take on the educational mission of the republic, which went way beyond the school lecterns. In any case, Ratip Akdeniz was appointed to Urfa as a middle school Turkish teacher after completing his two-year-long training in Ankara. He spent twelve years in this borderland province, which had a significant Kurdish and Assyrian population, serving as a teacher, headmaster, and

---

<sup>31</sup> "Mesleke girdiğim günden beri geçen 12 yıl içinde Halkevlerinin Dil-Edebiyat Şubesi üyeliğinde ve başkanlığında Partimizin yüksek presiplerini halkımızın şuuruna işlemeğe çalışmaktan ve bu yolda Halkevinde devamlı konferanslar vermekten milletim ve hükümetim hesabına faydalı işler görmekten sonsuz zevk duydum." Ratip Akdeniz' application file, 10 May 1946, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/324-1339-1.

<sup>32</sup> About Turkish Cypriots symphatizing with the Kemalist rule in Turkey, see Alexis Rappas, *Cyprus in the 1930s: British Colonial Rule and the Roots of the Cyprus Conflict* (Bloomsbury, 2020), 173.

<sup>33</sup> Yüksel Yıldırım, *Kıbrıs'tan Urfa'ya Ratip Akdeniz (1911-1985) - Bir Öğretmenin Hikâyesi*, (İstanbul: Nobel Bilimsel, 2023), 6.

devoted member of the People's House (1934-1942). Compared to his experience under British colonial rule in Cyprus, republican Turkey, led by nationalists, may have appeared more appealing to Ratip Akdeniz. As a result of his long-term work for the party institutions, Akdeniz did not obtain rewards like Hasene Ilgaz. After doing his military service in Dersim and serving two years in Gelibolu, which was far from his wife, he returned to Urfa.<sup>34</sup> After the opening of a high school in Urfa in 1942, he worked as a high school teacher and headmaster. In 1946, Akdeniz applied to become a CHP deputy but did not succeed. Still, he remained devoted to his cause and worked actively for the People's Houses until their closure despite drawing insignificant material rewards from his partisan work.

Considering the large number of teachers within the People's Preachers Organization, it becomes evident that being a People's Preacher might seem like a lucrative opportunity for teachers. However, the examples provided in this section illustrate that this is not always the case. Except for a few exceptional cases, teachers who became people's orators remained teachers until the end of their lives. Nevertheless, if they did not hope that being a people's orator during the single-party era would aid their political and professional careers, they would not have applied to the party to become members of parliament between 1945 and 1950.

Many People's Preachers aspired to rise to the position of member of parliament. However, for an ordinary teacher, ascending to a parliamentary position was an exceptional achievement. Hasene Ilgaz was one of the rare examples of this exceptional success. Introduced in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, Ilgaz had a linear political career, progressing from Teachers' Training College to teaching, then to becoming a school headmaster, followed by a People's Preacher, People's House director, and finally a member of parliament. Ilgaz's successful career can be attributed to her proximity to the political power centers of the era, as she was born and raised in Istanbul. Ilgaz worked at the Şehremini and the Eminönü People's Houses, two of the main intellectual production centers of that period. A notable difference existed between being a regular member and director of a People's House in the provinces and performing this role in the former imperial capital.

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 13.

It might have been somewhat overly ambitious for teachers who became People’s Preachers to aspire to and expect a political career as members of parliament. There were many other opportunities besides sitting in parliament in Ankara. Considering the pedagogical responsibilities and the title of intellectual bestowed upon them, could it be that the greatest gain obtained by People’s Preacher was, as a newspaper column suggested, to become an “owner of a signature” (*imza sahibi*)?<sup>35</sup>

Despite the discrepancy between the representations of *münevver* outlined in [Chapters 1](#) and [5](#) and the trajectories analyzed until now, some preachers were highly active in the world of letters or became active throughout their political career as People’s Preachers. Enver Behnan Şapolyo, for instance, was a history teacher at a High school in Ankara when he was selected as a People’s Preacher in 1938. Born in Istanbul in 1900, Şapolyo completed his studies at the University of Istanbul in 1932, followed by the Teachers Training College in Ankara, before embarking on his career as a high school teacher. Although he began his studies in the late 1920s, Şapolyo was already active in political circles through his publications in the early 1920s. In his application letters, Şapolyo highlighted his publications in the nationalist press during the armistice era to support the nationalist resistance, mentioning newspapers such as *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* in Ankara and *Babalık* in Konya. He also included a bibliography in his application file.

Şapolyo’s bibliography was extensive and included his drafts, those in print and prepared for publication. Şapolyo listed fifty publications, including history books, novels categorized as “national” (*milli roman*), and brochures about significant political events of the single-party era, such as celebrating the republic’s decennial. Interestingly, there was also a planned publication about public oratory entitled “Oratory Art” (*Güzel Konuşma Sanatı*), which he never completed. The composition of Şapolyo’s application file discusses the social assets he perceived as valuable to advance within the party’s hierarchy. In other words, his emphasis on his projected or real publications reaffirms the value of activity directly associated with *münevver* as a social group.

---

<sup>35</sup> Hanımteyze, “Münevverler tahsilsiz kızlarla evlenirler mi?,” *Son Posta*, 8 May 1931.

Münir Müeyyet Bekman, mentioned in the previous section, continued to publish opinion articles in the press throughout the 1930s.<sup>36</sup> In 1936, the local newspaper of İzmir, *Anadolu*, published an article about a visit of the Ankara People's House members to İzmir; in this article, Münir Müeyyet was presented as “a valuable poet of our revolution.”<sup>37</sup> In 1943, he published “A Chronology of the Second World War,” which included a list of events until 1940.<sup>38</sup>

Against this background, most preachers did not have careers in publishing. It is possible, however, that they published anonymously in local newspapers or People's House magazines. For instance, Cemile Aytaç was the only person I could identify who might have used the initials C.A. in the Elazığ People's House in 1936. Aytaç occasionally published her speeches and poems in the magazine of the Elazığ People's House *Altan*, but her speeches were not systematically published. Moreover, despite the number of women who published articles, short stories, and poems in the People's House magazine, no women appeared in the report on the activities of the Elazığ People's House, in which many photographs of men appeared. Her book *We Are Walking (Yürüyoruz)*, published shortly before her passing, includes many articles and speeches potentially dating back to her youth.<sup>39</sup>

The writing careers of some preachers were short-lived and limited to local publication and distribution. Mürşide Ülker Akyol was the headmaster of a primary school when she was selected as the People's Preacher in Adana in 1938. She did not publish anything until 1939, when her first work (18 pages long), a People's House publication commemorating Mustafa Kemal, was released.<sup>40</sup> Her second publication came out in 1952 while she was still headmaster of a primary school in Adana. This book, entitled *The Book of My Flag (Bayrağımın Kitabı)*, contained few of her own writings but included numerous illustrations likely drawn by her.

---

<sup>36</sup> Münir Müeyyet Bekman, “Türk Edebiyatının Türk İnkılabı Üzerinde Hiçbir Tesir ve Etkisi Yoktur,” *Açık Söz* (İstanbul), 12 June 1936.

<sup>37</sup> “İnkılabımızın değerli şairlerinden Münir Müeyyet” “Ankaralı gençler yarın İzmir'den ayrılıyorlar...”, *Anadolu* (İzmir), 13 September 1936.

<sup>38</sup> Münir Müeyyet Bekman and Feridun Fazıl Tülbentçi, *İkinci Cihan Harbi kronolojisi. 1940 sonuna kadar* (Ankara: Başvekâlet Basın ve Yayın Umum Müdürlüğü, 1943).

<sup>39</sup> Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl*.

<sup>40</sup> Mürşide Ülker Akyol, *Bayrağımın Kitabı* (Adana: Güney Basımevi, 1952).

The rest of the book comprised already published material, such as reproductions of laws on the national flag, various speeches, and articles from local and national newspapers.<sup>41</sup>

Mürşide Akyol's publishing career was modest. But this did not mean that she was disinterested in becoming a writer. In 1938, she tried to take part in a short story contest organized by the People's Houses. She submitted her short story to the direction of the Adana People's House. Yet, for about fifteen days, the administrative committee did not examine her story. Mürşide contacted the CHP General Secretary in Ankara to file a complaint to defend her right to participate in the contest.<sup>42</sup> This prompted the direction of the Adana People's House to communicate her story to the General Secretary the next day after her complaint.

İffet Halim Oruz became a preacher of İstanbul's Kadıköy district in 1938 while she was already a member of the CHP district administrative board. İffet Halim started publishing her poems in 1928. Until she became a People's Preacher in 1938, she delivered many speeches in public squares, on the radio, and in party facilities as a party or Women's Union (*Kadınlar Birliği*) member. While her speeches were not systematically reported in the press, she published a collection in 1936 titled *My Friends (Arkadaşlar!)*. This book contained the texts of speeches she delivered between March 1927 and December 1935 on various issues ranging from "national economy" to women's rights.<sup>43</sup>

Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz's publishing career started in 1923 in Gaziantep within the CHP with a short story titled *Automobile (Otomobil)*. After a decade without (known) publications, his career peaked in 1934, thanks to a highly entertaining text about the importance of the language revolution.<sup>44</sup> This publication was tightly connected to his role as a People's Preacher. It was a speech specifically prepared for the celebration of the Language Day in 1934. Like Dokuzoğuz's Language Day speech, Cevat Kazım Tunçoğlu's speech delivered in Samsun and

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> "Bir vazifenin edası yolunda yazmış olduğum bu hikayeyi binbir ızdırap içinde meydana getirdim. Çünkü üç dört aylık mesaimiz (En büyük acılar üzerine yazılan yazılar, zaruri ve milli konferans)lara bağlanmıştır. Bu sebeble hikaye bayram tatilinde ikmal edilerek halkevine sunulmuştur. Hakkımın mahfuz tutulmasını diler ve derin saygılarımı sunarım." Petition by Mürşide Ülker Akyol, 16 February 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1415-681-1.

<sup>43</sup> İffet Halim Oruz, *Arkadaşlar!*

<sup>44</sup> Marc Aymes, "La tâche de l'interprète, 1934-2023: Histoire linguistique pour petits et grands."

Zile on the topics of Independence and Revolution was published in 1937 in a local printing house.<sup>45</sup>

### 8.3.2. Women within the People's Preachers Organization

Lawyers, judges, and “law graduates” among women preachers also showed the intersection of women’s access to the legal professions and their party membership. Women had been allowed to enroll at the Faculty of Law in Istanbul in 1921. Yet, their *de facto* entry into legal professions took a considerable time throughout the 1930s.<sup>46</sup> Şükûfe Abdurrahman Hanım in Istanbul, Meliha Taha Toros, and Müveddet Altıkulaç in Adana were identified as “law graduates” instead of legal professionals such as lawyers and judges. Şükûfe Abdurrahman was one of the leading members of the Turkish Women’s Union (*Türk Kadın Birliği*), founded in 1924.<sup>47</sup> Toros became one of the first “female judges to sentence someone to the death penalty.”<sup>48</sup> Altıkulaç was elected to the municipal assembly in Adana a year after being listed as a People’s Preacher.<sup>49</sup> A law degree was an important asset in climbing the ladders of the party hierarchy. İffet Halim Oruz, a party preacher from Erenköy, Istanbul, worked as a teacher for a decade before becoming a CHP district administrative committee member. She then started a law degree at Istanbul University while she was over thirty-five years of age and achieved a remarkable career in the feminist press in Istanbul.

Among women, the second most represented occupation after teachers was membership of the municipal “General Assemblies,” referred to as *Meclis-i Umûmi*.<sup>50</sup> A total of five preachers were elected members of these assemblies who worked under the authority of the municipality.

---

<sup>45</sup> Cevat Kazım Tunçoğlu, *İstiklal ve İnkılap* (Samsun: Güneş Basımevi, 1937). This book was later sent to the CHP General Secretary, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1172-116-2.

<sup>46</sup> Emine Balcı, “Hukukun Öncü Kadınları: Türkiye’de Kadınların Hukuk Mesleğine Girişi Üzerine Bir İnceleme,” *Fe Dergi* 11, no. 1 (May 2019): 34.

<sup>47</sup> Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap: Nezihe Muhiddin, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, Kadın Birliği* (Istanbul: Metis, 2003), 242.

<sup>48</sup> “Atatürk dönemi hakimlerinden Meliha Toros öldü,” *Hürriyet* (Istanbul), 26 April 2003 2003, <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ataturk-donemi-h-kimlerinden-meliha-toros-oldu-142721>.

<sup>49</sup> “Adana Belediye Seçimi Bitti,” *Son Posta* (Istanbul), 8 June 1939.

<sup>50</sup> The emic term used for these municipal assemblies is “*Meclis-i Umumi*.” Yet, these “general assemblies” should not be confused with the provincial assemblies that played an advisory role. Nakiye Elgün specifies in her short autobiography (*terceme-i hal*) that it was after the amendment of the Municipal Law (*Belediye Kanunu*) in 1930 that she could become a member of “*Meclis-i Umumi*.” In the original text of the law published in Official Gazette, the assembly is referred to as “*Belediye Meclisi*,” hence municipal assembly. “



Women had the right to run for municipal elections since the amendment of the Municipal Law in 1930. For instance, Nakiye Hanım [Elgün] became a member of the municipal General Assembly (*Meclis-i Umûmi*) in Istanbul before being selected as a People’s Preacher. As mentioned earlier, Müveddet Altıkulaç, a “law school graduate,” was elected to the municipal assembly shortly after being nominated as a People’s Preacher. Rıfkiye Kağan, a preacher of Kars, worked as a teacher in the “borderland regions,” including Kars, from 1928 to 1935, when she resigned from her job to run for the 1935 municipal elections.<sup>51</sup> Lastly, Hacer Dicle was nominated preacher of Kastamonu in 1938 while she was a member of the municipal assembly. Another graduate of the Teachers Training College for Girls, Dicle worked as a school headmaster from 1920 to 1935 in her hometown before resigning to run for the 1935 municipal elections. After working four years in municipal assemblies and in the provincial administrative committee of the CHP in Kastamonu, Dicle ran for legislative elections and became a CHP deputy in 1939.

The trajectories of these seven women selected in different regions as party preachers show how preachers cumulated and switched between jobs and positions within the party structure. Within the small sample of women who became People’s Preachers, teaching was an integral component of a typical career. Most women preachers who were identified through other occupations within the party structure, as members of the provincial administrative committees or municipal assemblies, worked as teachers at another moment in their lives. Combining state service under the Ministry of Education and activism in the provincial branches of the party was the first common step in the political careers of these individuals. In cases of other social assets such as diplomas or previous political experience and their resulting network, women advanced in their political careers by passing through administrative or elected local positions up to the parliament in Ankara.

Nevertheless, this high mobility within the party hierarchy has not only stemmed from the work within the CHP since its creation. Both cohorts included women from elite origins who

---

<sup>51</sup> “928 yılından 933 yılına kadar Kars merkezi ve hudut boylarında öğretmenlik yaptım. Türk Kadınına siyasi hakların tanındığı 935 yılında Partimin gördüğü lüzum üzerine öğretmenlik görevinden ayrılarak Göle ilçesi Genel Meclis (*Meclis-i Umumi*) üyeliğine bir kaç devre devam eden Daimi Encümen üyeliğine seçildim.” Application file of Rıfkiye Kağan, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0/306-1242-3.

were active in nationalist and feminist political networks since the Second Constitutional Monarchy. Election to the municipal assemblies was a way to integrate politically active women, or feminists, into political life under the republican regime. Nakiye Elgün, for instance, was among the first women preachers to become a deputy. Elgün graduated from the Teachers Training College for Girls (*Darülmualimat*) in 1900 and worked as a teacher and headmaster until the start of the First World War.<sup>52</sup> In 1913, while teaching at the İnas Preparatory School (*İnas İdadisi*), she founded the Society for the Progress of Women (*Tealî-i Nisvan Cemiyeti*) along with famous novelist Halide Edip [Adivar].

According to her short biography, submitted for the legislative elections, she resigned from her teaching job to work for the “reform of schools belonging to pious foundations in 1914-15 [1330].”<sup>53</sup> These schools were, in fact, “reformed” by the orders of the governor of Syria, Cemal Pasha, who was in charge of Syria, Palestine, and the Hejaz as the commandant of the Fourth Army during the First World War.<sup>54</sup> The educational projects conducted under the orders of Cemal Pasha during the war years, in fact, played an essential role in the Armenian Genocide because these schools hosted a considerable number of Armenian orphans.<sup>55</sup> Given this appointment for a similar role to the more famous Halide Edip’s in 1915, we can suppose that Elgün was already well integrated into the Unionist political networks.

Elgün’s relatively quick rise to parliament can also be traced back to her activism in previously mentioned feminist and nationalist associations in the 1910s, which was in line with the national resistance movement that led to the foundation of the CHP in the 1920s. Along with Halide Edip, she was one of the leading figures of the January 1920 Istanbul meetings

---

<sup>52</sup> “İstanbulda doğdum. Tahsilimi İstanbul muallim mektebinde tamamladıktan sonra aynı mektepte hocalık ve müdür muavinliği yaptım. Yine Hoca ve müdür muavini olarak İnas idasisine tayin olundum. 1330 da istifa ederek Vakıf mekteplerinin ıslâhı vazifesini aldım. 1333 de Fevziye Lisesi müdürlüğüne geçdim. 1929 da İstanbul Kız Lisesi Müdürlüğüne tayin olundum.” Nakiye Elgün, “Kısa Tercümei hal,”1935, TBMM Arşivleri, HT-916-1-5.

<sup>53</sup> “1330 da istifa ederek Vakıf mekteplerinin ıslahı vazifesini aldım.” Nakiye Elgün, “Kısa Tercümei hal,”1935, TBMM Arşivleri, HT-916-1-5.

<sup>54</sup> Nuray Özdemir, “Nakiye Elgün (1880-1924),” in *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*. <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/nakiye-elgun-1880-1954/>.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. Özdemir uses the same wording as found in the short autobiography penned by Nakiye Elgün. Hence, she postulates that she worked for the reform of the schools belonging to the pious foundations. Yet, she adds an interesting information about the location of these schools (Damas and Beirut) and how Elgün worked in collaboration with Halide Edip following the orders of governor of Syria, Cemal Pasha. See: Selim Deringil, ““Your Religion is Worn and Outdated,”” *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, no. 12 (2019).

during which fervent speakers addressed the masses in Sultanahmet Square to contest the foreign occupation of Ottoman Anatolia and attract popular support for the national resistance movement.<sup>56</sup> She remained politically active throughout the 1920s and even became the director of one of the branches of Turkish Hearths in Istanbul.<sup>57</sup> She was one of the founding members of the Turkish Women's Union (*Türk Kadınlar Birliği*), founded in 1924. Shortly after being elected to the Istanbul municipal assembly, she became one of the first women to sit in parliament following the 1935 legislative elections. The political trajectory of Nakiye Elgün is exceptional to some extent. Elgün was born in 1880, and her advanced age and past political experiences within the Unionist circles allowed her to have higher mobility within the party structures than her counterparts in the early 1930s.

İffet Halim Oruz, on the other hand, was selected as a party preacher in 1938 when she was twenty-four years old and twenty-four years younger than Elgün. Oruz also worked as a teacher when she was younger. She was also among the founding members of the Turkish Women's Union, creating its Diyarbekir branch in 1927.<sup>58</sup> In 1938, she was a member of the Erenköy district administrative committee in Istanbul. Like Oruz and Elgün, many prominent members of the Turkish Women's Union, such as Lamia Refik and Şükûfe Abdurrahman, appeared among the People's Preachers of Istanbul.<sup>59</sup>

Crossing the life trajectories of five women allows a general overview of the political careers of the female CHP members from Istanbul who remained in the city. The increase in the number of women correlates with a period marked by increased social and political visibility for women who obtained electoral rights in municipal elections in 1930 and in national elections in 1934. The social trajectories of women who became People's Preachers showed how women confronted and negotiated with the political leadership of the CHP in the single-party era. Despite the surge of women both as preachers and as deputies throughout the single-party era, politically active women were pushed to the associative domain by the political leaders of the time. For this reason, many women among the People's Preachers

---

<sup>56</sup> Nuray Özdemir, "Milli Mücadele Dönemi Mitinglerinde Türk Kadını," 12.

<sup>57</sup> Özdemir, "Nakiye Elgün (1880-1924)."; Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap: Nezihe Muhiddin, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, Kadın Birliği*, 251.

<sup>58</sup> Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız İnkılap: Nezihe Muhiddin, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, Kadın Birliği*, 300.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

worked in the associative field besides their work as mass educators. Most of the associations listed in application files filled in by women were aligned with the state-party regime in the early republican era, such as the Aeronautical Association (*Tayyare Cemiyeti*) and the Child Protection Agency (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*).

The professional divide-up of the women preachers shows another undocumented aspect of interwar Turkey. Elite women could access a certain level of education through schooling or by working in the associative field. Hayriye Kaptancıoğlu from Ceyhan (Seyhan) worked at the Child Protection Agency (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*). Three women preachers from 1938 in Adana and Istanbul (Müveddet Altıkulaç, Meliha Taha Toros, Şükûfe Abdurrahman) were presented as “graduates of law school” and two women preachers, Memduha Arın and Mediha Varlık became judges.

### 8.3.3. Notables

The social trajectory of several notable preachers confirms the hypothesis of a partnership between the state and local notables. Saralioğlu Ali Bey, appointed as a party preacher in 1931, belonged to a “great family” that maintained leading positions at the municipal level through seats at municipal assemblies or mayorships from the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire to today. The family changed their surnames to Saral after the prohibition of suffixes like “the son of” (-oğlu, -zade). In the 2000s, the family opened a website collecting articles about the family’s past and its current role in the region. The “historical” section of the website referred to a local history book published in 2006: “The Saralizâdes: A Feudal Family in the Black Sea Region,” and shared a complete list of district mayors from the same family.<sup>60</sup> The preacher in question, Ali Bey, later became the district’s mayor.<sup>61</sup> From the genealogy provided on the family’s website, many other members of the same family held the position of the district mayor throughout the twentieth century. In the same vein, the director of the People’s House in Van, Salih Türkoğlu, later became the province’s mayor.<sup>62</sup> Tarakçızâde

---

<sup>60</sup> “Tarihçe,” Saral Ailesi, accessed 5 May 2022, <https://www.saralailesi.com/tarihce/>; Mehmet Bilgin, *Doğu Karadenizde Bir Derebeyi Ailesi: Saralizâdeler (Sarallar)* (Trabzon: Serander, 2006).

<sup>61</sup> “Tarihçe.”

<sup>62</sup> Concerning Salih Türkoğlu as the director of the Van People’s House, see: BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/845-342-1. Cited by: Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 249. Confirmation of the election of Salih Türkoğlu, 3 December 1945, BCA, Başbakanlık Tayin Daire Başkanlığı, 30-11-1/179-33-8.

Talat Bey, preacher of Buldan, Denizli, in 1931, changed his name to Talat Tarakçı following the surname reform of 1934 and became mayor of the city in 1938.<sup>63</sup>

Local notables who were co-opted by the single-party regime also had easier access to the plunder of “abandoned” property in this post-genocidal context. Three members of the Göğüş family were active in the Gaziantep People’s House: Sabahat, Muhtar, and Cemil Göğüş. In his study on the local and economic dimensions of the Armenian Genocide, Ümit Kurt used private archives of some elite families, including that of the Göğüş family. He showed that Cemil Göğüş was a member of the CUP and owned a local newspaper called *Antep Haberleri* (Antep News), which shut down in 1919. Cemil Bey was arrested for the deportation of Armenians after the occupation of Antep (January 1919) and participated in local militia against the occupation forces.<sup>64</sup> Between 1930 and 1935, members of the same family contributed to decreasing the price of “abandoned property” and bought estates belonging to Antep Armenians in auctions.<sup>65</sup>

Other preachers from Van, namely the “merchant” Altaylızâde Hüsametdin and two members of the Türkoğlu (a “well-established family”<sup>66</sup> of the province), participated in the transaction of the “abandoned property.” This was a standard method for handing over property belonging to former Ottoman Christians to provincial elites in early republican Turkey.<sup>67</sup> A systematic study of the transaction of abandoned property to provincial elites is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Still, the prism of the People’s Preachers Organization demonstrates one of the ways in which the state apparatus and notable families established “partnerships” in the context of the CHP single-party rule.

The leadership of provincial sections was often delegated to local notables distinguished from the “people” by their real estate capital and partnership, which persisted from the empire

---

<sup>63</sup> BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>64</sup> Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*, 152.

<sup>65</sup> Ümit Kurt, “Antep’in Gayri Resmî Tarihi,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 284 (Ağustos 2017); Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*, 182.

<sup>66</sup> “Büyükşehir’e kadın aday adayı,” *Şehrivan* (Van), 10 November 2018, <https://www.sehrivangazetesi.com/siyaset/buyuksehire-kadin-aday-adayi-h54161.html>.

<sup>67</sup> For the transaction of the abandoned property to Türkoğlu family in October 1925, see: BCA Muhacirin 272-0-0-12/46-79-9. For the role of Altaylızâde Hüsametdin in property usurpation, see: Guillaume Perrier and Laure Marchand, *Turkey and the Armenian Ghost: On the Trail of the Genocide*, trans. Debbie Blythe (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015); Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*.

to the Republic.<sup>68</sup> Although the lists of People's Preachers include many names of local dignitaries, they left little trace of their commitment to their duties.<sup>69</sup>

The case of Muhtar Göğüş was an exception. Göğüş persistently appeared in the paper trail of the People's Houses as a public speaker in many events organized at the Gaziantep People's House. In return, Göğüş sat at the municipal assembly and the municipal permanent assembly from 1931.<sup>70</sup> After another local notable moved to Istanbul as a parliamentarian, Göğüş became the director of the Gaziantep People's House. Altaylızâde Hüsamettin remained attached to the CHP provincial administrative committee throughout the single-party era.<sup>71</sup> These local partisan, administrative, and municipal positions allowed provincial power holders to remain powerful despite the change brought by the republic.

#### 8.4. Preaching as a Vocation

---

Many individuals saw becoming a People's Preacher as a means to social advancement, even choosing to work without pay for a political party that controlled the entire state apparatus without a true rule of law and checks and balances between different institutions. However, not all People's Preachers were motivated purely by opportunism. Memoirs from former People's Preachers are rare. Among these few memoirs is one by Hasene Ilgaz, a preacher from Fatih. Written in fragments and often lacking exact dates for events, her memoirs focus on activities she found most remarkable before and after becoming a CHP deputy in 1943. One striking fragment expresses her pride in participating through her speeches in such projects.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire*; Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire*.

<sup>69</sup> In the lists of "People's Preachers" sent from CHP provincial sections to General Secretary in 1931 and 1938 respectively, we find a great number of local notable families. However, these preachers left little trace of their speeches in the archives.

<sup>70</sup> 931 senesinden beri umumi meclis ve encümen üyesiyim." Muhtar Göğüş's registry file, no date [1935-1939] Gaziantep People's House, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

<sup>71</sup> Documents about CHP provincial administrative committee in Van, 4 September 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/202-801-5.

<sup>72</sup> Like other politically active women autobiographers during the formative years of the Turkish Republic, Ilgaz did not delve much into her private life in her memoirs. Instead, she focused on the "great men" who surrounded her in her youth and shared their personal aphorisms that she had the opportunity to hear firsthand. See: Hülya Adak, "Suffragettes of the Empire, Daughters of the Republic: Women Auto/biographers Narrate National History (1918-1935)," 27-28.

The Atatürk revolutions (*inkılap*) instilled in the nation a spirit that abolished old customs and habits, replacing them with every good and beautiful thing used by Western people, without allowing for any distinction between Eastern and Western. The speeches at that time were so effective that the people followed these topics, lectures, and even rallies with great attention, successfully managing to discard outdated customs and habits they held in their minds, believing and willingly abandoning them. Allow me to tell you an incident that happened to me regarding this matter. One night, I delivered a speech at the Letâfet building in Fatih. Special guests and party seniors were seated in the front row. The topic of my speech was niqab and lattice (peçe ve kafes), and I felt very excited. My ideas flowed like water, and when I finished my speech, the audience not only thanked me but also asked endless questions. Cevdet Kerim, who has since passed away, was among the audience members. After asking for permission from the presidency during this academic meeting, he expressed how happy and fulfilled he felt as if attending a party university on that day. He kissed my hands with affection as they cheered for me. The following day, while on duty, I received calls from key individuals such as Bican Bağcıoğlu, Fazıl Şerafettin, and Cevdet Kerim themselves, indicating their intention to pick me up from school - which they did collectively using several cars. We arrived at our destination: The Monument of Aerial Martyrs in Fatih, where many lattices piled up before it. It turned out that during the previous night alone, not one, not two, but 170 lattices had been brought to this place. The district governor congratulated me, saying, “We informed the party; they will also arrive.” This left me feeling joyful all over, so much so that upon returning home later that evening, I expressed gratitude to God for granting me this opportunity.<sup>73</sup>

Hasene Ilgaz published two memoirs, one in 1971 and another in 1991. The quote is from her 1991 memoir titled *Things I Read, Saw, and Wrote (Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım)*, released nine years before her passing. The anecdote lacks specific dates, but it likely originates from Hasene Ilgaz’s memoirs dating back to the period between 1929 and

---

<sup>73</sup> “Atatürk devrimleri yurttan eski adet ve alışkanlıklara son veren yerlerine batılı insanların kullandığı her iyi ve güzel şeyi gösteren doğulu ve batılı diye bir ayırımı müsaade etmeyen bir ruhu memlekete aşılacaktır. § O zaman yapılan konuşmalar o kadar etkili olmuştur ki, halk bu konuları, konferansları, hatta mitingleri dikkatle izlemiş ve kafasındaki köhneleşmiş adetleri alışkanlıkları inanarak ve isteyerek atmaya muvaffak olmuştur. § Size bu konuda başımdan geçen bir olayı anlatmak isterim. Parti adına Fatih İlçesi Letâfet Apartmanı denilen, büyük salonu bulunan binada bir gece konuşma yapıyorum. Özel misafirler, parti erkânı ön sıralarda oturmuşlardı. § Konuşma konum: Peçe ve kafes üzerine idi. § Çok heyecanlı idim. Fikirlerim su gibi akıyordu. Konuşmam tamamlanınca dinleyiciler hem teşekkür ediyorlar ve hem de durmadan sorular soruyorlardı. § Merhum Cevdet Kerim dinleyiciler arasında idi. Başkanlıktan müsaade alarak ayağa kalktı. Bu toplantının akademik bir toplantı olduğunu, bir parti okulundan ders alır gibi çok sevinçli ve mütehasıs olduğunu belirtti. Teşekkürlerini bildirdi. Ellerim öpülüyor, sevgi tezahürleri devam ediyordu. § Ertesi günü vazifemin başındayım. Fatih Kaymakamının beni aradığı söylendi. Arkadan, Bican Bağcıoğlu, Fazıl Şerafettin, Cevdet Kerim ve daha bir kaç zat... Beni okuldan gelip alacaklarını söylediler ve geldiler. Beraberce bir kaç araba... Fatih Hava Şehitleri Abidesinin önündeyiz. Burası bugün neden kalabalıktı, ne vardı. § İlerliyoruz. Beni ve bizi karşılıyorlar, gösteriyorlar. Hava Şehitleri Abidesinin önüne büyüklü küçüklü kafesler yığılmış. § Kaymakam anlatıyor bir iki değil 170 adet kafes, getirilmiş ve buraya gece bırakılmış. § Sizi kutlarız. Partiye haber gönderdik onlar da gelecekler. § Sevinçle eve döndüm. Bana bu imkânı veren Tanrıya şükrettim.” Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*, 32-33.

1934, during which discussions about niqab and lattice were prevalent. In this period, Hasene Ilgaz worked as a teacher in Istanbul's Şehremini district, regularly attending and possibly directing the People's House of Şehremini. The fragment attests to the importance of public speeches and lectures with political content in 1930s Turkey. Additionally, as illustrated by the 1934 cartoon (Figure 5), the implicit intention of the nationalist leadership was, to some extent, to replace older forms of knowledge transmission, such as between Sufi sheiks and their disciples or Islamic preachers and their congregation (*cemaat*).

Ilgaz's speech highlights another crucial aspect of the early republican era: women's increased public and political visibility. As one of the few female preachers selected by the party, Ilgaz aimed to encourage Istanbul residents to discard the niqab, worn by women to cover their faces, and the lattices (*kafes*) traditionally used in house windows to conceal the interior from the outside world.<sup>74</sup> Ilgaz believed that the passion in her speech and her deep commitment to the cause, which allowed her words to "flow like water," were indeed effective. She claimed that, as a result of her speeches, people disposed of the lattices that concealed women like herself from public view.

---

<sup>74</sup> The exact date of the speech is not specified in her memoirs. Yet, it is probable that it was between 1929 and 1934 while discussions on lattices (*kafes*) also called Mashrabiya, a distinctive aspect of Islamic architecture in Istanbul houses, and the niqab were paramount.





Figure 16. Ridiculing the lattice in Istanbul, *Akbaba*, 1 March 1934, 13.

Who is this guy? He is still sitting behind the lattice. - He should have a bird's brain!<sup>75</sup>

Hasene Ilgaz did indeed achieve significant social advancement as a People's Preacher. In 1943, she was nominated as a candidate for the recently annexed region of Hatay despite having no prior connection to the area. She served two terms as a CHP deputy in the Grand National Assembly and remained committed to her party's mission. She embraced the pedagogical mission assigned to the secular and educated elites and considered the speeches she delivered for the regime as her vocation. She was grateful for the opportunity to fulfill her duty as a teacher to her students and the general public.

The blurring of the line between state and party institutions in 1930s Turkey created a specific structure of political opportunities for individuals like Hasene Ilgaz. The horizon of expectation for teachers and low-ranking civil servants was broad. Teaching held considerable prestige, with many notable intellectuals, columnists, and deputies of the time having been either former or current teachers, typically at prestigious high schools in major cities. This

---

<sup>75</sup> "Bu herif te kim?.. Hâlâ kafes arkasında oturuyor... - Kuş beyinlinin biri olacak!" *Akbaba*, 1 March, 1934.

dynamic may have influenced how teachers, who comprised the dominant professional group within the People’s Preachers, viewed their political and professional prospects. However, understanding the beliefs and convictions of these ‘petty’ intellectuals helps to provide a fuller picture of their worldview.

Many current and former preachers, like Ilgaz, perceived their role during the early republican era as integral to their calling. İffet Halim Oruz, a preacher from Istanbul selected in 1938, provides another example. Her case is also valuable because her book was published before he was officially listed as a People’s Preacher (1938). In 1936, İffet Halim Oruz published her speeches delivered since 1927 in Istanbul. At the time, he was already in the CHP’s district administrative committee in Erenköy. The foreword of her book was, in fact, a poem which read:

If I were my own, would I ever endure labor?  
Is it worth facing countless troubles for one soul?  
Within me, there is a speed that resists every difficulty.  
I am committed to this path, and that is it!<sup>76</sup>

This publication shows, on the one hand, that many preachers were already ‘talking’ for the party before their inscription to the lists. On the other hand, it demonstrates the pride she took from delivering those twenty-three speeches in five provinces. Her foreword reveals that she saw the change surrounding her as more significant than her own life and her wish to participate in this transformative era. It goes without saying that she also saw this publication as a step that might increase her chances of advancing within the party hierarchy.

Similarly, Cemile Aytaç, a teacher from Izmir who worked in Elazığ and delivered regular lectures at the Elazığ People’s House, published fragments containing her speeches and articles shortly before her death and for the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the republic. The book was called *We Are Walking (Yürüyoruz)* after the title of its first chapter. The chapter, in turn, was named after a poem she wrote in 1934 for an event at the People’s House in Ankara. The chapter, published sixty years after the event, recounted her memories of Mustafa Kemal’s arrival to Elazığ in the spring of 1937. It is visible from the presentation of the memorial sections of the

---

<sup>76</sup> “Ben kendimin olsaydım çekermiydim hiç emek? Değer mi bir can için binbir derde başeğmek? İçimde her zorluğa karşı gelen bir hız var, Bu yola bağlanmışım, işte artık o kadar!” İffet Halim Oruz, *Arkadaşlar!*

book that she told the stories to her grandchildren, who helped her with the publication. The occasion of this visit is significant in itself. “Spring 1937” was also the start of the military campaign against the Dersim Revolt that lasted until September 1938 and was repressed by employing aerial bombings and chemical weapons against the local population. The repression of the Dersim Revolt had a particularly high death toll caused by the indiscriminate killing of civilians.<sup>77</sup> This particularly violent background of this reception to which Cemile Aytaç, a teacher born in Nevşehir, was invited to welcome Mustafa Kemal, will be left aside for now to concentrate on Cemile’s reminiscence of the reception, the poem she recited, and her meeting with Mustafa Kemal ([Chapter 12](#)).

Mustafa Kemal visited the city accompanied by the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, and the Elazığ deputy, Fazıl Ahmet Aykaç. The president was welcomed with a military ceremony that included guests like the Third General Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan, commandants from neighboring provinces, and advisors. A reception was held at the Elazığ People’s House after the ceremony. During the reception, Celal Bayar, the future Prime Minister of Turkey, recited a poem to welcome the guests. This was followed by another poem recited by the Elazığ deputy, Fazıl Ahmet Aykaç. Mustafa Kemal then requested a similar performance from the host. General Alpdoğan, who was referred to as “pasha” by Cemile Aytaç, called upon Cemile to recite a poem. Cemile, unprepared for this duty, was surprised and started trembling. Despite her initial unease, she recited a poem she had written three years ago while working at the Ankara Girls’ High School.<sup>78</sup> The poem read:

There is a goal to be achieved.  
Our hearts are ignited by its fire.  
Without resting, without sitting and having fun  
We are walking towards it.  
The oldest Turkish history was a momentum, a vast light,  
It was an overflowing might, a sublime life.

---

<sup>77</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, “Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938,” in *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence* (2011); Tessa Hofmann, “Transnationale Ideologien und Strategien im Zusammenhang mit dem Genozid von Dersim” (Der nicht anerkannte Genozid: Dersim 1937-1938, Online, 19 November 2021).

<sup>78</sup> “Abdullah Paşa’nın ayağa kalkarak “Cemile Hanım” dediğini duydum. Şaşırdım, ellerim ayaklarım titremeye başladı. Ancak bu hayatımın en mutlu daveti idi. Kalktım Atatürk’ün huzuruna doğru yürüdüm. Aklıma bir şey gelmiyordu... Atatürk ilkelerini canla başla benimseyen bir öğretmen olarak, 1934’te Ankara Kız Lisesinde öğretmenken, halkevinde yaptığımız bir müsamerede okunmak üzere “Yürüyoruz” adlı bir parça yazmıştım. Ezberimde olduğu için etrafımdakileri görmeden, bütün samimiyetim ve gücümle bu parçayı okudum.” Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl*, 12.

This light, this might, this life  
Now, it is the property of other worlds.  
Those who light their torch on us in the darkness,  
Now, they have become like the sun.  
But the main light is not yet dimmed. It is being reborn.  
Beyond a near horizon  
There is a great and magnificent Turkic world.  
We have made our preparations; we are on our way.  
We are walking towards it with strength, faith, and joy.  
Now, bigotry collapses beneath our feet.  
Treason is vanquished.  
The black field of ignorance,  
Every day, it gets a little smaller.  
The beautiful light of the Republic  
Every day, it expands a little more.  
Resistance, hesitation, impossibilities,  
They all crumbled one by one.  
In the middle of it all, the revolution soared,  
It marches like an uprising of truth.  
We are always with it, always gathered in it  
Watching over the most minor thing that could harm it,  
We walk by, pushing and trampling.  
We have only one cause: the one that beats in our pulse, the one that burns in our eyes,  
Looking at the horizons, we call it ideal.  
Looking into our hearts, we call him Atatürk.  
We are always walking towards that voice, towards his/its light.<sup>79</sup>

Similar to İffet Halim Oruz's poem, this piece also reflects a strong sense of responsibility towards participating in the social and political movement. It portrays Cemile Aytaç's aspirations and optimistic actions in driving the "revolution" forward. The poem illustrates a society in motion, confidently progressing despite facing three identified obstacles: bigotry, treason, and ignorance. Notably, it was recited in Elazığ, amidst the Dersim revolts and in the

---

<sup>79</sup> "Karşımızda varılacak bir amaç var § Gönlümüz onun ateşiyle tutuşmuş. § Durup dinlemeden, oturup eğlenmeden § Ona doğru yürüyoruz. § En eski Türk tarihi bir hızdı, bir engin ışıktı, § Bir taşkın kudretti, bir yüce hayattı § Bu ışık, bu kudret, bu hayat § Şimdi başka dünyaların malıdır. § Karanlıklar içerisinde meşalesini bizden yakanlar, § Şimdi birer güneş oldular. § Fakat henüz ana ışık sönmemiştir, yeniden doğuyor § Yakın bir ufkun ötesinde § Büyük ve muhteşem Türk dünyası var. § Hazırlığımızı yaptık, yola çıktık. § Ona doğru güçle, inançla, sevinçle yürüyoruz § Artık taassup ayaklarımızın altında bir çöküntüdür. § Hıyanet bir mağluptur § Cehaletin kara sahası, § Her gün biraz daha küçülüyor § Cumhuriyetin güzel aydınlığı § Her gün biraz daha genişliyor. § Karşı durmalar, tereddütler, imkansızlıklar, § Hepsi birer birer döküldüler. § Hepsinin ortasında şahlanan inkılâp, § Ayaklanan bir hakikat gibi yürüyor. § Hep ondayız, hep onda toplandık § O'na zarar verebilecek en küçük şeyi gözetleyerek, § İterek ve çiğneyerek yürüyoruz. § Bir tek davamız var; nabzımızda vuran O, gözlerimizde yanan O, § Ufuklara bakarak O'na ülkü diyoruz § Gönlümüze bakarak O'na Atatürk diyoruz § Hep o sese, O'nun aydınlığına yürüyoruz." Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl* (İstanbul: Kap, 1996), 13-14.

presence of the interior minister, Şükrü Kaya, and Mustafa Kemal. The poem alludes to the forceful suppression of these obstacles through intimidating side notes.

Aytaç fulfills her role as a “*münevver*” – in the sense of a luminary or enlightened enlightener – by spreading the light of the revolution.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, her poem is significant in conveying her deep admiration for Mustafa Kemal and her strong nationalist sentiment as a basis for her political commitment. Aytaç’s commitment to the leader and the ongoing revolutionary changes are visible in her memoirs. Her commitment to the party provided her with symbolic rewards of the moment. According to her memoirs, reciting this poem led Şükrü Kaya to present Cemile Aytaç to President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Mustafa Kemal congratulated Cemile on being an exemplary Turkish woman, and she was so moved that she could only respond with tears.<sup>81</sup>

Memoirs like those of Cemile Aytaç and Hasene Ilgaz were quite rare. Since they were published long after the events they describe, they were susceptible to revisions and re-editions in order to create a coherent biography.<sup>82</sup> Occasionally, former preachers expressed their emotions, convictions, enthusiasm, and pride in their application letters to become a CHP deputy. However, these sources have their own biases, as they aim to persuade decision-makers within the party structure to make room for new members in the national assembly. Still, they also testify to the expression of emotions generated by participating in partisan activities. For instance, Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz expressed his pride in working in Gaziantep with people who were soon to become prominent members of the CHP. Emin Bilgen, still from Antep, said he was “working sincerely” (*candan çalışmaktayım*) for the party since the day he retired.<sup>83</sup> Ratip Akdeniz, from Urfa, claimed to derive “infinite pleasure” from delivering lectures at the People’s Houses, likening the work at these partisan cultural centers to service for the “nation.”

---

<sup>80</sup> I got inspiration from Esin Ertürk Acar’s dissertation title in translating *münevver* as enlighteners. See: Esin Ertürk Acar, “Poor Enlighteners: Pedagogy, Politics and Elementary School Teachers in the Early Republican Era.”

<sup>81</sup> “Bitirdiğim zaman Şükrü Kaya Bey beni Atatürk’ün yanına götürdü. Atatürk bana Cemile Hanım, en büyük gururum sizlersiniz, böyle kadınları olan bir millet ebediyen yaşayacaktır. Vatan sizlere emanettir dedi. Gözyaşlarımla mukabele ettiğimi hatırlıyorum.” Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl*, 12.

<sup>82</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “L’illusion biographique,” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 62, no. 1 (1986).

<sup>83</sup> Emin Bilgen’s application file, 10 April 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

Those examples show the role of emotions, convictions, and worldviews generated by emotions – as opposed to material and symbolic rewards of political action – in the political commitments of some People’s Preachers. Beyond the predictable material and symbolic rewards provided by the context of a post-revolutionary single-party regime characterized by the perfusion between state and party institutions – including their employees – their subjectivities and the “feeling of being able to influence the course of history” was another decisive motivating factor.<sup>84</sup> Both Cemile Aytaç and Iffet Oruz’s poems testified to enthusiasm aroused by participating in a cause and a process similar to a revolution.

## Conclusion

Local notables who collaborated with the state and the party often led the provincial sections of the party, accessed provincial or local administration positions such as governorships and mayorships, and worked in the Provincial Assemblies in return for their collaboration. The fruits of their alliance with the party also resulted in high mobility within the CHP. Many notables who became People’s Preachers were nominated in the CHP lists in legislative elections and concluded their political career as deputies at the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

The party leadership relied on provincial elites from learned professions, perceiving the acceptance or refusal of their reforms as a matter of education and ‘enlightenment’ ([Chapter 5](#)). In turn, educated elites expected more from the social transformations brought about by the single-party regime than other social groups, such as workers and the peasantry. Like the members of People’s Houses, many preachers from these professional groups aspired to climb up the ladders of the party hierarchy and reach the parliament. As noticed by Alexandros Lamprou concerning the People’s House directors, it was “an open secret” that partisan activity through the party’s provincial branches (People’s Preachers Organization) and cultural

---

<sup>84</sup> Ludivine Bantigny et al., “Subjectivités,” in *Une histoire globale des révolutions* (Paris: La Découverte, 2023), 777.

sections was “a lift-off to the Parliament.”<sup>85</sup> Becoming parliamentary was the last step of the partisan career, which started in the provincial sections.

Many civil servants actively worked for associations and institutions affiliated with the party, such as People’s Houses, the Turkish Aeronautical Association (*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*), the Child Protection Agency (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*), and the Turkish Red Crescent (*Kızılay*) deemed themselves party members. When former preachers applied to run for legislative elections from the CHP lists, they mentioned their work in these associations as a sign of commitment to the party and gave the year they started to work, say, for the People’s Houses, as the year they enrolled to the party. Since the CHP leadership considered civil servants “natural limbs of the party,” they may have been informally encouraged to participate in the party’s cultural activities.

Given the responsibility of intellectuals assigned to them, People’s Preachers were active in domains ranging from partisan propaganda or activism to knowledge transmission and even knowledge production. Even though their social origins and trajectories did not fit the representation of the *münevver* observable in press controversies, they progressively became intellectuals in every sense of the term. While their role was initially limited to the transmission of political knowledge and its adaptation to different audiences, state-sponsored campaigns of knowledge production on national language, literature, and history transformed the People’s Preachers into “intellectuals” in the sense of knowledge producers. They delivered speeches for electoral campaigns, wrote poems about the revolution’s value, explained new laws and reforms to their audience, taught history, and published their speeches and opinion articles in the local press and People’s Houses magazines.

---

<sup>85</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, “Local Politics and State-Society Relations: State Officials, Local Elites, and Political Networks in Provincial Urban Centres in the 1930s and 1940s in Turkey,” *Turkish Historical Review* 10, no. 02-03 (2020): 263.





## 9. The Backstage

---

The previous chapters shed light on the stage, the staging, and the audience of the People's Preachers, on the other hand, on their selection process and political careers. One last aspect that further allows us to understand the communicational situation is what I call the "backstage" in the sense of everything concerning the functioning of the People's Houses and the speaking engagements of the People's Preachers.<sup>1</sup> This chapter focuses on inspection documents produced within the party concerning the difficulties and dysfunctions of the party's communication and educational apparatus.

There was a gap between the CHP's intention to mobilize and control the People's Preachers and its financial and infrastructural possibilities to do so. The inspection documents produced by the CHP and the Minister of the Interior after creating the People's Preachers Organization reveal the party's serious difficulties in managing its provincial sections. These documents include summaries of the reports prepared by the CHP candidates before the 1935 elections in each province, correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and various People's Houses, and the Minister of the Interior with other ministers on the attitude of local populations towards the state and circulating rumors. The cross-analysis of the inspection documents with the quantitative analysis of the number of preachers and lecture reports allow us to better grasp the challenges and limitations the party provincial organizations faced behind the stage.

The party's internal inspection reports compensate for the lack of information on the reception of the People's Preachers' speeches, reflecting the social conditions of the reception. CHP candidates produced the first set of documents for the parliamentary elections held in February 1935. The party categorized them into 6 (Bureaus) depending on their content. Their summaries also show the regional discrepancies regarding the single-party regime's power and authority in different local contexts. The documents "concerning the 1<sup>st</sup> Bureau" are on the functioning of the party's local sections and the People's Houses. Those prepared for other bureaus relate infrastructural problems to party-centered issues.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Patrick Charaudeau and Dominique Maingueneau, *Dictionnaire de l'analyse de discours*, 134.

<sup>2</sup> While this rich file contains information on the financial and governmental challenges of the CHP government during the 1930s, I limited my analysis to those relating to its authority and legitimacy in the provinces and the evaluation of its partisan and cultural activities.

## 9.1. Infrastructural Problems

---

Infrastructure was one of the main reasons the efficiency of the party's provincial sections varied from region to region. Infrastructure was one of the most emphasized problems of the CHP inspection reports. The scarcity of roads, buildings, and communication systems in the post-war economy of republican Turkey impacted CHP's organization in remote areas. For instance, the inspectors from the Western province of Kütahya reported that the People's Houses were "weak" with a "strict budget." Consequently, it was "inconvenient" for the General Secretary to expect "significant work" from them. The money allocated for each People's House was insufficient to finance their activities. In Kütahya, the People's House took in donations from the local sugar factory. When the factory stopped donating to the People's House, the house lacked the resources to organize events of the same scope.<sup>3</sup>

The inspection reports frequently mentioned the inadequacy of the budgets allocated for the People's Houses compared to the party headquarters' expectations. For lectures or ceremonies organized simultaneously in all provinces, the General Secretary often expected the Houses to broadcast the radio transmission from Ankara. However, connection problems and broken radios were repeatedly reported from the provinces. In Samsun, for instance, the People's House members could not listen to the Istanbul radio as instructed because of radio interference. In Muğla, they had to abandon the idea of following the congress via radio after attempting to use several radios, all of which failed to work.<sup>4</sup>

The underdevelopment of the transportation infrastructure in 1930s Turkey put a strain on the functioning of the party-state structure. This delayed the arrival of the circular letters

---

<sup>3</sup> "Halkevleri çalışma araçları arasında çok zayıf ve bütçeleri dar olduğundan geniş ölçüde iş beklemek kabil değildir. Uşak Halkevi şeker fabrikası memurlarından yardım görmekte ise de fabrikanın bu yıl kapanması Halkevi çalışmasına zarar verecektir. Lise öğretmenleriyle yüksek tahsil tahsil görmüş olanların Halkevlerle yakından ilgilenmeleri için ilbayın gayretini istemişler." Ömer Dinç, Dr. Şakir Ediz, İbrahim Dalkılıç, Naşit Uluğ, Dr. Lütüf Kırdar, Mehmet Sümer, Kütahya, Report for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>4</sup> "İl ve ilçelerdeki radyolar bozuk olduğundan bunlardan istifade edilmemekte ve onarılmamaktadır." Sırrı İçöz, Emin Draman, Ömer Evcı, Report on Yozgat, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1. "24 Ağustos 1936 günü Üçüncü Dil Kurultayının açılış Törenini Halkevimiz mensupları ve Halktan kalabalık bir kitle radyo önünde dinledikleri gibi Park ve Subaşındaki hoparlörlerimizle ayrıca Halka dinlettirilmiştir. İstanbul Radyosunun fazla parazit yapması dolayısıyla Ankara radyosu tecrübe edilmiş daha iyi dinlenmiştir." Language Day Report, Samsun, 4 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-108-02. "Ayrı ayrı bir kaç radyo ile yapılan tecrübelerimizde iyi netice vermedi Dinlemek, anlamak imkânı bulunamadı. Radyonun nihayet bir gürültüden ibaret sesi arasından belki bir kelime anlamak mümkün olur ümidile gelenler gitmedi bekledi. Fakat dinliyemeden akşamı yaptık." Language Day Report, Muğla, 2 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1169-107-02-12.

containing orders to organize lectures in some provinces and prevented individuals from traveling between cities. The inspector of Elazığ wrote about the “state of deprivation of the district” because of its distance from the center.<sup>5</sup> The inspector of Diyarbakır reported that “people complained about corruption and bad roads everywhere.” The failure to build the bridge on the road to Silvan “burdened” the “ordinary people and the government.”<sup>6</sup>

These infrastructural problems led to delays in the de facto creation of the People’s Preachers Organization. Many provinces did not send the list of selected preachers on time. The General Secretary of the Party, chaired by Recep Bey [Peker] at that time, sent the first circular for the foundation of the organization and the preparation of name lists on 22 September 1931. Yet, this first attempt did not bear its fruits for two months. On 11 November 1931, Recep Bey sent another circular stating that while he was sure that each provincial organization already selected their preachers, the lists should have been sent to the General Secretary to start working on this important task.<sup>7</sup>

There was a gap between the ambitions of the party leadership and what was possible in the provinces. In January 1933, some newspapers reported the creation of the People’s Preachers Organization with an emphasis on the training of the preachers as a news item, although the first attempts to create this organization dated from almost two years earlier. They wrote about the training of public speakers as “one of our biggest deficiencies” (*en büyük noksanlarımızdan biri*) and caught up with the party’s initiative with considerable delay.<sup>8</sup> Five years later, the Party General Secretary asked provincial sections to send updated lists as soon as possible. Since the sections did not comply with this order, they sent a reminder ten days later.<sup>9</sup>

Even when the provincial sections of the party complied with the directives of its general secretary, infrastructural deficiencies impacted the conduct of the lectures. For example,

---

<sup>5</sup> “Merkeze uzaklıktan dolayı bu havali mahrumiyet içindedir.” Inspection report from Elazığ, 8 November 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.

<sup>6</sup> “Her tarafta yolsuzluktan ve yolların bozukluğundan şikayet edilmektedir. Silvan yolu üzerindeki Ambarlı köprüsü senelerden beri yapılamadığından halk ve hükümet sıkıntı çekmektedir.” Nuriye Öniz, General Kâzım Sevüktekin, Rüştü Bekit, Report on Diyarbakır for the II. Bureau, BCA CHP 490-01/725-484-1.

<sup>7</sup> Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 11 November 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>8</sup> “Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Yetiştirecek: Halk Hatipleri için Bir Talimatname Yapıldı Faaliyete Başlanıyor.” “C.H.F. Halk Hatipleri Talimatı: Semt, köy ve mahalle ocaklarımızın da bir iki hatibi olmak lazımdır. Fırka hatipleri için dersler açılacaktır..”

<sup>9</sup> Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 1 October 1938- 10 October 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/4-19-2.

Edirne followed the party's directives regarding selecting people's preachers in 1931 and updating the lists in 1938. The People's House in Edirne had been in operation since 19 February 1932, the date of the decision concerning the opening of People's Houses or the transformation of Turkish Hearths into People's House. Nevertheless, the activities of this house were perceived as being in jeopardy in 1945 due to infrastructure problems persisting since the Second Constitutional Monarchy. Behçet Kemal Çağlar mentioned in his inspection report that the People's House dated from the "Union and Progress" times and was, therefore, old. The building's heating and sound insulation were defective and far from Edirne's city center. All these aspects reduced the effectiveness of this People's House.<sup>10</sup>

The party invested in loudspeakers and radio to diffuse the lectures beyond the People's Houses and the party locals in the provinces. Since the operation and repair of radios and loudspeakers required specific technical knowledge and financial resources, their maintenance disrupted the lectures organized in the community centers and hindered their dissemination in the cities. Çağlar reported that the small number of loudspeakers in Edirne needed repair. He explained that he needed to borrow ladders from the municipality and convince university students capable of repairing the loudspeakers to improve the situation in the city.<sup>11</sup>

### 9.1. Variations across Time and Space

---

The infrastructural problems were generalized but varied in time and between regions. The People's Houses' integration level with the rest of the country was not equal in all the provinces. Despite reminders to prepare and update the lists of People's Preachers, certain provinces and districts were noticeably absent from People's Preachers Organization documentation. Elâziz (Elazığ) did not submit lists of People's Preachers in 1931 or 1938. In 1931, Erzurum had a disproportionately small number of preachers, considering its population

---

<sup>10</sup> "Edirne Halkevinin ilk ve en acele işi, bina meselesidir. İttihat ve Terakkiden kalma yapının büyük salonu ısıtma ve ses bakımından pek elverişsizdir. Zaten yapının yeri bugünkü haliyle Kaleiçi denilen aşağı semte çekilmiş Edirne için uzak ve sapidır." Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

<sup>11</sup> "Edirne'de beş on yerde ses veren bir hoparlör teşkilatı vardır. Fakat bozukçadır. Son günlerde üniversiteli Edirnelileri gayrete getirerek Belediyeden alınmış merdivenlerle epeyce bir tamirin yapılmasına amil oldum. Bu hoparlörlerin çoğaltılması ve onarılması lazımdır." Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

of approximately 300,000 inhabitants (refer to Map 1). Eastern provinces with a higher proportion of Kurdish-speaking residents generally had fewer preachers than Aegean provinces like Muğla. Samsun boasted a significant number of preachers relative to its population in 1931, but it aligned with other provinces' proportions in 1938. Ağrı sent a list of seven preachers, including six teachers, one school headmaster, and one director of education, in 1931, while no lists were sent in 1938.

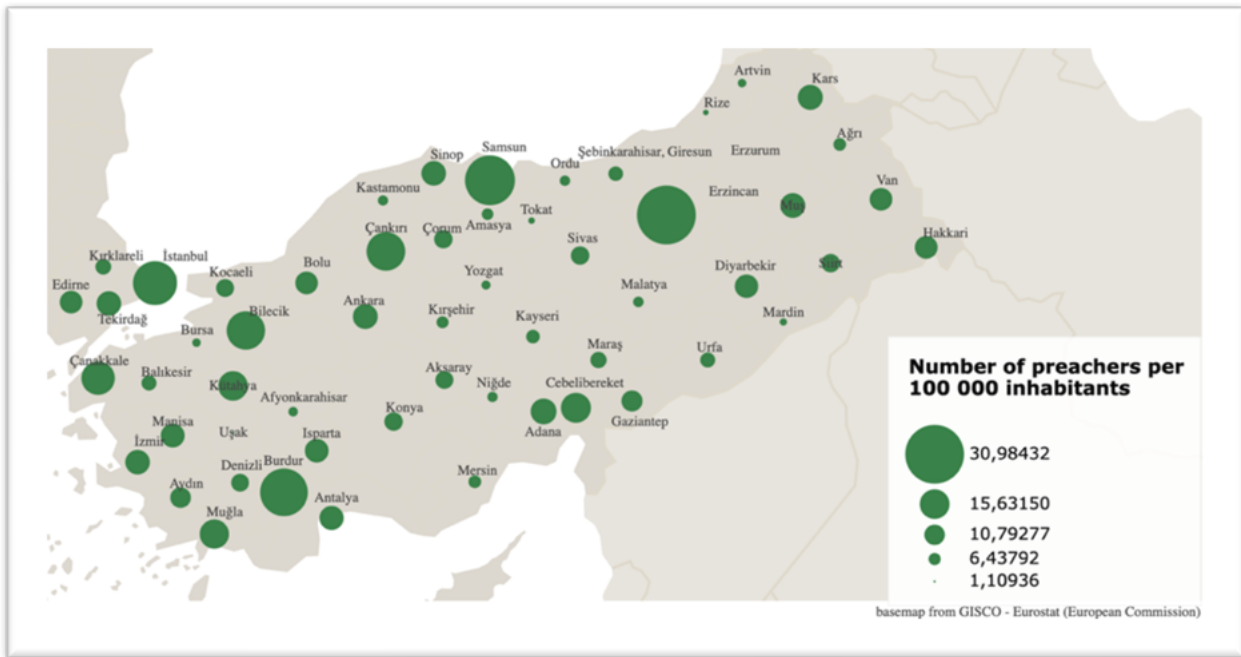
Discrepancies were evident not only between provinces but also among different districts within the same province. At the provincial level, some districts were less active than others. For instance, Urfa doubled the number of preachers selected between 1931 and 1938. Nevertheless, Urfa's CHP Provincial Administrative Committee noted in 1938 that there were no People's Preachers in the Suruç, Viranşehir, Yaylak, and Hilvan districts.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the People's Houses themselves did not function as desired.

The success or failure of a provincial section was also not always permanent. In 1939, party inspectors reported that the Elazığ People's House functioned properly for a while but then entered a period of inactivity. This decline was attributed to the composition of the People's House membership. Most members were civil servants, and whenever an active member was appointed to another region and left the city, the People's House experienced a lack of activity.<sup>13</sup>

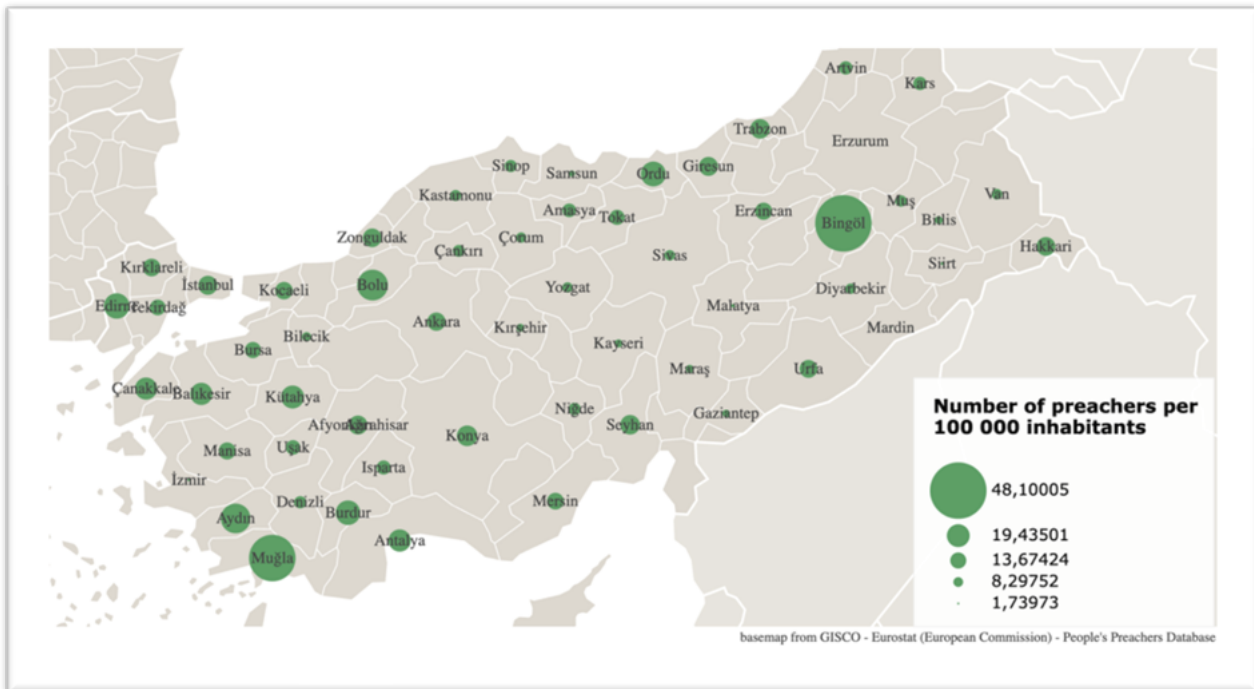
---

<sup>12</sup> “Şuruç, Viranşehir, Yaylak ve Hilvan kazalarında halk hatipleri bulunmadığını arz ederim.” From CHP Provincial Administrative committee in Urfa to the CHP General Secretary, 26 October 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>13</sup> Başkanlık yapan valilerin elemanları daha kolay buldukları memur sınıfindan seçmeleri yüzünden sık sık değişen azanın bıraktığı boşluklar. Report submitted to the CHP General Secretary, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.



**Map 2. People's Preachers in 1931**



**Map 3. People's Preachers in 1938**

*Census data for Bingöl, Bitlis, Hakkari, and Uşak are from 1927.*

The remoteness of some provinces and their specific political context added to these differences. One example is Ağrı, which was closer to the Soviet and Iranian borders than to large Turkish cities such as Erzurum or Kars. In a travelog published in 1937 in *Son Posta*, the author recalled his difficulties in locating the place known to be approximately at the border in the middle of mountains and hills.<sup>14</sup> Ağrı had a significant Armenian population wiped out during the genocide, and its predominantly Kurdish inhabitants had launched a rebellion in the late 1920s that also entailed a separatist claim to the land.<sup>15</sup> How would a People's House function in this setting only a few years after the rebellion? How would preachers face the audience amidst such tense circumstances? The Ağrı People's House was built in 1936.<sup>16</sup> The file concerning the lectures delivered in Ağrı contains only seven short documents that did not include the title or subject of the lectures. They simply stated that the People's Houses or the provincial government organized the lectures following the orders. Only in the 1940s do we have more detailed information about a middle school headmaster, a secretary of the provincial government, a judge, a director of the People's House, and a registry officer delivering a lecture in Ağrı about the impact of the Second World War.<sup>17</sup>

This was a common situation in Kurdish Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, where the party had different priorities, such as facilitating state penetration. In Bitlis, no preachers were selected in 1931. The situation improved in 1938 when the party's provincial organization selected six preachers. The People's House opened in 1934. and its early activities included "sports exercises," "entertainment," and also "special lectures [delivered] to the people." The same article about the People's House's activities also reported that "after the amnesty," 3,400 previously undeclared births were declared.<sup>18</sup> The mixture of information about the People's House's activities and undeclared births simultaneously points to the difference in priorities in this region.

---

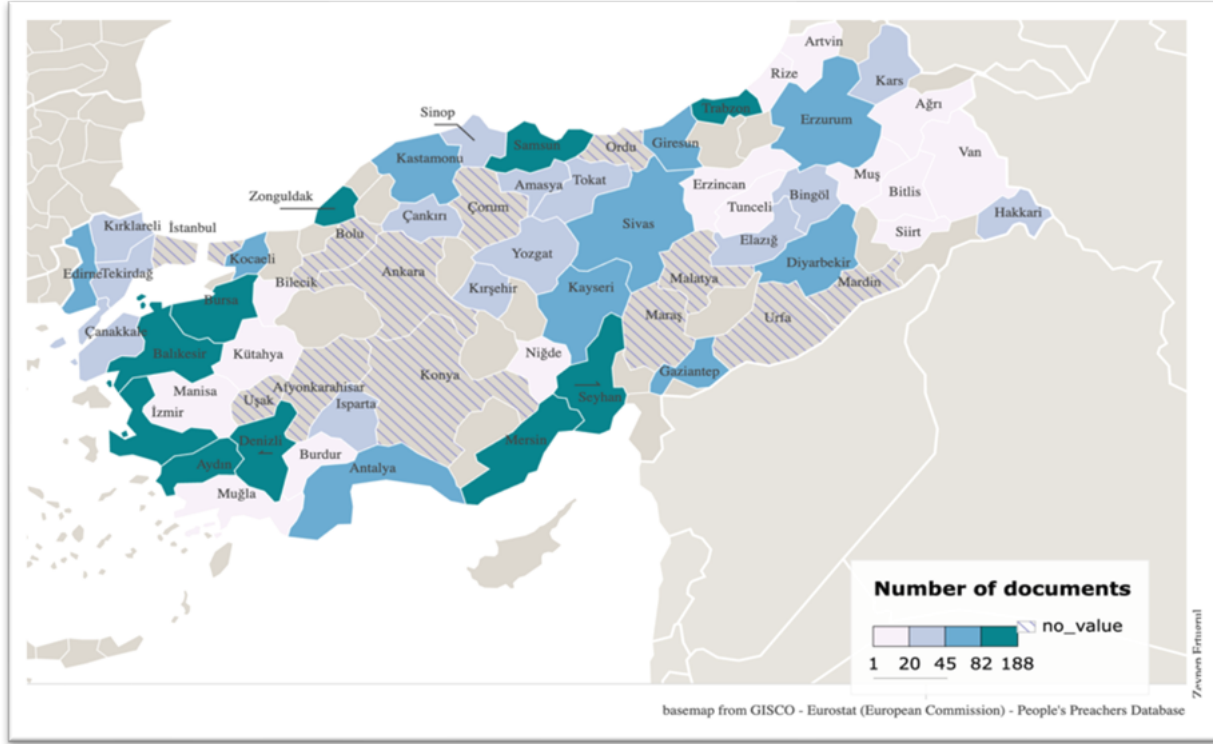
<sup>14</sup> "Karaköse !... Durun bakayım. Mevkiini de bulamadım. Karaköse nereye düşüyordu? Oradan hududa ne kadar yol var? Harita, harita... Yahu bir harita yok mu ?" Vasfi Rıza Zobu, "Kaf dağımın arkası...", *Son Posta*, 23 July 1938.

<sup>15</sup> Sedat Ulugana, *Ağrı Kürt Direnişi ve Zilan Katliamı (1926-1931)* (Istanbul: Pêri Yayınları, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> "Ağrı Halkevi başkanlığından," *Cumhuriyet*, 22 July 1936.

<sup>17</sup> From Karaköse People's House to the CHP General Secretary, 6 May 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1007 - 885 - 2.

<sup>18</sup> "Bitlis Halkevinde Faaliyet," *Son Posta*, 30 June 1934.



Map 4. Number of documents produced per province (1935-1945)

All in all, Bitlis sent fourteen lecture reports, mainly composed of telegrams between 1940 and 1945. This figure reached hundreds in the most active provinces, such as İzmir, Balıkesir, and Trabzon. Members of parliament delivered most reported lectures, and the telegram format did not allow for building on the content of the lectures.<sup>19</sup> The level of detail also increased in other provinces that introduced newspaper clippings, photographs, poems, and speech transcriptions in their reports. Amasya, for instance, produced a relatively small number (25) of documents between 1935 and 1941. Still, these documents were more detailed: each report summarized the content of the lectures and gave some information on the audience.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Correspondence about the lectures delivered in Bitlis, 1940-1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1008-889-1.

<sup>20</sup> “Hatibin sözleri sık sık alkışlanarak halkın kalbinde doğan vatan ve istiklal aşklarını izhara vesile olmuştur.” From Amasya CHP administrative committee to the CHP General Secretary, 25 March 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 1007 - 886 - 1.



The party faced challenges in organizing itself in certain provinces. The map above shows the number of documents sent as lecture reports from each province between 1936 and 1942. Some provinces, such as Istanbul, Ankara, and Konya, did not appear in the party archives, but this did not necessarily mean they were inactive. In fact, Istanbul, Ankara, and Konya were highly active. However, there was a significant difference in the number of documents from each province. İzmir, Balıkesir, Aydın, Denizli, Mersin, Seyhan, Zonguldak, Samsun, and Trabzon had a high number of lecture reports. In contrast, Ağrı, Van, Bitlis, Muş, Artvin, Rize, Kars, Niğde, Kütahya, and Manisa had very few reports sent to the CHP General Secretary.

The data on the lecture reports is incomplete, covering only some provinces according to the constantly changing administrative divisions of 1930s Turkey. Despite this, the reports reveal a significant discrepancy between the East and West. There were notably active People's Houses in the Mediterranean regions (Seyhan, Mersin) and the Black Sea regions (Samsun, Trabzon, and Zonguldak). This disparity is linked to the conflict and neglect towards the Kurdish populations in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia. Party correspondence often described the organization in these predominantly Kurdish regions as “non-existent” or “weak.” This situation persisted into the 1940s. For example, in 1941, the party's correspondence described its organization in Elaziğ as “non-existent.”

The party inspectors sent from the “center” in Ankara and the People's Preachers themselves observed these inconsistencies. Cemal Gökçe, a teacher chosen as a People's Preacher in Edirne in 1938, mentioned the “specific characteristics of the region” when writing about his experience in Diyarbakir in his application letter submitted in 1950.

During the three years I served as a director in Diyarbakır, together with my teacher colleagues, we created lively activities at the local People's House. In 1933, under my leadership and with the participation of the People's House president, we organized a series of lectures considering the particular characteristics of the area.<sup>21</sup>

Since Gökçe traveled among Gümüşhane, Kastamonu, Sivas, Diyarbakır, Ankara, and Edirne throughout his career, we can infer that the "particular characteristics" referred to Kurdish identity and indicated the need for special attention in this area.

The need for special attention was not limited to the Kurdish-majority regions, however. A region's linguistic and religious composition was crucial in shaping the party inspectors' perception of local issues. In an inspection report by the former People's House director in Gaziantep, Ömer Asım Aksoy compared the activities of the party organization and the People's House in Mersin with those in his hometown, Gaziantep. He stated that "the people of Mersin had a weaker connection to the party than Gaziantep." The inspector had asked a shopkeeper in the city's market about the party, and the shopkeeper could not say where the building was without checking with one of his neighbors. For the inspector, this "weakness" and indifference towards the party structures in the city was linked to the "mixture of the population."<sup>22</sup>

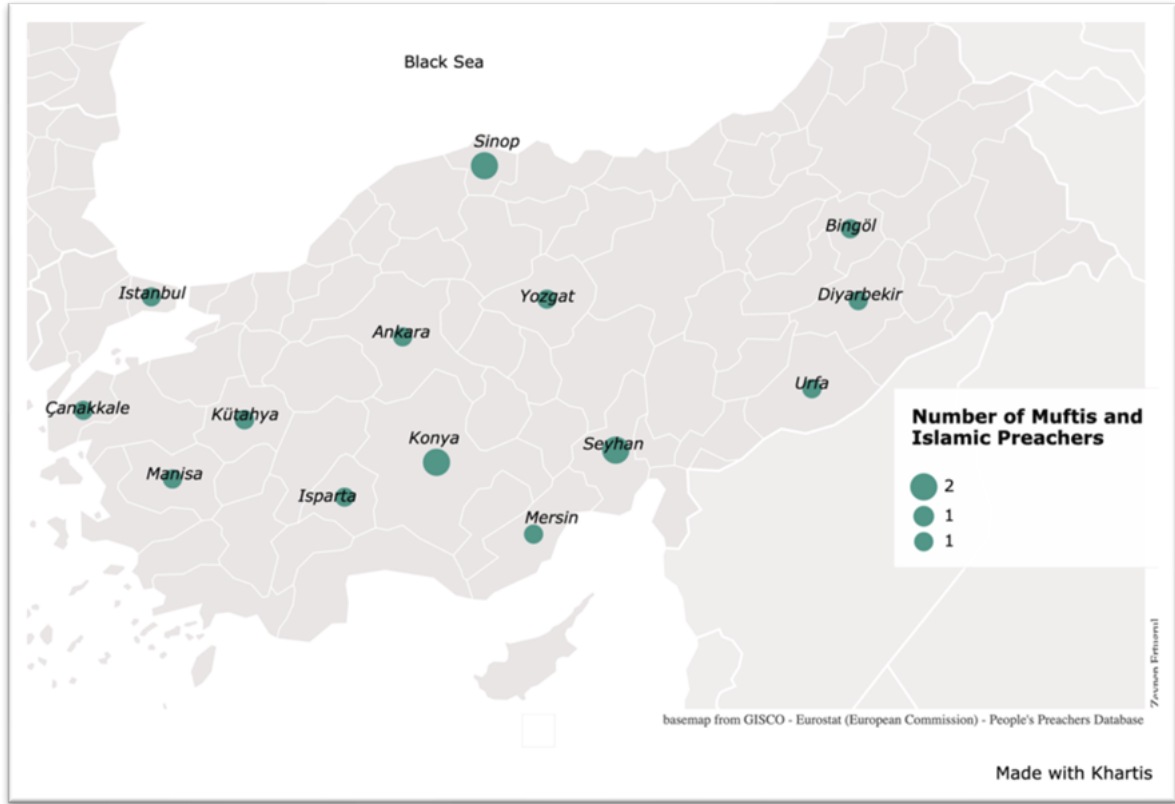
The party's difficulties in organizing in some provinces also impacted the type of people who worked for the party's local organization. For instance, in Kars, the provincial management board of the CHP was composed of men who had been active on the Caucasian front. While dedicated members of the party at the local level, these individuals were kept at arm's length from Ankara. Among them were two deputies of the first Grand National Assembly convened in Ankara at the outset of the national struggle. However, throughout the 1930s, despite their efforts to join the parliamentarians in Ankara, they found themselves

---

<sup>21</sup> "Diyarbakır da müdür olarak bulunduğum üç yıl içinde muallim arkadaşlarımla birlikte ora Halkevinde canlı bir faaliyet yarattık. 933 de başkanlığım altında Halkevi reisimin de iştirakiyle muhitin hususiyeti göz önüne alınarak bir konferanslar serisi tertip ettik." Cemal Gökçe's application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

<sup>22</sup> "Mersinde halkın parti ile alakasını Gaziantep'tekine göre çok zaif buldum. Bunda Mersin ahalisinin çok karışık bir kütle olmasının tesiri de çoktur. Çarşıda bir dükkancıya partinin nerede olduğunu sormuştum, kendisine pek uzak olmadığı halde komşusundan tahkik etmeden kati bir şey söyleyemedi." Ömer Asım Aksoy to the CHP General Secretary, 10 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-896-1.

sidelined from the party’s management board in Kars. This was likely due to suspicion towards these individuals based on their previous allegiance to the former Unionists, a concern Mustafa Kemal harbored. Yet, their retention in significant local party positions also held significance.

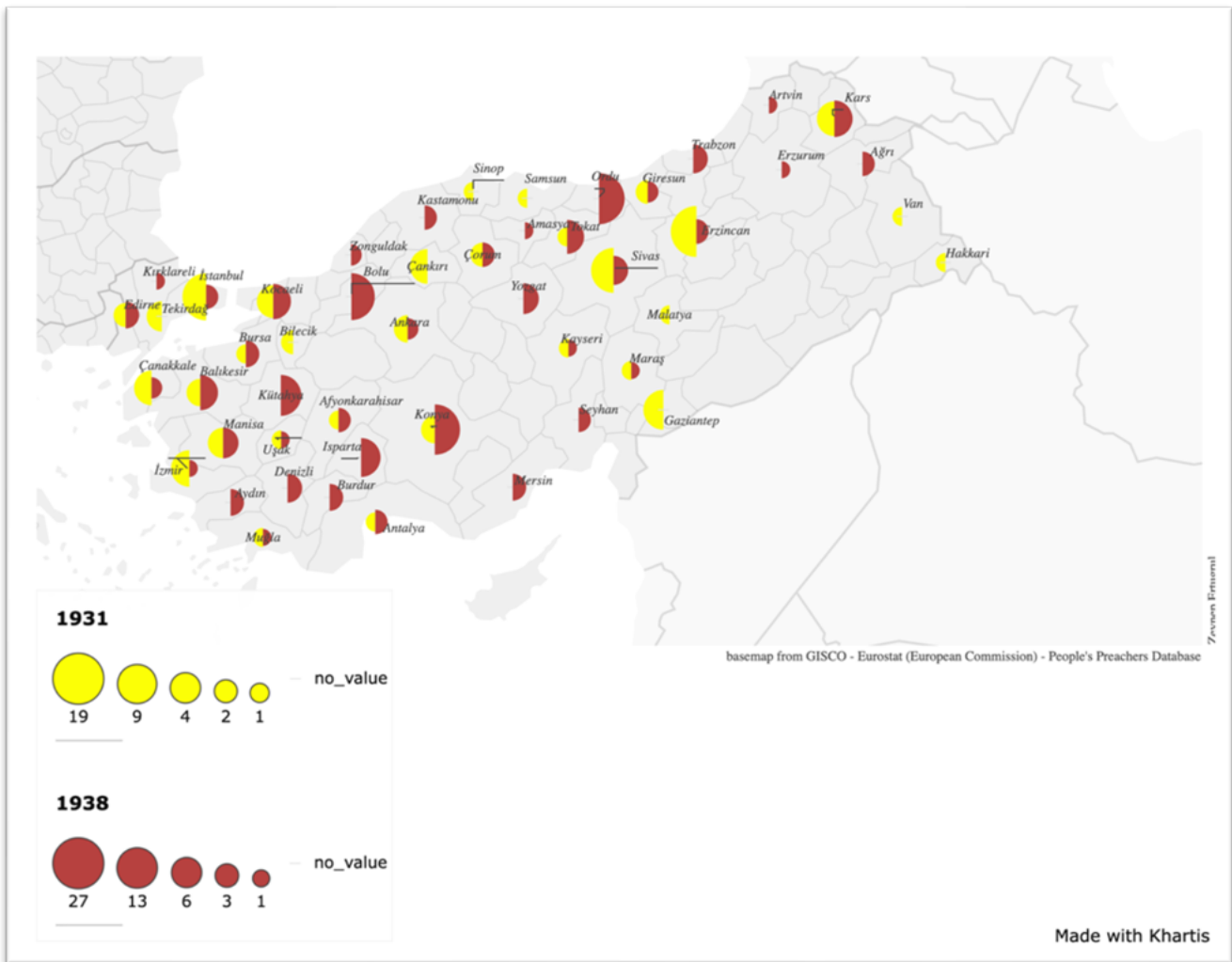


Map 5. Muftis and Islamic Preachers among People’s Preachers (1931-1938)

In the context of state-led efforts to secularize society, it seemed contradictory that Islamic preachers and muftis were included in the People’s Preachers’ lists. These additions could be linked to the difficulty of finding “enlightened” individuals in each community willing to work for the party. However, there was no significant difference between regions when it came to adding Islamic dignitaries to the People’s Preachers’ lists. We found several Islamic dignitaries in Konya, Seyhan, Sinop, Çanakkale, Diyarbakır, and many other provinces (See Map 5).

Nevertheless, the distribution of the local economic and political elites, including farmers, merchants, landowners, and those identified by name, locality, or directly as *eşraf* (notables), showed significant differences between regions. Manisa, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, İstanbul, Kocaeli, and Tekirdağ had a constant presence of the economic provincial elites, while the

same people were notably absent in most provinces in Kurdistan (Diyarbakır, Muş, Bitlis, Siirt). While there seems to be a sharp decrease in the number of local economic elites in Gaziantep, Malatya, Samsun, Sinop, Van, and Hakkari, this was potentially due to the Surname Law and the decline of the use of honorary titles such as *eşraf* in those years. As shown in [Chapter 7](#), many provincial elites and notables were identified in multiple ways, and the standardization of patronymic surnames after 1934 made the provincial power-holding family names difficult to discern (See Map 5).



**Map 6. Landowners, merchants, notables among the People's Preachers (1931-1938)**

Yet, these shortfalls are not only a sign of weakness of the “center.” Bearing in mind that the republican state was still in its early years, these reports are rather indicative of the larger project of the CHP regime: building a new, never-before-seen solid state pervading its territories not simply in terms of administration but also of political mobilization. In the press, reports about the opening or the expansion of a People’s House appear in the same issue (or around the same time) as articles celebrating the construction of roads, bridges, railways (less frequently), and power plants. Expanding infrastructure and expanding People’s Houses were two sides of the same coin: an ongoing effort to tighten up the bonds between the regime and its population. The value of this coin was to be frequently reminded, explained, and justified by the People’s Preaches, relying on the already mentioned “power of the spoken word.”

Several important celebrations, such as the Language Reforms of 1934 and 1936, were organized synchronously in each province but were not observed in other provinces. Despite the local People’s House being highly active between 1936 and 1939, Elazığ did not send a list of preachers in 1931 or 1938. The eastern provinces, where most of the post-war population was Kurdish, were less active than others. Istanbul, partly due to its large population as the country’s biggest city, selected more preachers than any other province. In the Black Sea region, Samsun; in Central Anatolia, Konya; and in the Aegean region, İzmir and Manisa were the provinces with the largest number of People’s Preachers selected in both years. While Erzincan in Eastern Anatolia selected as many preachers as Konya, its neighbor Elâziz/Elazığ had none.

At the provincial level, some districts were less active than others. Urfa doubled the number of preachers selected between 1931 and 1938. Nevertheless, Urfa’s CHP Provincial Administrative Committee noted in 1938 that “there were no People’s Preachers in the districts of Suruç, Viranşehir, Yaylak, and Hilvan.”<sup>23</sup> People’s Houses themselves also did not function as desired. In 1939, the party inspectors reported that the Elazığ People’s House functioned properly for a while but then passed into a period of silence. This was caused by the makeup of the members of the People’s Houses in general. Most members were civil servants, and

---

<sup>23</sup> “Şuruç, Viranşehir, Yaylak ve Hilvan kazalarında halk hatipleri bulunmadığını arz ederim.” From CHP Provincial Administrative committee in Urfa to the CHP General Secretary, 26 October 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

every time an active member was appointed to another region and left the city, there was a lack of activity at the People's House.<sup>24</sup>

In provinces where the party organization was weak, serial lectures ordered by the party leadership were delivered by civil servants working in the province under the directive of the provincial governor or the General Inspector. Since this method was used less often and the lecturers were trained for the pedagogic mission envisioned by the party, the results could be counterproductive. Elazığ was a significant case in this regard. A lecture on the opening of a public hospital specializing in leprosy was announced by a "health officer," who delivered a speech that frightened the local people, including educated people referred to as "*münevvers*" and among whom other civil servants were present.

The insufficiency of the infrastructure caused delays in the organization of the lectures. The order for the "Independence and Revolution" lectures was sent on 24 December 1935 and required that the lectures be organized before 20 February 1936.<sup>25</sup> This order was not respected since the General Secretary sent a reminder on 13 February 1936. This second circular also required sending telegrams to local and national newspapers and press agencies.<sup>26</sup> Most lectures were organized in March or early April.<sup>27</sup> A preacher from Kars, Zihni Orhon, who was supposed to travel to Erzurum for this occasion, delivered his lecture in mid-March 1936 because he had to "wait for the roads to be opened."<sup>28</sup> In 1937, K1ğı district (Bingöl) celebrated Language Day with a week's delay because they did not receive the order early enough. The circular letter left Ankara on 18 September 1937, yet it did not reach K1ğı 950 kilometers south-east until eight days later. Moreover, the makeup celebration in K1ğı was organized following the intervention of the party inspector and deputy of Erzincan Hikmet Işık, which gives the

---

<sup>24</sup> Başkanlık yapan valilerin elemanları daha kolay buldukları memur sınıfından seçmeleri yüzünden sık sık değişen azanın bıraktığı boşluklar. Report submitted to the CHP General Secretary, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.

<sup>25</sup> Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17

<sup>26</sup> İnkılap ve İstiklal konularına dair konferans vermek üzere Parti adına gönderilen arkadaşların konferanslarını verdiklerini ve orada kaç kişi hazır bulunduğunu ve yaptığı fayda ve tesirleri yerli gazetelerle Ankara ve İstanbul gazetelerine ve ajanslara bildirmenizi rica ederim. Circular from CHP general secretary, Recep Peker, 13 February 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-12.

<sup>27</sup> Zihni Orhon's Independence and Revolution speech was delivered on 13 and 16 March 1936, Report, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>28</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and Zihni Orhon, 24- 26 February 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

impression that it was not a matter of communicational infrastructure but of an insufficiently organized party in the district.<sup>29</sup>

These problems were not limited to the early years of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses. They persisted throughout the 1930s and until the end of the lifetime of these organizations. Despite several reminders, the Party General Secretary solicited the Edirne People's House administration in March 1940 on their lack of response concerning the organization of the lectures.<sup>30</sup> The delays were widespread in most provinces. However, they were exacerbated in regions where the party was ailing due to geographical distance and weakness of the party organization.

The discrepancies between regions were also reflected in the type and number of documents produced in each province, district, or subdistrict. Kars, for instance, was situated one thousand kilometers east of Ankara and was underrepresented in the People's Preachers Organization paper trail. Kars sent brief telegrams instead of long reports with considerable delay. The head of the Kars People's House, Hüseyin Talınlı, talked about the "rush" of the "crowds" and even people from surrounding villages attending the lecture.<sup>31</sup> Still, no speech transcription was included in the report. A couple of months after the "Independence and Revolution" lectures, the People's Houses organized one of the most spectacular People's Houses celebrations of the decade regarding "archival mobilization."<sup>32</sup>

Language Day (*Dil Bayramları*) was celebrated for four days, synchronically in around sixty provinces in August 1936. In total, one hundred and fifty-two reports were produced.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> From the CHP section in Kığı (Bingöl) to the CHP General Secretary, 3 October 1937, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1172-116-2.

<sup>30</sup> "Mesela Halkevinize bağlı Üniversite profesörlerine verdirtmek istediğimiz konferansların mevzularını tayin etmeniz hakkındaki yazımıza bir çok da tekitlere rağmen cevap vermediniz." From CHP General Secretary to the Edirne People's House, 20 March 1940, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

<sup>31</sup> "İlimize gelen Erzurum CHP başkanı general Osman Koptagel bugün saat 14/30 da sinema salonunda büyük bir kalabalık huzurunda inkılap konuları üzerine ilk konferanslarını verebilen Halk fazla rağbet göstermekle beraber köylerden dahi birçok yurttaşlar gelmişlerdi. İkinci konferanslarını yarın vereceklerini saygılarımla arz ederim." Telegram from Hüseyin Talınlı to the CHP General Secretary, 19 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>32</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, "Dil Bayramı. Une lecture somatique de la fête politique dans la Turquie du parti unique," in *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman et en Turquie. Etudes réunies pour François Georgeon*, ed. Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar (Paris, Louvain, Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 508.

<sup>33</sup> Zeynep Ertugrul, "L'histoire littéraire en train de se faire. La littérature comme thématique dans les Fêtes de la langue (1934-1948)," 38.

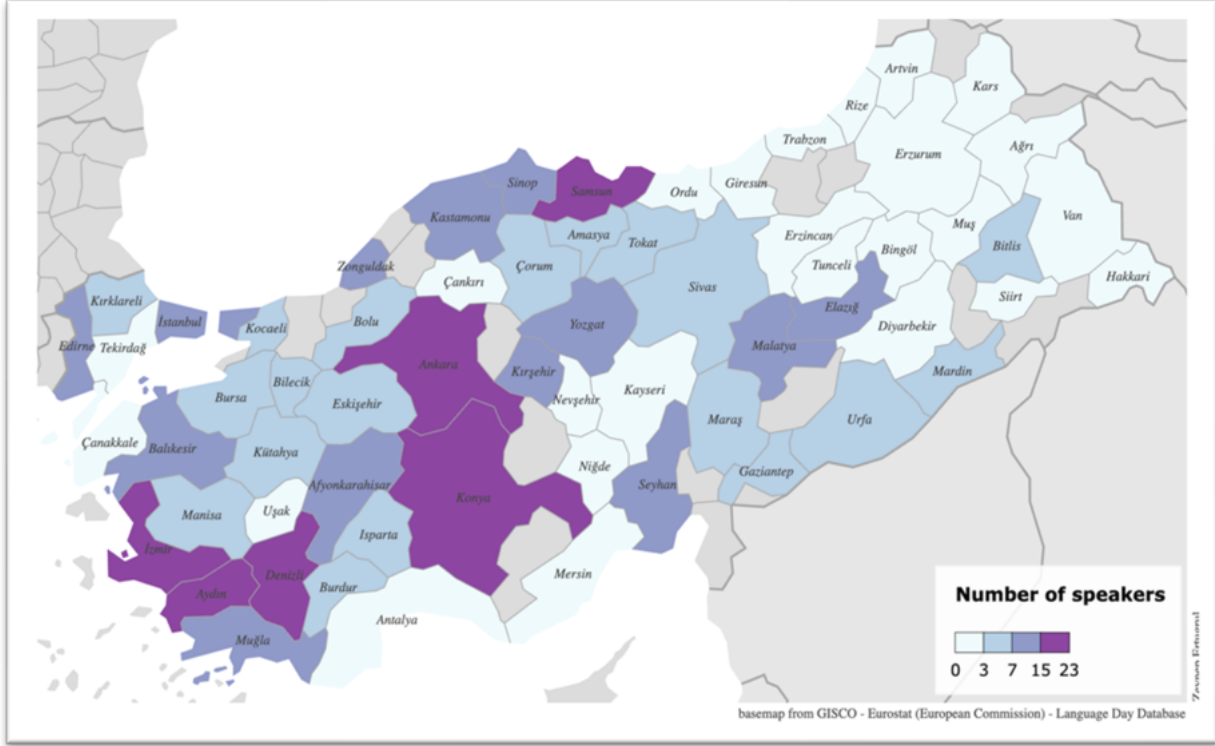
Many provinces sent dozens of pages of celebration reports, including speech transcriptions; some remained completely silent. In 1936, Ordu, Artvin, Rize, Ağrı, Van, Bingöl, and Siirt submitted nothing to the party General Secretary. The governor and party provincial director of Kars sent a vague and stale message to the CHP General Secretary.<sup>34</sup> When the Kığı district in Bingöl organized its makeup celebration (Language Day) in October 1937, the included speech transcription was considerably shorter than the others (half a page). The CHP General Secretary ordered provincial sections and the People's Houses to organize another lecture series in March 1941 to discuss the ongoing war. While many other provinces sent detailed reports, including speech transcriptions, Kars sent a couple of telegrams summarizing the events. All in all, Kars sent only three speech transcriptions to the party's General Secretary in

---

<sup>34</sup> "24 Ağustos Üçüncü Türk Dil Kurultayının açılışı münasebetile bütün kazalarda ve vilâyet merkezinde törenler yapılarak mevcut kurumlar tarafından kurultay Başkanlığı kutlulanmış ve kurultayın önemi hakkında söylev ve konferanslar verilerek vilâyet gazetesinde neşriyatlar yapıldığını arz eder, saygılarımı sunarım." Letter signed by the CHP Kars provincial director and governor, Ahmet Cevdet Eroğlu, 1 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1168-104-1.



almost twenty years (1931-1950).<sup>35</sup> The regions where the party organization was weak sent more vague and shorter reports and privileged telegrams instead of letters.



Map 7. Number of speakers during Language Day celebrations in 1936

The regional organizational discrepancies reflected the party's larger problem in its provincial sections. The party did not have equal control over every province in Turkey and lacked the overall interest of local populations in peripheral areas. Mediterranean regions were relatively under control; the party organization produced more satisfactory reports from these regions.<sup>36</sup> The party's provincial and district organizations only formally existed or were non-existent, especially in Eastern and Northern Anatolia and mainly Kurdish provinces.<sup>37</sup> For instance, a former People's House member from Diyarbakır boasted about acting in accordance

<sup>35</sup> File concerning the lectures organized in the province of Kars, 1930-1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>36</sup> Reports from Denizli, İzmir, Balıkesir, and Aydın are provinces with satisfactory reports. The report from Denizli, for instance, simply states that the cultural sections of the Party "work well." Mazhar Müfit Kansu, Report on Denizli, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>37</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi*, vol. II (Istanbul: İletişim, 1996), 55.

with the “specificity of the region.”<sup>38</sup> Other former People’s House members claimed they were not formally enrolled in the party because “there was no party organization in Diyarbakır.”<sup>39</sup> The inspectors of the party often reported problems concerning Kurdish – and formerly Armenian – areas they generically called “the East” (*Doğu*).<sup>40</sup> For instance, reports from the province of Erzurum denounced the low percentage of individuals joining the party compared to the province’s overall population (under 3%), the lack of women among party members, and “duality among the local population.”<sup>41</sup> Another parliamentary candidate from Erzurum, Şükrü Koçak, informed the party general secretary that no one had stepped foot in the party headquarters for a year.

The party [headquarters] are situated in a *medrese* room. Everything sent to the party headquarters is stacked there with dust on it. The last issue of the official gazette in the bureau is from 26 July 1934. This means that the door of the party headquarters had yet to be opened.<sup>42</sup>

Party control over the Kurdish provinces in Eastern Anatolia was on the rocks. In 1942, an inspection report from Elazığ mentioned the “impossibility of organizing the party” in the region.<sup>43</sup> A report from Lice (Diyarbakır) stated that the “government house is in bad condition. In Lice, there is not even a government house.”<sup>44</sup> Concerning Kurdish provinces, the reports

---

<sup>38</sup> Diyarbakır da müdür olarak bulunduğum üç yıl içinde muallim arkadaşlarımla birlikte ora Halkevinde canlı bir faaliyet yarattık. 933 de başkanlığım altında Halkevi reisinin de iştirakiyle muhitin hususiyeti göz önüne alınarak bir konferanslar serisi tertip ettik. Cemal Gökçe’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

<sup>39</sup> “Diyarbakırda parti teşkilâtı olmadığından halkevinde kayıtlıdır.” Application files from Diyarbakır, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/297-1198-3.

<sup>40</sup> An example is Cihad Baban’s article in a local newspaper published in Erzurum and called “Doğu” (The East) on the necessity of “cultural mobilization” in the East. See: Cihad Baban, “Doğuda Cezri Bir Kültür Seferberliği Lazımdır,” *Doğu* (Erzurum), 30-11-1937.

<sup>41</sup> “İlin 8426 Parti üyesi var. Nüfusa nisbeti %3 bile değil. Parti üyesi arasında kadın yok. Üyelerin partiye maddi bağları yoktur. (...) Hasankale başkanı Zakir hakkında dedikodular var. Parti ile tüze arası açık. Partiyle ilçebay birlik. İşyarlar arasında ikilik var. Parti islahı muhtaç. Parti başkanıyla ilçebay müstantiği dövmüşler. Parti başkanı uray başkanıdır. Urayda yolsuz harcamalar olduğu söyleniyor. Osman Koptagel bu işe el koydu.” Report of Şükrü Koçak on the situation in Erzurum before the elections, 1935. BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1; “Burası da karışık, halk arasında ikilik var.” BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>42</sup> “Parti bir medrese odasında. Oraya gönderilen şeylerin yığın halinde ve üzerleri tozlu durduğu ve son konan resmî gazetenin 934 temmuzunun 26sına ait olduğuna göre Parti kapısının bir seneden beri açılmamış olduğunu gösteriyor.” Report of Şükrü Koçak on the situation in Erzurum before the elections, 1935. BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>43</sup> Seçim dairemde parti teşkilatı yapılamadığı için yurttaşlarım bu senede bu nimete mazhar olmaları temennisini tekrar ettiler. Inspection reports from Elazığ, 8 December 1942, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/270-1076-1.

<sup>44</sup> “Hükümet kurağları hiç eyi değildir. (Lice) de hükümet kurağı da yoktur.” Report on Lice (Diyarbakır), 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

reproduced the common assumptions of the backwardness of the population: the common folk are “ignorant” and do not recognize the authority other than the “feudal chiefs,” which in turn were successfully “shattered” due to the government’s efforts, while not being “completely removed.”<sup>45</sup> The reporter recognized the CHP’s failure to “develop” the province: “We cannot expect any development [from the region] while the folk remain ignorant and feudal chiefs own everything.”<sup>46</sup> In Kars, inspection reports were also negative overall, except for those of its central district. In 1938, Göle did not organize regular meetings.<sup>47</sup> Ardahan’s party director resigned from his post, which caused a quasi-lack of activity in the party’s administration.<sup>48</sup> Çıldır’s party organization was sluggish.<sup>49</sup> In Arpaçay, the party inspector did not even “come across the party organization.”<sup>50</sup> In 1939, the party inspector suggested appointing an “influential individual” such as the “governor, a commandant, or a deputy” to the People’s House direction to “energize” the Elazığ People’s Houses.<sup>51</sup> Civil servants were appointed to the “Eastern provinces” as part of their obligatory duties, but they did not want to stay longer than the mandatory period. Still, in Elazığ, inspection reports wrote about underqualified and inexperienced district governors because of this tendency.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> “Toprak beylerindir. Köylü onu tanır. Her şey beyindir. Beylerin kuvvetleri kırılmışsa da tamamen kalkmamıştır. “Report on Lice (Diyarbakır) for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>46</sup> “Diyarbakırda derebeylik yaşamaktadır. Halk cahil bütün varlıklara da beyler sahip iken kalkınması da beklenemez.” Huriye Öniz, Kâzım Sevüktekin, Rüştü Bekit, Report on Diyarbakır for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>47</sup> Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, “Toplanmalar düzgün değil.” 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>48</sup> “Başkan çekilmiş. Çalışma yok gibi Toplanılıyor. Parti halk ile alakadar değil.” 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>49</sup> Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, “Teşkilat cansız. Toplanma yok. Dosyalar intizamsız. Hesaplar yeni tanzim edilmekte. Umumi alakasızlık görülmektedir.” 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>50</sup> “Teşkilata tesadüf edilmemiş.” Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>51</sup> “Elazığ Halkevinin her komitesinde faaliyet ve hareket uyandırmak maksadiyle memleket münevver ve gençliğinin iştirakiyle muhtelif içtimalar yaptık. Aza ile bilhassa devam ve enerji hususunda hasbihallerde bulunduk. Aldığım netice şu oldu: Başımızda vali, kumandan, mebus gibi nafiz bir şahsiyetin bulunması lazımdır. Bu olmayınca işler yürümez.” Report submitted to the CHP General Secretary, 4 July 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.

<sup>52</sup> “Dahiliye vekâleti teşkilat kanununda bilhassa böyle hücre kazalarda en kudretli idare amirlerinin uzun müddet kalabilmeleri ve idealist, olgun kaymakamlar gönderilmesi esbabının teminine gayret olunacağını ümit ederim. Eski devirlerin daha çok ihmaline uğrayan bu mıntıkanın artık derdine devasaz olmak zamanı gelmiştir. Buralarda kalkınma, terakki ancak bu kıratıda faal tecrübeli amirlerin fasılasız hizmetleriyle elde edilecektir.” Inspection report from Elazığ, 11 November 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/645-136-1.

Some party members qualified the issue as the “Kurdish problem.” The party was weak because of competing nationalist movements. Nakiye Elgün, a People’s Preacher and candidate for the 8 February 1935 parliamentary elections raised the famous “Kurdish problem” and encouraged the party to “give importance” to the problem and “prohibit putting forward the Kurdishness.”<sup>53</sup> Along with mentioning national resistance movements organized often by non-Turkish and/or non-Sunni-Muslim citizens of the Republic of Turkey, one of the main ways of “putting forward” otherness was to speak in a different tongue than Turkish. The party’s inspectors used Turcophony to measure the regime’s success.<sup>54</sup> As a result, the “folk” who “do not speak any other language than Kurdish” or the Georgians “conserving their language” were raised as problems in various provinces.<sup>55</sup> Settling Turkish-speaking migrants to Kurdish, Armenian, or Arabic-speaking regions was among the solutions put forward by the party inspectors.<sup>56</sup> In rare cases, such as the cosmopolitan quarter of Pera in Istanbul, the People’s Houses were used to “engrain the Turkish culture to the non-Turks.”<sup>57</sup>

The party’s weakness in some provinces created a workforce problem. The Houses employed some people to maintain the premises and engaged civil servants as volunteers. Yet, it was often insufficient. In Istanbul, the party inspectors complained harshly about opening many People’s Houses without considering the “preparation of the employees, the budget” and “measuring the suitability of the milieu.”<sup>58</sup> To attract more individuals to participate in the Houses’ activities, the inspectors advised that the governor “make more of an effort to

---

<sup>53</sup> “Erzurumda kürtlük meselesi her zaman ileri sürüldüğünden buna önem verilmesi ve meni lâzımdır. Nakiye Elgün, Report on Erzurum for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>54</sup> “Türkçe konuşmayı yaymak önemlidir.” Hilmi Çoruk, Report on Mardin for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>55</sup> “İl ve ilçeler merkezlerinden başka yerlerde halk kürtçeden başka dil bilmez.” Report on Diyarbakır written by Huriye Öniz, Kâzım Sevüktekin, Rüştü Bekit, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1. “Gürcüler dillerini muhafaza ediyorlar.” Report of Selim Sırrı Tarcan, Ordu, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>56</sup> “Türkçe konuşmak yönünden özensizlik vardır. Buna önem verilmesi ve bu topraklara türkçe konuşan göçmenler yerleştirilmesi.” Edip Ergin, Report on Mardin, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>57</sup> “Beyoğlu Halkevi: Türk olmayanlara türk kültürünü aşlamak ergisiyle çalışıyormuş.” Report on İstanbul, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>58</sup> “Eleman hazırlanmadan, para işi göz önüne getirilmeden, çevrenin elverişi tartılmadan ve dileği incelenmeden Halkevi açmaktan beklenen faydeler istenildiği gibi elde edilmemektedir. Bunu yazmayı da ödev bildik.” Dr. General Hakkı Şinasi, Selah Cimcoz, Sadettin Uraz, Yaşar Yazıcı, Ali Barlas, General Şükrü Gökberk, Hamdi Gürsoy, Fakihe Öymen, Ziya Karamürsel, Report on İstanbul for the V. Bureau, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

encourage those who had access to higher education” to attend since the People’s Houses aimed to reach educated elites.

The ‘problematic’ regions, mostly but not exclusively Kurdish, were ruled by a state of exception called “General Inspectorates“ (*Umumî Müfettişlikler*) starting in 1927.<sup>59</sup> The Inspector-General acted as the governor of a grouping of administrative units with little respect for the separation of powers. The Inspectorates were helpful for the single-party regime in repressing the revolts and implementing violent population displacement and massacre policies such as that of Dersim (1937-1938) that took place under the 4th General Inspectorate.<sup>60</sup> The control mechanism of the Party General Secretary over the preachers’ activities was reinforced and doubled by the provincial governors and the local commandership.<sup>61</sup>

One of the party’s provincial sections’ main challenges was finding new members. The inspector of Samsun reported that the provincial directorate overstated the number of new party members by enrolling individuals who did not even formally ask to be registered. Hence, they did not follow the procedure to become party members. In the district of Vezirköprü in Samsun, among 4900 official members, only 300 followed the procedure. Therefore, only a small percentage was “aware of their membership,” and some “claimed membership while they did not pay the monthly installments.”<sup>62</sup> The issue of ‘fake’ party or House members was repeated by relying on euphemisms without assuming the illicitness of registering people without their knowledge and consent. In Tokat, it was reported that the “party members were registered without any concern over the conditions written in bylaws.”<sup>63</sup> In 1950, a People’s House member talked about the party organization in Uşak as “non-existent” (*ismi mevcut kendisi*

---

<sup>59</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Umumî Müfettişlikler: 1927 - 1952*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003).

<sup>60</sup> Kieser, “Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938.”

<sup>61</sup> “Malumaten CHP Genel Sekreterliğine ve 9/2/39 tarih ve mektupçuluk kalemi 734/80 sayılı yazıya cevaben Tunceli Vali ve Kumandanlığına arz edilmiştir.” From the Hozat District Governor and the Director of the People’s House to the CHP General Secretary, 23 February 1939, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1013-909-1.

<sup>62</sup> “İlin üye sayısı 40000 kişi gibi önemli bir kabarık gösteriyorsa da birçok üyelerin kaydı tüzük yolu ile yapılmamış dolayısıyla birçok üyeler yüklenlerini vermemekte ve istenilen ilgiyi gösterememektedir. Mesela Vezirköprüde 4900 üyeden ancak 300 kadarı teklif varakası vermiştir. Diğerleri gelişi güzel üye kaydedilmişlerdir. Bundan dolayı birçok üyeler üyeliklerinden haberleri olmadığı gibi birçokları da üyelikten çıkarıldıkları halde üyeyim iddiasındadırlar.” Meliha Ulaş, Etem Tuncel, Dr. Asım Sirel, Zühtü Durukan, Mehmet Güneşdoğdu, Ruşeni Barkın, and Ali Tunakı, Report on Samsun, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

<sup>63</sup> “Parti üyeleri tüzükte yazılı şartlara bakılmadan gelişi güzel kaydedilmiştir.” Sırrı İçöz, Emin Duraman, Ömer Evcı, Report on Tokat, 1935, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/725-484-1.

*olmayan partiyi*). The party formally existed but did not have the infrastructure and human resources necessary to function.<sup>64</sup>

As a result, the party hired preachers from whoever was available and willing to act as local spokespeople in provinces where the party organization was weak or non-existent. Despite the membership requirement to become a People's Preacher and despite the illegality of enrolling in a political party as a civil servant, most People's Preachers were civil servants. The CHP provincials did not respect the party's internal regulations or the laws concerning state employees while filling out reports required by the Party's General Secretary. Because of low membership rates and a weak party organization in some provinces, employees of the provincial administration, such as governors, district governors, or deputy lieutenant governors, acted as de facto People's Preachers. Lieutenant General Abdullah Alpdoğan, for instance, was the governor of the IV. General Inspectorate, including Tunceli (formerly Dersim), Bingöl, and Elazığ in 1936. Alpdoğan took the stage in political celebrations.<sup>65</sup> In many districts of Elazığ impacted by the Dersim Massacre between 1937 and 1938, such as Pertek, Hozat, and Çemişgezek, most speakers came from the military or were high-ranking local administrators. In 1939, the General Secretary of Hozat's District Governorship sent a list of lectures delivered between March and June 1939 to the CHP General Secretary. Still, in 1941, "Global Circumstances" (*Dünya Ahvali*) lectures were mostly delivered by provincial administrators such as governors, district governors, or subdistrict governors, as seen in the following table.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> "En son bulunduğum Eşme kazasında ismi mevcut hiç kendisi olmıyan partiyi salon ve idare odası açmak ve aylarca yalnız parti başkanıyla o salonu bekleyerek envai propaganda yaparak radyolar te'min ve ziyafetler çekerek halkı ısındırdım. Partinin maddeten mevcudiyetini tanıttım. Evvelleri hiç gelmiyen halk şimdi her gece salonda oturacak yer bulamıyacak kadar geliyor." Ali Nusret Türker's application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>65</sup> Correspondence between Elazığ People's House and the CHP General Secretary, 7 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

<sup>66</sup> Correspondence from Pertek People's House to the CHP General Secretary, 14 April 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1013-909-1. The list of the speakers included the district governor (kaymakam) Hamdi Onay, sub-district governor Haki Akkaynak (nahiye müdürü), a teacher named Kadri Onur, another sub-district governor B. Kaleli.

**Table 6. Lectures at the Hozat People's House (March-May 1939), BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1013-909-1.**

Date	Speaker	Topic
1 March 1939	Government doctor Cemal Erkan	Human Diseases
8 March 1939	District Governor Turgut Başkaya	The amelioration and benefits of the means of transportation
15 March 1939	First Lieutenant ( <i>Üsteğmen</i> ) Fuat İnal	Horseback Riding
22 March 1939	First Lieutenant Ahmet Çoşkun	On Sports and Skiing
29 March 1939	Government doctor Cemal Erkan	On Childcare
5 April 1939	District Governor Turgut Başkaya	Railways and History and Activities of Railways in Turkey
12 April 1939	Pharmacist First Lieutenant Ekrem	On the Destruction of the Poisonous Gases
19 April 1939	Public Prosecutor Müfit Sezer	Capitulations
26 April 1939	Government doctor Cemal Erkan	Malaria Treatment
3 May 1939	District Governor Turgut Başkaya	On Banks
10 May 1939	Second Lieutenant Seyfi Önür	Protection against Aerial Attacks
17 May 1939	District Governor Turgut Başkaya	On Village Law
24 May 1939	Government doctor Cemal Erkan	On Ocular Diseases
31 May 1939	Public Prosecutor Müfit Sezer	On Crime

## 9.2. Corruption, Neglect, and Abuse at the People's Houses

---

Existing members of some provincial party organizations were deemed unqualified for their roles. Many reports complained about how individuals heading the party's local and cultural sections did not serve well, behaved improperly, or were corrupted.<sup>67</sup> In Van, for example, the telegram director had been made the director of a dysfunctional People's House.<sup>68</sup> The same was true in Trabzon; the inspector deemed the People's House was "weak" because of its director's lack of qualifications. He also advised that a "qualified individual" should head the House "with a salary if possible."<sup>69</sup> Remunerating officials of People's Houses for their service did not solve the problem. Despite receiving salaries from the party, many were still reported as not fulfilling their duties.

The question of remuneration is important when framing the relationship of the People's Preachers to the party they worked for. The circular and the directives illustrated above do not mention this issue of salaries or other types of remunerations. Only one document refers to a People's Preacher from İzmir: Mahmut Karındaş, appointed in May 1933 "for a salary of 80 liras." Karındaş took a fifteen-day leave to visit his family in Bursa in September 1934, but he did not return to his job and did not give any pretext for more than two months. Since he "was not seen at his duty" for a long time, the party hesitated to pay his salary and considered "ending his affiliation."<sup>70</sup> When the party's provincial section advised their superiors to stop

---

<sup>67</sup> "Halkevinin başkanı yok. Çalışılmıyor. Çevredeki elemanlardan faydalanılmıyor. Halkevinin düzeltilmesi." Bediz Aydılek, Report on Konya for the V. Bureau, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>68</sup> "Halkevi kapalıdır. Sebebi de hiç lâıyk olmadığı halde telgraf başdirektörü Onat'ın eski ilbay İbrahim Mesut tarafından ev başkanlığına getirilmiş olmasıdır. Yeni ilbayın ev işine önem vermesini kendisine söylemişler." Hakkı Urgan, İbrahim Arvas, Müniş Boya, Report on Van, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>69</sup> "Halkevi kuvvetli değildir. Başında bulunan zat bu işi başaramaz. İstenilen vasıfta bir arkadaşın bu işi başarabilmesi için mümkünse maaşlı olması." Seniha Hızal, Mitat Aydın, Report on Trabzon, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>70</sup> "Büronuz emrinde çalışan Karındaş Mahmut bey vazifesi başında görülmediğinden Teşrinisani 934 peşin maaşı verilememiştir. Mumaileyhin mezun olup olmadığı ve maaşı hakkında yapılacak malumat ve mütaleanın bildirilmesini rica ederim efendim." From the 8th Bureau to the 5th Bureau, 3 November 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/382-1617-2. "İnkılap esaslarını halka telkin maksadı ile büromuz emrine alınmış olan Karındaş Mahmut beyin bu hususta vücudundan istifade imkânı bulunmadığı tecrübe ile anlaşılmıştır. Bundan sonra kendisinin büro işlerinde çalışması lüzumu bildirilmişse de şimdiye kadar hiçbir zaman muntazam çalışmamıştır. Bundan iki ay evvel onbeş gün izin isteyerek merkezden ayrılmış ve şimdiye kadar vazifesine gelmediği gibi gelmemesi sebebini de bildirmemiştir. Büromuza hiçbir veçhile faydası olmıyan Karındaş Mahmut beyin büromuzdan alâkasının kesilmesine müsaade buyrulmasını reca eder, derin saygılarımı arz ederim efendim." From Denizli deputy B.V. to the CHP general secretary, 13 November 1914, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/382-167-2.



working with Karındaş, the leadership left them the choice.<sup>71</sup> The provincial section stopped working with Karındaş only to hire him again two years later at the İzmir International Fair (1936).<sup>72</sup> The Karındaş case shows the flexible attitude of the General Secretary when facing unexplained absences and irresponsible behavior of the party provincials. The forgetfulness of the provincials likely caused the party's leniency. Karındaş approached the party for a job two years after the events and presented himself as a People's Preacher to increase his credibility. Another possibility is that other forms of abusive behavior were considered more serious and already took considerable time from the General Secretary.

The abusive practices of local party members and state administrators exacerbated the qualification problem. Local party officials, including local administrators and elected officials, were often accused of corruption. Many mayors, provincial governors, district governors, and village headmen figured among the People's Preachers or within the party's provincial sections before 1931. In the 1935 reports produced in each province, many inspectors raised the issue of corrupt and abusive behavior of the party provincials. In Hasankale (Erzurum), Zaki, the director of the CHP district section, had a bad reputation. It is written that the "party headmen and the district governor beat up the prosecutor" and that the "municipality headed by the party director have corrupt expenses."<sup>73</sup> In the Develi district (Kayseri), the inspector observed a "standoff" (*soğukluk*) between party members.<sup>74</sup> The district governor of Ereğli (Konya) was criticized for acting in "illegitimate" ways, "abusing

---

<sup>71</sup> "İzin müddetini geçirip vazifesine devam etmediği büronuzca tasdik edilen Karındaş Mahmut beyin vücudundan istifade edilmemekte olduğu da bildirilmesine göre mumaileyhin istihdam edilip edilmemesi keyfiyeti büronuzun takdirine bağlıdır. Bu vaziyete göre maaşının itası veyahut hizmetine nihayet verilmesi icap ettiği takdirde büronuzca Kâtibiumumilik yüksek makamının müsaadesi alınarak büromuza mâlumat verilmesi ricasına takdim kılındı, efendim." From 11th Bureau to 5th Bureau, 6 November 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/382-167-2.

<sup>72</sup> "Sizden emir aldığından bahsle Nurkalem mümessili adı altında propağanda için buraya gelen Halk Hatiplerinden Mahmut Karındaşa fuarda işe yarar bir programla haline münasip işler verildiğini arzederim." From CHP İzmir provincial directorate to the CHP general secretary, 4 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/382-167-2.

<sup>73</sup> "Hasankale başkanı Zakir hakkında dedikodular var. Parti ile tüze arası açık, Parti ile ilçebay birlik, işyarlar arasında ikilik var. Parti ıslaha muhtaç. Parti başkanı ile ilçebay müstantığı dövmüşler. Parti başkanı uray başkanıdır. Urayda yolsuz harcamalar olduğu söyleniyor. Osman Koptagel bu işe el koymuş." Nakiye Elgün's report, Erzurum, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>74</sup> "Develide Parti arkadaşları arasında soğukluk var." Ahmet Hilmi Arga's Report, Kayseri, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

state authority” in his “personal ambitions” instead of “reinforcing” it.<sup>75</sup> Still, in 1939, the director of the People’s House in Iğdır was denounced for his “ill-treatment of the youth,” which disrupted the functioning of the People’s House “by keeping the youth at bay.”<sup>76</sup> As mentioned earlier, low-ranking civil servants, including tax collectors, also figured among the People’s Preachers. An inspector reported from Manisa on the necessity to “closely follow” the “ill-treatment and abuse of people” by the “small functionaries and tax collectors.”<sup>77</sup>

Reports about abusive behavior were mixed with those about the lack of qualification of People’s House members. Behçet Kemal Çağlar’s inspection report about the Edirne People’s House (1945) evaluated the director of the People’s House in 1945, Cemal Gökçe. Gökçe, who applied five years later for a seat at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, was evaluated by Çağlar as “hard of hearing and slow to think.” He criticized him for talking to other People’s House members, primarily teachers, “in a commanding manner” as if he was still at the high school.<sup>78</sup> According to the report, the People’s House director was unfit for his position, and the rest of the People’s House members were not actually from Edirne but civil servants working for the Education Ministry or General Inspectorate. Çağlar repeatedly reminded the party leadership to invest more in useful suggestions to incite the locals of Edirne to participate in People’s Houses activities.<sup>79</sup> Despite the difficulty in attracting “locals” to the People’s

---

<sup>75</sup> “Ereğli ilçebayının devlet otoritesini öne sürerek konuşmalarında gösterdiği fazla heyecan karşısında bulunulanları hislerine hakim olarak yaşamak istemesi. Parti başkanı da devlet otoritesini kuvvetlendirmeye değil kontrol etmek yetkisinde sanması. Ereğliyi boğucu ve nefes alınmaz bir yere çevirmiştir. Ereğli ilçebayına göre Ereğlide şahsi ihtiraslar, gayri meşru hareketler vardır. Doğru iş yapmak hesaplarına gelmiyor. Yönkurulda bulunan Fethi ve Bahri serbest fırkanın en kuvvetli adamları imişler.” Ahmet Hilmi Arga’s Report, Kayseri (Ereğli), BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>76</sup> “Bölgenin Kars vilayeti merkezinde çalışırken Iğdır kazası halk evimizin: Başkan Hüseyin Saydam’ın gençlere karşı takındığı fena tavrı hareket tesiri ile elemanlarından birçoklarını kaçırdığını ve bu arkadaşın halkevinin başında bulunduğu müddetçe esasen sekteye uğrayan mesasinin büsbütün duracağını ve beklenen faydaların teminine maddi imkan kalmayacağını haber almış ve bu haberi birbirini teyid eden rivayetler takip etmiştir.” 29 October 1939, From the Inspector of Çoruh region to the CHP General Secretary, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/942-653-1.

<sup>77</sup> “Küçük memurların, hele tahsildarların halka yaptıkları fena muamele ve suiistimal ehemmiyetle ve yakında takip edilmelidir.” Turgut Türkoğlu, Report on Manisa, 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/725-484-1.

<sup>78</sup> “Halkevi başkanı Lise müdürü Cemal Gökçe, gerçi ağır işitir ve yavaş düşünür bir adamdır, gerçi Halkevindeki çoğu öğretmen arkadaşına hala okulda imiş gibi emir verir tarzda konuşur fakat çalışmalara engel olmayacak ve merkezden tavsiye edilen Pratik programları hulusla gerçekleştirmeye çalışacak bir elemandır.” Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Edirne, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

<sup>79</sup> “Edirne Halkevi şubesinin başında olanlar öğretmenlerle genel müfettişlik memurlarıdır. Bunların içinde tesadüfen Edirneli olan bir iki kişi vardır. Bunların hiçbirini kırmadan hatta değiştirmeden Edirnelileri kendi

Houses, “civil servants and the enlightened” (*memurlar ve aydınlar*) remained the prioritized yet unreachable group for the Edirne People’s House in 1945.<sup>80</sup>

The main role of the People’s Preachers was to announce and explain government-led reforms, infrastructural projects, and measures to their audiences. However, the selected people were not always in agreement, competent, or well-intentioned enough to carry out these responsibilities. An interesting report from Elazığ showed that a civil servant, a doctor delivering a lecture about the recent opening of a leprosy hospital in the city, had the opposite impact because of his medical opinion. The regional inspector of Muş, Münir Soykan, informed the CHP General Secretary about such a case, noting that even the governor, the main counselor, and their friends—people often occupying posts among the People’s Preachers—exacerbated the situation by propagating erroneous information about the treatment of leprosy in the city.<sup>81</sup>

In response to this report, the inspector cautioned the party General Secretary about the dangers posed by these lectures and the potential for the party-mandated public speakers to misuse their roles for self-promotion. He also pointed out that this self-promotion was inherent

---

Halkevlerinin: şehirdeki her kurumdan fazla kendilerinin olması gereken bu kurumun kadrosuna almak gerekmektedir. Bu merkezce tavsiye edilerek değil, intihaplarda ve çalışmalarda el altından yapılacak mahalli telkinlerle sağlanacak bir iştir. Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Edirne, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

<sup>80</sup> “Büyüğünden küçüğüne kadar bütün memur ve aydınların alakasını iyice halkevine çekmek. Şahsi anlaşmazlıkları hatta intihap geçimsizliklerinin üstünde bir Halkevcilik ruhu olabileceğini akıllara getirmek.” Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Edirne, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.”

<sup>81</sup> “Elazığda cüzzam hastanesi yapılması tekerrür edip faaliyet başladığı zamanlarda burada bulunan cilt hastalıkları mütehassisi Hüsamettin (bu hastane yüzünden memleketin tehlikeye maruz kalacağı, marazın halka sirayetinin önlenemeyeceğini) ileri sürerek bir kısım münevverleri korkutmuş, hatta o zaman baş müşavir olan Saib Örgü ile valimiz Asım Türel de bu endişeyi uyandırmış çok hassas ve asabi olan arkadaşı nafia müdürü Ziveri de kendi yanlış fikrine faal bir propaganda yaptırmıştır. O sıralarda elazığa gelen içtimai muavenet müdürü doktor ekrem tok bu yersiz endişeyi teskin eylemiş olduğu halde vali asım türel elazığda verilen bir ziyafette sayın sıhhat vekilimiz doktor hulusi alataşa cüzzam hastanesi hakkında ileri sürülen fikirleri arzden kendini alamamış hulusi beyden de (bu fikirler eski ve demodedir) cevabını almış, Hüsamettin ile ziver de buradan gittiklerinden efkâr sükun bulmuş, olduğunu bir kerre öğrendim. Sami in arasında bulunarak dikkatle dinlediğim konferansta doktor rapıp iyice eyice hatırımda kaldığına göre (cüzzam hastalığının hastaların ifragatile de bulaşacağını fakat büyüklerimizin sirayeti önleyecek her türlü tedbiri aldıklarına şüphesi olmadığını söyleyerek evvelce tedavi edilemez zan edilen bu hastalığın bugün ilacı mevcut ve şifası mümkün bulunduğunu) ilave etti. İşbu beyanatta endişe uyandırmak değil tatminkar bir mana bulunduğu fikrindeyim. (Konferans vesilesile halka kendini tanıtmak için reklam yapmak) fikri de gayet varittir, zira her konferans verici muhitte zaruri olarak tanıtır, esasen bu gibi konferanslar talep üzerine verilmekte münevverlerimiz buna teşvik edilmektedir, vekaletin hassasiyeti yukarda arzettiğim geçmiş ve şimdi sükun bulmuş propagandanın bıraktığı izden olsa gerektir. Keyfiyeti arz eder sonsuz saygılarımı teyit ederim.” Regional Inspector of Muş and deputy of Antalya, Münir Soykan, 23 April 1941, Elazığ, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

in the nature of the position, something that the (Health) “Ministry” should have been vigilant about. In response, the secretary, citing the People’s House directives, contended that “excessive control could compromise scientific matters.” However, they also advised the People’s House administration to offer such lectures to specialists.

The delegation of health lectures to the control of the health director would lead to the delegation of agricultural lectures to the control of the agriculture director tomorrow, and the delegation of educational lectures to the control of the Education Director, and it is impossible to predict where this will begin or end. Scientific activities always suffer from excessive restrictions. We find the provisions of Articles 2 and 3 of the People’s House working regulations sufficient regarding lectures. If new provisions are necessary, which we do not see the need for at the moment, they can only be established through proper channels.<sup>82</sup>

This communication indicates that the CHP shifted its priorities by 1945 despite the diligence of its inspectors. Due to the emergence of partisan opposition and the formal end of the single-party era, they no longer wanted to oversee everything as before Mustafa Kemal’s death.

Beyond failing to convey the state’s reforms and development initiatives as intended and even producing contrary effects, the People’s Orators organized their lectures according to their own interests, diverging from the party’s pedagogical line. These lectures were criticized within the party for not being aligned with the people’s level of understanding and failing to capture their interest. Behçet Kemal Çağlar’s report on Edirne People’s House mocked the inadequacy of the speeches in Edirne and beyond as follows.

The Edirne People’s House organized a series of lectures with a good idea, and one of them was given by the director of the People’s House. It was titled “Nietzschean philosophy and counter-social thoughts.” However, at that time (the people of) Edirne were deprived of a lot of knowledge, from how the first cannon was fired to the poems written for it; the same friend, who was a philosophy teacher, could very well have spoken about the philosophy of Ottomanism, the Turkish view of life, a philosophical analysis of Turkish history. I know that in Adana, a lecture on Kant was given in the days when cotton workers filled the streets of the city, and in Antep, a speech was given on agriculture in Europe in the 19th century. The People’s Houses should be reminded again with clear

---

<sup>82</sup> “Sihhat konferanslarının sıhhiye müdürünün kontrolüne verilmesi, yarın ziraat konferanslarının ziraat, terbiye konferanslarının Maarif müdürkerinin kontrolüne verilmesine yol açar ki bunun nerede başlayıp nerede biteceğini kestirmek mümkün değildir. İlmî faaliyetler fazla takyitlerden daima zarar görür. Biz konferanslar hakkında Halkevleri çalışma talimatnamesinin 2 ve 3üncü maddeleri hükümlerini yeter bulmaktayız. Yeni hükümler icap ediyorsa ki, şimdi biz bu icabı görmemekteyiz, ancak nizami kanallarla konulabilir.” From the CHP General Secretary to the Forth General Inspector, General Abdullah Alpdoğan, 4 June 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

instructions on how speeches should be prepared, according to the level and interest of the people.

People are not tired of listening to preachers. They are tired of listening to the wannabe preachers who have the monopoly over lectures at the People's Houses. A good topic and a good speech will always be able to attract attention.<sup>83</sup>

There was a contradiction between the party elites' efforts to attract the enlightened and educated segments of the public, including lower and higher officials, to the People's Houses and what these segments sought from the People's Houses. Instead of teaching the values of the Republic to the people, as he was ordered to do, Cemal Gökçe, a philosophy teacher and director of the People's House, viewed the lecture hall as a place where he could discuss Nietzsche's philosophy and engage in topics that interested him. There was no middle ground between the People's House lecturers' inability to convey politically relevant knowledge and their desire to discuss topics they felt competent in.

*"The Spokesperson is an imposter with a scepter."<sup>84</sup>*

These examples of reports denouncing misbehavior and corruption are arguably part of any state administration. Be it because they are convinced of being part of a political mission to improve society, or because they interiorize a bureaucratic disposition tending to denounce flaws or irregularities, or because they are moved by personal motives to denounce other civil servants, state officials in very diverse types of states and regimes often complain about the malfunctioning of the state apparatus to its central administration. Still, in the case of Turkey, the very sense of remoteness – at the same time infrastructural and ideological – palpable in several Anatolian settings was part of the equation.

---

<sup>83</sup> "Edirne Halkevi güzel bir düşünce ile bir seri konferans tertiplemiş, bunlardan birini de Halkevi başkanı vermiş (Niçe felsefesi ve kontr-sosyal düşünceler). Halbuki o sırada Edirne sinesinde ilk topun nasıl döküldüğünden kendisi için yazılmış şiirlere kadar bir çok bilgiden mahrum bulunuyordu; felsefe öğretmeni olan aynı arkadaş osmanlılığın felsefesinden, Türkün hayat görüşünden, Türk tarihinin filozof gözüyle incelenmesinden pek ala bahsedebilirdi. Adanada pamuk işçilerinin şehir sokaklarını doldurduğu günlerde Kant hakkında konferans verildiğini, Antep'te 19uncu asırda avrupada ziraat diye konuşma yapıldığını biliyorum. Konuşmaların halkevinde, halk seviyesine, halk alakasına göre nasıl hazırlanması gerektiği halk evlerine bir sarıh tamimle yeniden hatırlatılmalıdır. Halk hatip dinlemekten değil, halkevinde konuşmayı inhisar altına almış hatip taslağı dinlemekten bıkmıştır. İyi konu iyi konuşma her zaman ilgi toplayabilecektir." Report by Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Edirne, 20 August 1945, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/996-851-1.

<sup>84</sup> "Le porte-parole est un imposteur pourvu du skeptron." Pierre Bourdieu, "Le langage autorisé," 185.

Despite the significant number of preachers selected in each province and district to deliver public speeches and lectures throughout Turkey, there were notable differences between regions and among districts within a single province. Communication about lectures at the People's Houses between the provincial administrative boards and the CHP General Secretary was frequent. However, the activities were not always executed adequately. The situation worsened in Kurdistan due to the party leadership's lack of will to invest in more inclusive and peaceful state-building methods in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia. Financial limitations resulted in infrastructural problems and a shortage of a qualified and willing workforce. The authoritarianism of the single-party rule contrasted with its lack of involvement in some provinces, especially in Eastern Anatolia. Ultimately, the analysis of reports about the People's Houses and the party's provincial branches indicated that the People's Preachers were selected from those who were only partly capable and partly willing to work for the party. Even then, they did not always perform as require

## Part III. Time War(p): Teaching the Past, Explaining the Present

---

This section comprises three chapters that delve into the impact of wartime experiences on the biographies and narratives of People’s Preachers. The latter often spoke about war to interpret the early republican era’s transformative and often radical reforms. By weaving together biographical documents and speech transcriptions sent to the party General Secretary or published in the local press, including the People’s House magazine, these chapters explore how the preachers navigated and articulated the radical changes of the time.

Chapter 10 invites us to reconsider the early republican era not simply as a time of new beginnings but as a history deeply intertwined with the aftermath of war and genocide. This chapter reveals how the war experience is crucial in the life stories of the People’s Preachers, their politicization, and their modes of explaining and legitimizing the sweeping political and social transformations ushered in by the republic. Delving into application letters and other biographical documents of the former People’s Preachers illuminates how their life trajectories are interwoven with mass violence, whether as perpetrators, bystanders, or witnesses. To do so, the chapter outlines the analytical framework that integrates the wartime past and state-sponsored mass violence into the social and political trajectories of the People’s Preachers. It also scrutinizes the late Ottoman experiences of some preachers, including their involvement in war efforts, thus providing a perspective on their subsequent roles in the republic.

[Chapter 11](#) focuses on the preachers of a borderland region annexed by the Russian Empire after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878 that switched hands during the Turkish-Armenian War, also called the eastern front of the “Turkish War of Independence.” The cross-analysis of life stories of Kars preachers and two speeches on “Independence and Revolution” (*İstiklal ve İnkılap*) delivered in Erzurum will reflect on the role of state-led mass violence in early republican history.

Finally, [Chapter 12](#) scrutinizes the activities of the Elazığ People’s House, focusing on the lectures delivered before and during the Dersim Massacres from March 1937 to September 1938. These massacres targeted a population portrayed as unruly and incompatible with the republican ideal of citizenship. This chapter questions what it meant to preach for the party

and the state amid state-led mass violence. In doing so, it reveals the intersections of education, disciplining, intimidation, and persecution within the CHP's pedagogic mission during its single-party rule in Turkey.

After demonstrating the bodily, biographical, and intellectual proximity of the People's Preachers to war, genocide, and the ongoing state violence of the early republic, this chapter explores how their roles in advocating for the party, elucidating the values of the new regime, and raising "acceptable citizens," who conformed to the party's ideology and policies, are intrinsically linked to state violence.<sup>1</sup> Bringing these elements together will underscore the analytical significance of rethinking the founding years of the republic. Rather than periodizing the transition from persuasion to repression, the chapter reveals how education and persuasion converged with repression to establish and sustain the state.

---

<sup>1</sup> Füsün Üstel, "*Makbul Vatandaş*"ın Peşinde : II. Meşrutiyet'ten Bugüne Türkiye'de Vatandaş Eğitimi.



## 10. Preaching in Post-War and Post-Genocide Turkey

---

The voice of our Party should be heard everywhere and at every gathering, whether it is the great national days [celebrated] in the whole country or when people get together for reasons of local joy and sorrow. (...) On the other hand, for example, on the day when a town or village, which is a cherished part of our country, was liberated from enemy occupation, speeches should be made by our Party in every neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

This quote is derived from the People’s Preachers Organization directives, first circulated in September 1931. This founding document outlined that participation in local commemorations and the celebration of national holidays were among the primary objectives of the People’s Preachers Organization. National holidays in the Republic of Turkey commemorated various stages of the “Turkish War of Independence” leading up to the proclamation of the republic. Local commemorations centered on the liberation of specific cities or towns from foreign occupation in the wake of the First World. The ceremonial speeches focused on the theme of “war,” both as a concept and as a historical event.

Furthermore, the directives emphasized that the People’s Preachers were responsible for highlighting “Turkish civilization, Turkish history, Turkish bravery, and providing a brief overview of Turkish culture.” The party leadership aimed to educate the target audience, comprised of adult citizens. Consequently, the public addresses delivered by the People’s Preachers made the official history more accessible to a broader audience. War played a key role in the “official history” of the early republican era since Mustafa Kemal accorded a key place to the experience of the “War of Independence” in his 1927 *Speech (Nutuk)*.<sup>3</sup> The directives encouraged the Preachers to speak clearly and concisely, avoiding a style resembling “detailed instruction at schools.”<sup>4</sup> Yet, this was a difficult task.

---

<sup>2</sup> “İster bütün memlekete ait büyük milli günler olsun, ister mahalli sevinç ve keder sebepleriyle halkın bir arada toplanacağı zamanlar olsun, her yerde ve her toplanişta Fırkamızın sesi işitilmelidir. (...) Diğer taraftan meselâ, memleketimizin aziz bir parçası olan herhangi bir kasaba veya köyümüzün düşman işgalinden kurtulduğu o gün her mahallede Fırkamızca nutuklar söylenmelidir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk* (Ankara : Kaynak, 2015 [1927]).

<sup>4</sup> “İkinci esas: Türk medeniyeti, Türk tarihi, Türk kahramanlıkları ve kısa tarifiyle Türk kültürünün mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedaris şekline benzemiyen ve her zaman arzu ve hevesle dinlenilebilecek olan bir mahiyette telkinine ehemmiyet verilecektir.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

On the one hand, the People's Preachers had to popularize the official narrative of the Ottoman past and the Great War. On the other, they had to make this accessible to their audience and bring it closer to their experience, for example, through anecdotes. Republican sermons, therefore, lay on an intermediate level between the uniformized official discourse delivered by the party leadership and the vernacular language adapted to local circumstances.

Republican sermons, including speeches celebrating national holidays, participating in citizenship education, or informing Anatolian populations on practical aspects of early republican policies, often incorporated war narratives or used war as a metaphor to talk about ongoing reforms. The prevalent themes included concepts of "civilization," "history," and "bravery" to establish narrative patterns for individual and collective remembrance. The People's Preachers' main objective was to legitimize the sociopolitical change brought by the republic. The republic was proclaimed following a decade of intense warfare, including the First World War and the "Turkish War of Independence." The war experience was crucial for Anatolia as it lasted longer than in many other countries. It involved mass mobilization of citizens for military or economic purposes and entailed widespread violence such as forced displacement and massacres targeting specific populations.

The "Great War" lasted longer in the Ottoman context for two main reasons. First, intense warfare started earlier than in Western Europe due to the Italo-Turkish War (1911-1912) and the Balkan Wars (1912-1913).<sup>5</sup> Second, conflicts persisted past 1918 in many parts of Eastern and Western Anatolia as National Forces (*Kuvâ-yi Miliye*) rejected the terms of the Armistice of Mudros (1918), leading to the Treaty of Sèvres (1920). This led to a war against occupying forces (France, Britain, Italy, Greece), that also crushed the independent Republic of Armenia in Eastern Anatolia and opposed Greece's expansion into Western Anatolia. Mustafa Kemal led nationalist militias who fought Greek and Armenian troops supported by the Allied Powers on both fronts. Even after the official end of the "Turkish War of Independence," border

---

<sup>5</sup> Ryan Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate: The Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922*, ed. Robert Gerwarth, *The Greater War*, (Oxford University Press, 2016); Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

disputes from post-war arrangements preoccupied Turkish governments until Turkey annexed Alexandretta (Hatay) in 1939.<sup>6</sup>

The First World War caused an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe characterized by mass conscription, widespread draft evasion, state-controlled economies, food shortages, epidemics, and death for Ottoman subjects not targeted for annihilation.<sup>7</sup> The Ottoman Army conscripted approximately 2.9 million men, with nearly half of them succumbing to death or injury, and 250,000 becoming prisoners of war.<sup>8</sup> By the 1930s, some Anatolian provinces saw thirty percent of adult women widowed. At the same time, national newspapers continued to publish missing person reports related to the “Great War” (*umumî harp*) until 1939.<sup>9</sup>

The loss of territory resulting from the Balkan Wars had instilled what Eyal Ginio termed the “Ottoman culture of defeat,” fostering increased hostility towards non-Muslim subjects and the militarization of politics in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>10</sup> The wartime decade also exacerbated the ongoing persecution of Christian subjects, which had been ongoing since 1895 for Armenians.<sup>11</sup> For a significant portion of non-Muslim subjects, the war meant persecution, destruction, and annihilation. In contrast, many male survivors fought in the ranks of the Greek army or the allied forces.<sup>12</sup>

The deportation and mass murder of Armenians, Assyrians, and Orthodox Rums led to a demographic transformation, laying the groundwork for homogenized citizenship in the

---

<sup>6</sup> Fuat Dündar, “When did the First World War End for Turkey?,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 141 (2017).

<sup>7</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home: The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*; Katrin Bromber et al., eds., *The Long End of the First World War: Ruptures, Continuities and Memories* (Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2018); Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. “Kayıp Aranyor,” *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1939.

<sup>10</sup> Eyal Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and their Aftermath* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 272; Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*, 9; Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*.

<sup>11</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *“They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else”: A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> The death toll of the Armenian Genocide causes heated debates among historians. Turkish state narrative estimates that 300.000 Armenians died during the “deportation,” while historians who do not take a denialist position estimates that between 800.000 and 1.5 million were killed during the Genocide. See: Fuat Dündar, *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question (1878-1918)* (Routledge, 2010). As to the population exchange between Turkey and Greece, approximately 1 million Rum Orthodox were sent to Greece from Anatolia.

postwar Republic.<sup>13</sup> These factors rendered the Anatolian experience of the First World War unique, as it was “offensively fought both to the exterior and the interior.”<sup>14</sup> Following the defeat of the First World War and the proposed expansion of the Republic of Armenia, some genocide survivors attempted to return to their hometowns. Consequently, the “War of Independence” also entailed attacks on returning Armenians in regions such as Cilicia under French occupation.<sup>15</sup> If the First World War coincided with the genocide, and the “War of Independence” facilitated the genocide’s culmination, the commemorative events organized in early republican Turkey – wherein People’s Preachers played a pivotal role – should incorporate direct and indirect allusions to the annihilating measures targeting Ottoman Christians.

This chapter starts with the hypothesis that major events like the First World War, the acknowledged genocides committed by the Unionists (such as the Armenian Genocide), and other forms of state-led mass violence against Ottoman subjects during and after the war became social structures. It suggests that the republic’s “values and principles,” which the People’s Preachers were supposed to communicate and teach, cannot be passed on without mentioning these events. It searches for traces the “genocide” in the biographies and activities of the People’s Preachers to connect the “dark past” of republican Turkey to its ‘luminous’ and ‘enlightened’ nascency.

### 10.1. Total War and Genocide as “Structuring Structure”

---

When addressing state-led mass violence inflicted upon Ottoman citizens before, during, and after the First World War, categorization of these violent acts becomes a crucial issue, often sparking scholarly debates. The Armenian Genocide, despite long-standing denial by the Turkish state and many historians, has gained recognition by the historical community over

---

<sup>13</sup> The Orthodox Rums include the Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians as well as Turkish speaking (but writing in Greek alphabet) Karamanlı Orthodox communities under the Ottoman Empire that had been both subject to the population exchange.

<sup>14</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, “The Ottoman Road to Total War (1913-1915),” in *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski (London - New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 32.

<sup>15</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 126-136.

the past twenty years. However, other victims of similar and simultaneous annihilating policies, such as Assyrians and Yezidis, frequently remain overlooked.

Similarly, the massacre of Phocaea in June 1914, which led to the decimation of the Greek-Orthodox population in the city, is categorized as a “massacre” but is also situated within the broader context of state-led “ethnic cleansing” carried out by the Unionists before and during the First World War.<sup>16</sup> The forced deportations, relocations, and massacres of the Greek-Orthodox population in the Pontus region by the Black Sea are labeled as “genocide” by some. In contrast, others, and most recently Nikos Sigalas, recognize that the perpetrators, the means used, and the “context” were common to those events but contest the qualification of “genocide” partly for its potential relativization of the sort of the Armenians and partly because of the instrumentalization of the category by Turkish and Greek “nationalist” historiographies.<sup>17</sup>

Since this chapter does not specifically focus on Armenians, Yezidis, or Pontic Rums, the causes or most concrete consequences (destruction of populations, property usurpation, perpetrators’ role and networks, etc.) but rather on the residues of state-led mass violence in the state grammar and political discourse, distinguishing between different episodes of planned deportation, massacre, kidnapping, and Turkification of women and children is not analytically fruitful within this research framework. To avoid euphemization and hierarchization of various state-led mass crimes and their victims, I adopt a broad definition of “genocide” throughout this and the following chapters. This approach is inspired by the original writings of Raphael

---

<sup>16</sup> Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks’ Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), 84-87.

<sup>17</sup> Drawing on the not-so-recent developments in the historiography of genocide(s), I disagree that the use of the category of “genocide” reproduces “nationalist and racist thought categories.” See: Nikos Sigalas, “La première guerre mondiale et la genèse de la question pontique : une histoire connectée de la violence en Anatolie au début du XXe siècle” (Ph.D. Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2023), 22. From Raphael Lemkin to current scholars of genocide, do not reduce “genus” to an ethnic, racial, or national groups. See: Martin Shaw, “Sociology and Genocide,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 161. A. Dirk Moses, *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression*, Human Rights in History, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021). See also A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. A. Dirk Moses and Donald Bloxham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Benjamin Lieberman, “‘Ethnic Cleansing’ vs Genocide,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. A. Dirk Moses and Donald Bloxham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Lemkin and the adaptations by sociologists and anthropologists studying mass violence and its aftermath.<sup>18</sup>

The “genocide” discussed here encompasses a wide range of annihilating measures, including forced deportation, mass killings, and population exchanges, orchestrated by the Unionist government and their successors (the CHP) against unwanted groups, primarily Armenians and Assyrians, before, during, and after the First World War, irrespective of whether it was officially recognized as “genocide” or not, either commonly or by instances of international law.

This choice stems from the fluidity of terms such as “ethnic cleansing,” “demographic engineering,” and genocide.<sup>19</sup> The boundaries between these terms remain ambiguous and subject to debate. Demographic engineering often involves measures in a common genocidal process, such as deportations and mass killings. Moreover, Raphael Lemkin did not distinguish between cases in which the “demographic balance is tip(ped) in favor of the imperial powers,” which is another way of saying “demographic engineering.”<sup>20</sup> Scholars often employ the first two euphemistically to avoid the explicit use of “genocide,” as its invocation carries significant legal and moral implications. The analytical distinction between “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” holds no relevance for the inquiry on the imprint of destructive “violence against political and social groups” in the discourse propagated by the People’s Preachers.<sup>21</sup>

Utilizing the term “demographic engineering” offers a less contentious and more comprehensive approach to understanding the extensive array of annihilating measures enacted against unwanted populations. It also allows for an examination of genocidal violence

---

<sup>18</sup> About euphemistic categories used instead of genocide, see: Martin Shaw, “Sociology and Genocide,” 146.

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin Lieberman, “‘Ethnic Cleansing’ vs Genocide.”; A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide.” Nikos Sigalas and Alexandre Toumarkine, “Demographic Engineering, Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing. Dominant paradigms for the Study of Violence Exerted on Minorities in Turkey and the Balkans,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008): §9.

<sup>20</sup> A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide,” 26.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, “The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide,” in *Annihilating Difference : The Anthropology of Genocide*, ed. Alexander Laban Hinton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 3.

preceding and following the Armenian and Assyrian Genocides.<sup>22</sup> However, I refrain from employing this term due to my focus on the aftermath of mass violence, which includes conventionally recognized genocides and other events of state-led mass violence. Instead, I adopt the expansive definition proposed by Alexander Laban Hinton in his work, *Annihilating Difference*, published in 2002. According to Hinton, genocide encompasses various instances of political violence that may be categorized differently by distinct international bodies. It is characterized as political circumstances wherein “a perpetrator group attempts, intentionally and over a sustained period of time, to annihilate another social and political community” from a particular territory.<sup>23</sup>

Martin Shaw proposed another definition of genocide as “structure.” According to this understanding, “genocide as structure” is “a form of violent social conflict or war, between armed power organizations that aim to destroy” not only “civilian social groups” but potentially armed “groups and actors who resist this destruction.” Shaw saw “genocide in action” as a process in which “armed power organizations treat civilian social groups as enemies and aim to destroy their real or putative social power, by means of killing (...) and coercion against individuals whom they regard as members of (those) groups.”<sup>24</sup>

Events such as prolonged wars involving broader segments of society (such as “total wars”) and genocides resulting in demographic tabula rasa can acquire “structural significance” or become “structuring structure.”<sup>25</sup> My understanding of war and genocide as a “structuring structure” is greatly influenced by Talin Suciyan’s research on the Armenians in early republican Turkey. Suciyan characterizes the social habitus in Turkey as a deeply ingrained structure intertwined with genocidal violence against Armenians and its denial. In Suciyan’s conceptualization, “denial” goes beyond the denial of the genocide as a crime, but encapsulates

---

<sup>22</sup> Nikos Sigalas and Alexandre Toumarkine, “Ingénierie démographique, génocide, nettoyage ethnique. Les paradigmes dominants pour l’étude de la violence sur les populations minoritaires en Turquie et dans les Balkans,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008): §9-12.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, “The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide,” 6.

<sup>24</sup> Martin Shaw, “Sociology and Genocide,” 160.

<sup>25</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, “Representation, Event, and Structure,” in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 111. Pierre Bourdieu, “Structures, Habitus, Practices,” in *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford University Press, 1990).

the denial of the “language, history, and survival” of the remaining Armenians in Turkey in the republican era.<sup>26</sup>

The concept of “post-genocidal habitus of denial” enables Suciyan to elucidate the normalization, trivialization, and concealment of violence directed towards Armenians and other non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations. Suciyan conceptualizes “habitus” based on the writings of Pierre Bourdieu. While Bourdieusian uses of the concept of “habitus” are class-bound, his remarks around the historicity of the “habitus” as “embodied history internalized as a second nature and subsequently forgotten” are valuable to link historical events and social structures.<sup>27</sup> For Suciyan, the “post-genocidal habitus of denial” allows us to reflect on the persistence of violent practices against the Armenians in Turkey, aiming to end their presence as a “group”<sup>28</sup> through daily insults, “Citizen Speak Turkish” campaigns, differential taxation, and forced labor.<sup>29</sup>

Understanding the “genocidal continuum” through the lens of habitus or what Bourdieu termed “structuring structure” would undoubtedly influence political discourse.<sup>30</sup> Exploring the case of the People’s Preachers proves insightful to examine the imprint of genocide on the political rhetoric of the early republican era. As delineated in earlier sections, the People’s Preachers were regarded as enlightened instructors of the republican citizenry, entrusted with the task of elucidating “Turkish civilization, Turkish history, and Turkish bravery.” But they also interpreted recent events, which often entailed the expulsion of perceived enemies from the homeland through successive wars and ongoing reforms. These reforms included mandates such as adopting “pure-Turkish” patronymic names and purging vocabulary with foreign origins from the standardized official language.

Moreover, the stage where the People’s Preachers held sway bore the indelible scars of war and genocide. As noted in Chapter 6, their platforms often stood amidst the ruins left by the genocide. Many People’s Houses were built on “abandoned” and usurped properties that

---

<sup>26</sup> Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*, 17-27.

<sup>27</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford University Press, 1990), 57.

<sup>28</sup> A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide.”

<sup>29</sup> Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*, 69.

<sup>30</sup> For an even broader definition of genocide, see: Nancy Scheper-Hughes, “The Genocidal Continuum: Peace-Time Crimes,” in *Power and the Self*, ed. Jeannette Marie Mageo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).



formerly belonged to Armenians, Rums, and others. In the republican squares established in every city after the proclamation of the Republic, the languages spoken just fifteen years earlier were no longer heard.

Were the preachers and their older listeners unaware of how their Armenian and Greek neighbors had “disappeared”? Could the preachers have fought against the Armenians and Greeks during the First World War or the War of Independence? Who bought the houses declared “abandoned property” after the genocide and sold them at auctions? Who purchased items from these homes and used them to decorate their own houses? These questions highlight the conspicuous absence of the decimated populations, rendering the genocide an unspoken yet undeniable presence. This challenges the notion that the genocide was a “non-issue” or that there was a “deafening silence” about it in 1930s Turkey, a belief shared by many scholars of genocide denial.<sup>31</sup>

If habitus is a “product of history,” producing “individual and collective practices – more history – in accordance with the schemes generated by history,”<sup>32</sup> it should also influence discursive practices. According to Bourdieu, the habitus delineates the boundaries of “things to do or not to do” and “things to say or not to say” in a given context at a given time.<sup>33</sup> If the republic was born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, these ashes carried traces of the decimated populations. Therefore, it was inconceivable that the People’s Preachers, while teaching the public about the revolution and celebrating the pure Turkish air now being breathed in Turkey, would not mention those who had left.

By using “habitus” as a conceptual framework in this chapter, I also drew inspiration from the works of Marc Angenot, who took a step forward by including habitus in discourse analysis in his study of the “social discourse” in 1889 France with a focus on the spread of the antisemitism in France. Angenot defined social discourse as “implicit discursive and topic rules

---

<sup>31</sup>Doğan Gürpınar, “The Manufacturing of Denial: The Making of the Turkish ‘Official Thesis’ on the Armenian Genocide between 1974 and 1990.”; Seyhan Bayraktar, “Remembering the Armenian Genocide in Contemporary Turkey,” *Témoigner. Entre histoire et mémoire*, no. 120 (2015); Seyhan Bayraktar, “The Grammar of Denial: State, Society, and Turkish-Armenian Relations,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 4 (2015).

<sup>32</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 54.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

that organize everything said or written in a given state of society.”<sup>34</sup> When the social discourse is understood in these terms, the representativeness of one passage of a sermon or one particular preacher becomes less relevant since the social production of individuality and distinct opinions is bound to the same social habitus.<sup>35</sup>

Expanding upon Talin Suciyan’s concept of the “post-genocidal habitus,” this chapter redirects its attention from survivors to potential perpetrators, bystanders, or “heirs” of the genocide within early republican Turkey.

Lorsque l’héritage s’est approprié l’héritier, comme dit Marx, l’héritier peut s’appropriier l’héritage. Et cette appropriation de l’héritier par l’héritage, de l’héritier à l’héritage, qui est la condition de l’appropriation de l’héritage par l’héritier (et qui n’a rien de mécanique ou fatal), s’accomplit sous l’effet confugé des conditionnements inscrits dans la condition de l’héritier et de l’action pédagogique des prédécesseurs, propriétaires appropriés.<sup>36</sup>

Both the local spokespeople of the party and the early republican citizens at large were the heirs of “independence” and the “republic.” Mustafa Kemal referred to this heritage as a “treasure” (*hazine*) in his 1927 speech.<sup>37</sup> People’s Preachers were tasked with educating the public, including present and future generations of the republic. By examining the members and affiliates of the CHP assigned to “enlighten” the general public about the recent past, we can explore the significance of mass violence within this heritage.

By reflecting on the legacy of genocide in legitimizing the new republican order, I took inspiration from the contributions of historians who have examined the formative years of the republic as a post-genocidal period. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu explored the “limits of belonging” for Armenians in Turkey.<sup>38</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör demonstrated how the destructive measures employed during the Armenian Genocide became part of the state’s approach towards other undesirable populations, such as Kurds, in the early republican era.<sup>39</sup> Ümit Kurt highlighted the economic aspects of the genocide, illustrating how it persisted in the early republican era

---

<sup>34</sup> Marc Angenot, “Le discours social: problématique d’ensemble,” *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* 2, no. 1 (1984): 20.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>36</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Le mort saisit le vif: les relations entre l’histoire réifiée et l’histoire incorporée,” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 32, no. 1 (1980): 7.

<sup>37</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 666.

<sup>38</sup> Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*.

<sup>39</sup> Ümit Uğur Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)*.

through the appropriation of Armenian property by local Muslim elites, who often were also perpetrators of the genocide.<sup>40</sup> Ellinor Morack, in her book entitled, “The Dowry of the State,” examined the management of “abandoned property” after the genocide and the population exchange, which played a central role in the state-building process.<sup>41</sup>

In line with these scholars who focused on the aftermath of genocide, this chapter investigates the pivotal role played by the destruction of populations for the sake of winning a war or maintaining law and order in the early republican era, focusing on how the displacement and decimation of persecuted populations manifested in the discourse and the trajectories of the People’s Preachers. In doing so, I also drew inspiration from the methodological framework that Frank Biess and Robert Moeller employed in examining post-World War II European history. Numerous contributions in “Histories of the Aftermath” call for avoiding the perception of the postwar as a “zero hour” (*Stunde Null*) and instead delving into the “legacies” and “aftereffects” of the war, including the “twentieth century’s paradigmatic genocide, the Holocaust.”<sup>42</sup> According to Biess and Moeller, “postwar” serves not only as a chronological and thematic unit but also as an epistemological tool for scrutinizing “the persistent, hidden, and sometimes not-so-hidden traces” of World War II and the Holocaust.<sup>43</sup> Drawing from works that utilize “postwar” or “aftermath” as an analytical framework in exploring the history of early republican Turkey is particularly relevant given the current state of historiography.

The historiography of contemporary Turkey often highlights the transition “from an Empire to a nation-state.” Examining the social and political “transformations” following the “end of empire” entails focusing on the changes instigated by the early republican government and assessing consent or dissent of post-imperial society regarding reforms. Such works frequently employ terms like “demographic engineering” and “social engineering” to encapsulate the transformations at play.

---

<sup>40</sup> Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*.

<sup>41</sup> Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*.

<sup>42</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, “The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide,” 1. Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, 2-3.

<sup>43</sup> Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, 2-3.

“Demographic engineering” refers to forced population displacements and massacres to reduce or remove certain members of the populations committed by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and their successors.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, “social engineering” encompasses the radical reforms implemented by the early republican government, such as the Alphabet Change, the Clothing, Surname, Language Reforms, the adoption of a secular Civil Code, and state secularization. These reforms were imposed through various means, ranging from coercion to cultural activities like theater, cinema, public lectures, and concerts organized at People’s Houses. Except for Uğur Ümit Üngör, who reflected on the intersection between violent population politics and milder forms of population management through “education” and “recreation,” the term “social engineering” was predominantly used to talk about supposedly ‘peaceful’ and ‘inclusive’ ways of nation building in studies of contemporary Turkey.<sup>45</sup>

In most of those works, there is an implicit continuity between the “demographic” and “social” engineering.<sup>46</sup> However, many studies focusing on cultural centers or local representatives of the regime tend to differentiate between these two aspects. This distinction has created a perceived “break” between the late Ottoman years characterized by “demographic engineering” and the early republican years marked by “social engineering.” Within this framework, the structural centrality of the genocidal past of the early republic is not always denied but rather relativized as the “dark side.”<sup>47</sup> Conversely, the violent present—

---

<sup>44</sup> Nikos Sigalas and Alexandre Toumarkine, “Ingénierie démographique, génocide, nettoyage ethnique. Les paradigmes dominants pour l’étude de la violence sur les populations minoritaires en Turquie et dans les Balkans.”

<sup>45</sup> Ümit Uğur Üngör, “Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950,” 27-28. For conceptualizations of “social engineering” that exclude the state-sponsored collective violence, see Sevim Yeşil, “Unfolding Republican Patriarchy: The Case of Young Turkish Women at the Girl’s Vocational Boarding School in Elazığ” (Master of Science Middle East Technical University, 2003), 106; Alexandros Lamprou, “Between the Central State and Local Society. The People’s Houses Institution and the Domestication of the Reform in Turkey (1932-1951)” (Ph.D. Thesis, Universiteit Leiden, 2009). A. Holly Shissler, “‘If You Ask Me’: Sabiha Sertel’s Advice Column, Gender Equity, and Social Engineering in the Early Turkish Republic,” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 3, no. 2 (2007); Sibel Bozdoğan, “From ‘Cubic Houses’ to Suburban Villas: Residential Architecture and the Elites in Turkey,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem, and Philip Robins (Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 422.

<sup>46</sup> This continuity and even interrelationship is explicit in: Kerem Öktem, “The Nation’s Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey.”; Ümit Uğur Üngör, “Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950.”

<sup>47</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, “Local Negotiation of Change: Historiography of Modern Turkey and the Study of Provincial Anatolian Towns,” 124-30.

especially against non-Turkish and non-Sunni-Muslims of the early republic—is often reduced to the measures dictated by the context, understood as revolutionary state building. In other words, state violence and intimidation are frequently analyzed separately from ‘positive’ aspects of state- and nation-building embodied by institutions like People’s Houses and People’s Preachers Organization.

As a result, scholars who adopt this framework tend to analyze early republican reforms within a modernization paradigm. Yet, by excluding state-sponsored mass violence from the parameters of Turkish “modernization,” they confine “modernity” to state secularization for the exclude its “dark side.”<sup>48</sup> This tendency was also present in a recent review essay published on Turkish historiography and social sciences, which reduced the study of state violence in early republican Turkey either as providing arguments to the current regime under Islamist and authoritarian “Justice and Development Party” (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) or to “learned xenophobia towards Turks.”<sup>49</sup>

Separating the reforms implemented during the early republican era from the legacies, aftereffects, or even the continuation of state-sponsored mass violence in the 1920s and 1930s reinforces some central claims of the official historiography, echoing the republican state’s claim of rupture between the late Ottoman Empire governed by the CUP and the early republican Turkey, governed by the CHP. Maintaining the break between the Unionists and Kemalists, in this sense, contributes to a form of scholarly genocide denial (relativization).<sup>50</sup>

The next section will examine the role of war and genocide in life trajectories of People’s Preachers, drawing on references to their activities during the Second Constitutional Monarchy and the First World War found in their application letters for legislative elections. The hypothesis posits that since the CHP established the People’s Preachers Organization less than a decade after the official conclusion of the “Turkish War of Independence” and fifteen years

---

<sup>48</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, “The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide,” 8; Alexandros Lamprou, “Local Negotiation of Change: Historiography of Modern Turkey and the Study of Provincial Anatolian Towns,” 124-30.

<sup>49</sup> İlker Aytürk, “Post-post Kemalizm: Yeni Bir Paradigmayı Beklerken.” See also Hakan Yavuz, “Self-hating Turks and the Genocide Debate.” For the response from Emmanuel Szurek, see Emmanuel Szurek, “In Pursuit of Post-Kemalism,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 35 (2022).

<sup>50</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 1999, no. 137 (1999): 202-03; Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*, 3.

after the decision to deport Ottoman Armenians during the First World War, People’s Preachers had temporal, spatial, and visceral proximity to these events.<sup>51</sup> Consequently, they played a role in disseminating witness accounts during the early republican era.

## 10.2. Temporal Proximity with War and Genocide

---

The applicants of the legislative elections – whether they were People’s Preachers or not – often mentioned their past political activities. These encompassed involvement in nationalist cultural societies such as Turkish Homeland Associations (*Türk Yurdu Cemiyeti*) or Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), which later allied with the CUP and the Defense of Rights Associations, established post-Mudros Armistice.<sup>52</sup> In some cases, they even mentioned their own or close families’ involvement in the “deportation of Armenians” as a way to promote themselves. The district governor of İnebolu (Kastamonu), Nasuhi Kurosman, for instance, inserted a sentence in capital letters to his application submitted in 1946 to become a CHP deputy. The sentence read:

MY FATHER WAS THE MARTYR NUSRET, EXECUTED IN BAYAZIT ON 5 AUGUST 1920 [1336] BY NEMRUT KURT MUSTAFA’S COURT-MARTIAL. HE WAS MARTYRED ON THE PRETEXT OF HAVING CARRIED OUT THE ARMENIAN DEPORTATION OF BAYBURT DURING THE DAMAT FERİT GOVERNMENT.<sup>53</sup>

Nasuhi Kurosman was not listed among the People’s Preachers. According to his biography, he served as district governor of Birecik (Urfa) in 1938. As a civil servant moving through Anatolian provinces and district governor in provinces where the party had difficulty finding local spokespeople (Refer to [Chapter 9](#)), Kurosman likely addressed those addressed by People’s Preachers. However, Kurosman focused on his educational background rather than his commitment to the party and his efforts to enlighten the people on behalf of the party-state.

---

<sup>51</sup> Zeynep Ertugrul and Emmanuel Szurek, “Le meurtre et la langue: Dire le génocide dans la Turquie des années 1930,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (Upcoming 2024).

<sup>52</sup> Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*.

<sup>53</sup> “BABAM DAMAT FERİT HÜKÜMETİ ZAMANINDA BAYBURT ERMENİ TEHCİRİNİ YAPMIŞ OLMAK BAHANESİYLE 5 AĞUSTOS 1336 TARİHİNDE NEMRUT KÜRT MUSTAFA DİVANI HARBİ TARAFINDAN BAYAZİTTE İDAM EDİLMEK SURETİLE ŞEHİT EDİLEN URFA MUTASARRIFI ŞEHİT NUSRETTİR.” Nasuhi Kurosman’s application file, 1946, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/324-1339-1.

After his father was sentenced to death for war crimes, Kurosman experienced poverty and had to quit his studies. However, an anonymous benefactor funded his education at the prestigious Galatasaray High School for a year and a half.<sup>54</sup> Kurosman initially intended to work in agriculture, but circumstances led him to follow “his father’s path” and attend the School of Administration (*Mülkiye*) to become a district governor.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast to autobiographies of former People’s Preachers, Kurosman’s accounts were notably explicit about how his life was marked by war and his father’s involvement in mass violence. Kurosman emphasized his father’s involvement in the deportation of Armenians and his subsequent death sentence for war crimes. He believed that highlighting his lineage with a person involved in war crimes would improve his chances of being listed among legislative candidates. The application letter submitted by Kurosman was a striking example of the biographical proximity of People’s Preachers to war and genocide. While it may not always be possible to document and demonstrate this proximity, the relationship that People’s Preachers had to the recent past can be viewed through the prism of “political socialization” at the educational institutions and within the party.<sup>56</sup>

### *10.2.1. War and Genocide as Factors of Political Socialization*

People’s Preachers were appointed as local emissaries of the newly established regime, entrusted with the ‘intellectual responsibility’ of disseminating the burgeoning national historical canon to wider audiences. As previously noted, they were chosen based on their presumed possession of a higher level of institutionalized or “private” education that enhanced their credibility. They underwent training within the party’s internal gatherings, during which they were expected to learn from speeches delivered by higher-ranking party members,

---

<sup>54</sup> “Babamın sađlıđında, 1918 mütareke senesinde Urfadan mazulen avdetinde Kadıköy Fransız mektebinde okudum, 1336 senesinde şahadetinden sonra mecburen, parasızlıktan mektebi terk ettim. Ertesi senenin başında o zaman ismini bize bildirmeyen bir zat bir senelik mektep ücretimi verdiđinden Galatasaray lisesine girdim. Bir buçuk sene okuduktan sonra yine parasızlık yüzünden orayı da terk ettim. Nasuhi Kurosman’s application file, 1946, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/324-1339-1.

<sup>55</sup> “Memur olmak istemediđimden ziraat tahsilini tercih etmiřtim. Halbuki hadisat beni zorla memur olmađa götürüyordu. Düşündüm, memur olunca neden ziraat memuru olmalı, işi başına geçecek memlekete faideli olacak tasarruflarda bulunmak imkanı daha çok olan baba mesleđi de bulunan idareye girmeye karar verdim.” Nasuhi Kurosman’s application file, 1946, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/324-1339-1.

<sup>56</sup> Lucie Bargel, “Socialisation politique,” in *Dictionnaire. Genre et science politique* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2013).

spanning from the General Secretary – who concurrently held the position of Interior Minister – to the President of the Republic.

Due to their high literacy rates, preachers were also provided with printed materials such as local and national newspapers, books, party-published brochures, or circulars distributed by the Turkish Historical Association (*Türk Tarih Kurumu*) and the Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu*) for further enrichment. Their involvement in national festivities and other commemorative occasions is primarily tied to history. Beyond political ceremonies, they used historical narratives to elucidate the present, characterized by the profound transformations instigated by the early republic's reforms. For instance, they were the first to access the national history of the “War of Independence,” as outlined by Mustafa Kemal, sent to the libraries at People's Houses.<sup>57</sup>

Social background and generational factors impact how people access education. Educational institutions provide an essential space for political socialization, shaping how people learn about the past.<sup>58</sup> As shown in previous chapters, the CHP's provincial sections selected People's Preachers among individuals from similar professional groups. Most preachers were teachers and low-level civil servants; many high-ranking provincial administrators and former members of the armed forces were among them.

Professional titles de facto required to become a People's Preacher also required passing through certain educational institutions. Access to schools forming teachers and high- and low-ranking civil servants was not available to all in the late Ottoman Empire. As an elite group with similar social backgrounds and passing through similar educational institutions, People's Preachers were likely to inherit and transmit a situated historical memory.

Information on the preachers' age is not exhaustive. Still, we have access to many birth dates within the corpus. In the Gediz district of Kütahya in Western Anatolia, the party's provincial direction added age to the “identity” case. Three teachers, a merchant, and two

---

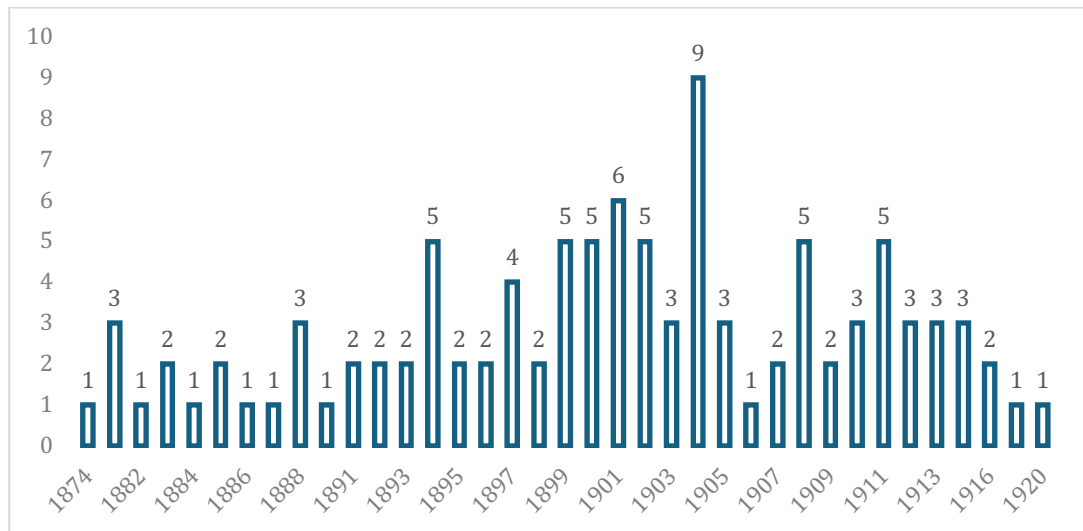
<sup>57</sup> Circular concerning the distribution of Mustafa Kemal's Speech to the People's Houses, 12 May 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-33.

<sup>58</sup> Muriel Darmon, *La socialisation*. (Paris: Armand Colin, 2016), 114; Lucie Bargel, “Socialisation politique” In *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux*, ed. Olivier Fillieule, (Paris, Presses Universitaires de Sciences Po.), 2020, 554.



agricultural landholders (*ziraatçi*) were between twenty-five and forty years of age, hence born between 1898 and 1909.<sup>59</sup>

The age range of preachers selected in Gediz represents one hundred preachers that I could trace in identity documents in party archives, memoirs, or biographical notes. They were born between 1874 and 1920.<sup>60</sup> The exact birth year of only five percent of the preachers selected between 1931 and 1938 is accessible. Yet, since the party provincials selected them among professionally active adults, it is possible to deduce that the youngest were born under the Second Constitutional Monarchy proclaimed in 1908. Older ones might even have experienced Abdülhamid II's rule (1876-1909) or constitutional rule after thirty years of his autocratic rule (*istibdat*) (1908).



**Table 7. Birthdate of the People's Preachers**

This age group shows a remarkable difference between the younger and older preachers. The largest group was born in the first ten years of the twentieth century and spent their childhood and youth under the Second Constitutional Monarchy or throughout the First World War. Nasuhi Kurosman, mentioned at the beginning of the section, belongs to this group. He was too young to be politically active, but he experienced war and genocide through his father's

<sup>59</sup> Three teachers (*muallim*), two agriculturer (*ziraatci* and *zürra*) and one merchant (*tüccar*). Gediz, Kütahya, 1931, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

<sup>60</sup> I could trace the birth date (year in Rumi or Gregorian calendar) of around one hundred preachers based on published biographies or application files used extensively throughout the dissertation.

involvement. The provincial sections of the CHP, including People's Houses and the People's Preachers Organization, brought different cohorts together as spaces of socialization, allowing the transmission of experiences between younger and older cohorts.

Examining the memoirs of Hasene Ilgaz, a preacher born in 1902, will show how People's Preachers are memorial actors not only because they relay testimonial narratives but also because they inherit memories from previous generations or from institutions where they were politicized, such as the Republican People's Party and People's Houses.<sup>61</sup> Hasene Ilgaz provides an excellent example of intergenerational transmission of memory. Ilgaz published two memoirs in 1970 and 1991. The preface of the first one, titled *Unutulmayan Yıllar* (Unforgettable Years), explains how Hasene Ilgaz spent her youth "through various problems regarding the motherland (*yurt*), epidemics, fires, famines, wars, and invasions."<sup>62</sup> It mentions the Gallipoli victory, the Istanbul fires, and various episodes in which "a generation opposed the destructive powers" thanks to their "traditions" and their "national feelings" (*ruhundaki milli varlığı ile*).<sup>63</sup> With *Unforgettable Years*, Ilgaz undertook to share her "childhood and youth recollections" (*gördüklerimiz*) that she thought "other generations could hardly experience."<sup>64</sup> *Unforgettable Years* comprised Ilgaz's finished notebooks containing fragmentary anecdotes, article outlines, or remarks on her public interventions.<sup>65</sup>

The second one, entitled *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım* (Things I Read, Saw, and Wrote), had a similar structure. In its preface, Ilgaz clarified that it was a continuation of the first one because she "finished another notebook" and "her friends suggested" publishing them

---

<sup>61</sup> Magali Boumaza, "Ce que faire mémoire veut dire," in *Faire mémoire: regards croisés sur les mobilisations mémorielles (France, Allemagne, Ukraine, Turquie, Europe)*, ed. Magali Boumaza (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2018), 15. Darmon, *La socialisation*, 117-118.

<sup>62</sup> "Bizim gençliğimiz çeşitli yurt sorunu, salgınlar, yangınlar, açlıklar, savaşlar ve istilâlarla gelip geçti. Öyle anlar oldu ki memleket gençliği sınırlarda harcandı. Doğu dolaylarında silâh ateşinden çok tifüsün bir nesli harcadığı görüldü." Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*.

<sup>63</sup> Ama bunun yanında gelenekleriyle, ruhundaki milli varlığı ile bir nesil, kahredici kuvvetlere karşı koydu. Hasene Ilgaz, *Unutulmayan Yıllar*.

<sup>64</sup> Bizim çocukluk ve gençlik çağımızda gördüklerimiz pek az kuşakların yaşadığı ve yaşayacağı olaylarla doludur. Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Onun için not defterlerimden ve okul ödevlerimden o andaki canlılığı ile topladığım bazı yazılarım (UNUTULMAYAN YILLAR) ın izlenimleridir. Anılarımı memleket gençliğine sunuyor ve dikkatlerini bu sorunlar üzerine çekmek istiyorum. Ibid.

again for educational purposes.<sup>66</sup> Despite being published as testimonies for the “country’s youth,” Ilgaz’s memoirs contain a small amount of text that directly relates to her personal reminiscence. The fragmentary sections refer to “great men,” their speeches, or newspaper articles of the period in which she was politically active, without mentioning her own presence, activities, ideas, or emotions. The memoirs exclude any information regarding her relationship with those great men.<sup>67</sup> Despite being published a couple of decades after her involvement as People’s House member and deputy, both texts are rich in “souvenirs” of the late Ottoman and early republican politicians. Since Hasene Ilgaz was politically involved in one of Istanbul’s most flourishing People’s Houses, her memories concerning early republican politicians are rather predictable. Still, she was too young to remember some episodes mentioned in her memoirs since she was born in 1902.

One remarkable example was a fragment entitled “Talât Paşa,” which included four short stories. The first pointed at Talât’s political dexterity. After presenting Talât as a “great *komitacı*” who “one day” traveled to Aydın with Şükrü Kaya, she recounted how Talât was used to greet random merchants and peasantry during this trip. When Şükrü Kaya questioned him on why he was greeting people that he did not personally know, Talât suggested that this was a good strategy for winning potential opponents, local landowners (*ağalar*) and through the landowners, the peasants to his cause.<sup>68</sup> The second anecdote was about the foundation of the CUP organization in Edirne, with Faik Bey [Kaltakkıran] (1870-1948) presented as the member of the parliament representing Edirne. Faik Bey was deputy of Edirne from 1908 to 1943. If Ilgaz referred to Faik Bey as the [current] deputy of Edirne, she probably wrote this

---

<sup>66</sup> “Yeni bir defter daha kapandı, bu defterden geçirdiğim sayfalar şimdi bir kitabın sayfaları içinde yer alıyor. Ben bu çalışmayı dostlarım için yapıyorum. Çünkü onlar kendilerini yormadan okuyacakları öğretici kitaplar istiyorlar.” Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*, 5.

<sup>67</sup> Ilgaz’s case is similar to what Hülya Adak examined through memoirs published by women and relating to the early republican period, in which they silence their private lives. Yet, here, Hasene Ilgaz does not even discuss her public political career. The difference between reading something from a newspaper, listening to a public speech by a great man on the radio, or observing described events personally is not discernible in Ilgaz’s memoirs. Hülya Adak, “Suffragettes of the Empire, Daughters of the Republic: Women Auto/biographers Narrate National History (1918-1935).”

<sup>68</sup> “Talât Paşa büyük bir komitacıdır. Bir gün Şükrü Kaya Bey’le Aydın’a gidiyorlar.” Talât’s reported speech explaining why he greeted random people in the streets to gain the respect of even the opponents. Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*, 96.

anecdote in her notebook before 1943.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, it is likely that the account is based on what Ilgaz heard while she was the director of Şehremini People's House (1937-1943).<sup>70</sup>

Faik Kaltakkıran was a Unionist who formed the CUP nucleus in Edirne in collaboration with Talât and later founded the Society for the Defense of Rights in Trakya in 1918.<sup>71</sup> The story about Kaltakkıran is undated, but some elements suggest that the reported anecdote dates from the last years of Abdülhamid II's rule. Firstly, the story is from the period when Mehmet Ferid Pasha [Avlonyalı] was grand vizier (1903-1908), and Faik Bey was his personal secretary (*hususî kâtip*). Secondly, the scene depicted a meeting behind closed doors in Edirne, in which the participants suspect a statesman of working closely with Abdülhamid II. The anecdote most probably relates to the secret foundation of the CUP nucleus in the city. This story, again, cherishes Talât's political tact and local immersion in Edirne. After Talât brought Faik Bey to this secret meeting, the participants first suspected Faik Bey because "he was a stranger" and then because his position revealed his proximity with the *istibdat* regime.<sup>72</sup> When Faik Bey's presence prompted fear and shock among the participants, Talât reassured them that he was his friend before becoming the personal secretary of the grand vizier.

The third anecdote was about a deputy who contacted Talât asking to nominate him as the Justice Minister during the Second Constitutional Monarchy.<sup>73</sup> This unnamed deputy asks for a false appointment to convince an Egyptian princess who required an "*ünvan*," in other words, a degree or a social status, to marry him. The deputy also promised to resign immediately after the nuptials if Talât wished, arguing that he would hand a pre-signed but undated resignation letter. Talât replied that he would immediately give the deputy what he wanted if the latter reassured him that the state would not collapse in the following twenty-four hours. Concerning

---

<sup>69</sup> Ilgaz uses the present tense instead of the past tense. "Birkaç tanıdığım bir evde toplantıya davet etmiş, kendisinin hemşehrisi ve ahbabı olan Edirne Milletvekili Faik Kaltakkıranı da beraber götürmüş." Ibid. If Kaltakkıran was no longer Edirne deputy, in other words, if the text was written after 1943, she would refer to him as the former Edirne deputy (eski Edirne milletvekili).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>71</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Rôle of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 37.

<sup>72</sup> "Evde bulunanlar Talât Paşa'yı bir yabancı ile geldiğini görünce hep birden kim olduğunu öğrenmek ve anlamak için yüzüne manâlı manâlı bakmışlar." Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*, 96.

<sup>73</sup> The author does not give a precise date for this anecdote, if Talât had to power to determine a minister, this happened during the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

the last days of the Ottoman Empire, this story underlines the atmosphere of normalized corruption among the ruling elites while stressing Talât's political wisdom.

It is unlikely that Hasene Ilgaz's stories of the late Ottoman Empire, the Great War, or the national struggle were personal remembrances. Her book is based on what "she read and saw," as its title suggested. After analyzing both memoirs, it is possible to add what she heard while she was an active member of Şehremini People's House. Hasene Ilgaz's case illustrates the superfluous distinction between personal reminiscence and collective memory concerning how the late Ottoman Empire was narrated in the early republican era. Hasene Ilgaz's memoirs show the role of political socialization within Unionist circles, then in the cultural sections of the Republican People's Party, in shaping collective memories.

For those born in earlier decades than Hasene Ilgaz, we can talk about common educational trajectories and political involvements, resulting in a shared understanding of historical events such as wars and revolutions. In other words, People's Preachers shared similar patterns of "political socialization" that, in turn, structured their attitudes and beliefs.<sup>74</sup>

The historiography of elite (re)production in the Ottoman Empire provides insight into the social and political trajectories of late Ottoman provincial elites, which in turn populated the People's Preachers Organization (Chapter 7). The military defeats of the late Ottoman Empire motivated successive governments before and after the Young Turk Revolution to invest in the educational system and reform it. François Georgeon argued that it is possible to talk about a "generation" as an "intellectual community" that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century because of educational reforms.<sup>75</sup> Michael Provence emphasized the emergence of a new bureaucratic elite due to the transformation of the educational system for diverse but converging reasons aiming at military, technological, and administrative progress.<sup>76</sup> At the

---

<sup>74</sup> Lucie Bargel, "Socialisation politique." Philippe Juhem, "Effets de génération," in *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2020), 220. Concerning the proposal to combine sociology of collective action with memory studies, see: Magali Boumaza, "Ce que faire mémoire veut dire," 15.

<sup>75</sup> François Georgeon, "Les Jeunes Turcs étaient-ils jeunes? Sur le phénomène des générations, de l'Empire ottoman à la République turque," in *Enfance et jeunesse dans le monde musulman*, ed. François Georgeon and Klaus Kreiser (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2007), 154-55.

<sup>76</sup> Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 19.

same time, Olivier Bouquet showed the mechanisms of social reproduction within families of higher-ranking bureaucrats.<sup>77</sup>

The new generation educated at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, comprised the graduates of secularized schools created after the education reform of 1869, on the one hand, and privately tutored individuals descending from elite families on the other.<sup>78</sup> This new generation was at the core of the revolutionary political movements, who ultimately saw saving the empire or the nation – depending on the period – as their vocation.<sup>79</sup> The most represented professional groups among People’s Preachers were low-level bureaucratic elites and other learned professions such as teachers, doctors, pharmacists, and lawyers ([Chapter 7](#)). Since access to these jobs required specific educational credentials determined by law in the late Ottoman Empire, they were also products of this renewed schooling system. These professional groups participated in the emerging political movements of the late nineteenth century. The older ones born in the 1880s were likely to join the CUP activities before or after the Young Turk Revolution (1908).

Similarly, People’s Preachers were impacted by the long-term war effort from the Balkan Wars until the end of the War of Independence. During the Great War, able-bodied men born between 1869 and 1884 were required at the recruitment offices after the first announcement of general mobilization (*umumi seferberlik*). Therefore, many male preachers experienced the Great War as soldiers.<sup>80</sup> The repercussions of general mobilization on the home front impacted women.<sup>81</sup> In other words, People’s Preachers had temporal proximity with turning points of late Ottoman history, including the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the Balkan Wars, the First World War, and the Turkish “War of Independence.” As provincial elites working as party propagandists, their social status made them convincing narrators of the past, mnemonic actors, or even “provincial memory entrepreneurs.”<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Olivier Bouquet, *Les pachas du sultan: Essai sur les agents supérieurs de l’État ottoman (1839-1909)* (Paris, Louvain: Peeters, 2007), 230.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>79</sup> Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 32.

<sup>80</sup> Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 86.

<sup>81</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*.

<sup>82</sup> Magali Boumaza, “Ce que faire mémoire veut dire,” 20.

### 10.2.2. Paramilitary Experience and the Legacy of Unionism

---

War and genocide affected People's Preachers' lives. The short autobiographies (*terceme-i hal*) submitted to run for legislative elections are rich sources to trace their educational and political trajectories. Many preachers highlighted the most relevant biographical information concerning their political careers to increase their chances of being selected. Hence, many preachers limited their short biographies to their activities for the Party or its predecessors, the CUP, or the Associations for the Defense of Rights (*Müdafaa-i Hukuk Cemiyetleri*). Women who applied listed their activities at associations created or funded by the republican government, such as the Turkish Aeronautical Association and the Red Crescent. Since the CHP leadership valued state service and education level, preachers also highlighted their functions within state service. Nevertheless, a few preachers elaborated on their experience during the successive wars of the early twentieth century.

For instance, Niyazi Tevfik Bey [Yükselen] preached for the party in Kadıköy, Istanbul, from 1931 to 1945. Yükselen was born in 1884 in Çanakkale. An alumnus of the renowned School of Administration (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), he enumerated several administrative jobs he occupied between his graduation (1903) and the beginning of the First World War: under the Ankara governor, as the district governor of Akhisar, inspector of the Ministry of Pious Foundations and headmaster at schools of various degrees including some prestigious lycées (*Sultani*). He underlined in his short autobiography that throughout the Balkan Wars, he was a lecturer at Langues O' in Paris where he "prompted some French great men to deliver lectures in favor of the fatherland" and formed the Turkish Homeland Association (*Türk Yurdu Cemiyeti*) branch in Paris. The latter was founded in August 1911 in Istanbul by cultural nationalists who became closer to the CUP following the Balkan Wars.<sup>83</sup> During the First World War, Niyazi Tevfik Bey contended working for the "national defense" in Çanakkale. After the Mudros Armistice, he was part of the Istanbul nucleus of the "Defense of Rights

---

<sup>83</sup> Following the Balkan Wars, the Turkish Homeland Association became closer with the CUP. Füsun Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*, 60.

Association.” These previous political commitments allowed him to attend the creation of the Republican People’s Party out of the Defense of Rights Associations in 1924.<sup>84</sup>

As mentioned earlier, most People’s Preachers did not study abroad. In this sense, Niyazi Tefvik’s trajectory was exceptional ([Chapter 7](#)). Yet, it confirms the hypothesis about the older preachers’ late Ottoman encounters in elite-producing institutions, nationalist political and cultural organizations such as the CUP and Turkish Homeland Association. His educational background, typical for training the Ottoman civil officialdom, prepared him for his future political and intellectual commitments. The fact that he underlined his lobbying at a French language school training researchers and diplomats aiming to work in the Ottoman lands points to his potential intellectual proximity with nationalists and the governmental circles of the 1910s.

Niyazi Tefvik Bey’s international trajectory was exceptional. Still, it shared some common aspects with other preachers, such as Münir Müeyyet Bekman, working in Çankaya (Ankara). Bekman was born in 1871 in Ioannina, a town ceded to Greece after the Balkan Wars. When the city changed hands, Bekman was twenty-one years old. In his application letter, Bekman mentioned that he was a “writer” (*muharrir*) in two nationalist newspapers, *Yeni Gün* (New Day) and *Öğüt* (Advice), published in Ankara and Afyon during the “War of Independence.”<sup>85</sup> Yükselen and Bekman’s biographies illustrate the politicization of a significant portion of the People’s Preachers who did not fight in the war but were shaped by wartime experiences.

Another preacher from Ankara, Mustafa Başer, worked in the party district direction in his hometown, Keskin. He was born in 1892. After graduating from the *Darülmualimin* (Teachers Training College) in Ankara in 1910-11 [1328], Başer worked as a school headmaster. A year later, Başer participated in the Boy-Scouts training “that opened in Maltepe” (Istanbul). The

---

<sup>84</sup> “Ankara Vali maiyeti- Akhisar kaymakamlığı - Evkaf müfettişliği - Numune mektebi- Orta mektep, sultani ve lise müdürlüklerinde - Harbi Umumide Çanakkalede Müdafaai milliye sıfatile çalıştım. İstanbulda müdafaai hukuk cemiyetinde ve bu cemiyetin halk partisine inkılabı üzerine 1924 de Kadıköy teşkilatına memur oldum. Evvela Çağferaga ocağına Yeldeğirmeni nahiyesine bilahare kaza mutemedliğine seçildim. (...) Paris’te Elsinе’yi Şarkıye Mektebi muallimliğinde bulunarak Balkan Harbi esnasında bir çok Fransız büyüklerine Vatanım lehinde konferanslar verdirdim ve Paris Türk Yurdu müessislerindenim. Pariste Ulum-u Siyasiye Mektebinde ve Sorbon Darülfünununda ikmalî tahsil ve malumat eyledim.” Niyazi Tefvik Yükselen’s application file, Çanakkale, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/ 294-1186-2.

<sup>85</sup> “İstiklal mücadelesinde Ankara’da çıkan Yeni Gün ve Öğüt gazetelerinde muharrirlik.” BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.



opening Başer referred to, was the beginning of boy scouting for Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish Force Association (*Türk Gücü Cemiyeti*) was a nationalist boy-scouts-like association founded in 1913. This association had ideological links with the nationalist *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), with which the Committee of Union and Progress collaborated after the defeat in the Balkan Wars despite formerly having considered it a threat.<sup>86</sup> It also aimed at the youth's military training rather than focusing on other "national sports such as fencing, archery, or javelin."<sup>87</sup> Başer might have been politicized in nationalist circles if he had participated in a training program to become a scoutmaster when he was twenty-three.<sup>88</sup> No further information on his late Ottoman socialization is available. In any case, Başer was highly politicized by the time the Republic was proclaimed. Following demobilization, for instance, he entered the party-affiliated associations such as the Aeronautical Association. Since the CHP district organization was created in his hometown, he could play a leading role in the party's local organization. When he applied for running for the parliamentary elections, he had been the party's district director since 1932 and the mayor of Keskin for a decade. Prior commitment to Unionist political circles was likely to facilitate his swift ascent in the party hierarchies during the early republican era.<sup>89</sup>

Başer's application contains rich information about his war experience. He entered the War Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiye*) to be trained as a reserve officer shortly after the start of the First

---

<sup>86</sup> "Büyük Turanı özleyen yeni, uyanık Türk dünyası, Turan'ın altın tacını taşıyacak saltanat binasının dört direğini dikti: Türk Birliği Derneği, Türk Yurdu, Türk Ocağı ve Türk Gücü!" [Kuzucuoğlu] Tahsin, "Güççülük," *Türk Yurdu*, 15 Mayıs 1330 - 28 Mayıs 1914, 1914. Cited by: Nazan Maksudyan, "Agents or Pawns?: Nationalism and Ottoman Children during the Great War," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 1 (2016): 169; Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*, 60.

<sup>87</sup> "Türk Gücü milli idmanlardan, milli kuvvet oyunlarından, kılıçtan, kalkandan, oktan, yaydan, kargıdan, ciritten, kerpiç gibi balçıktan kuvvet almak istiyor. (...) Fakat Türkün bunların hepsinden üstün bir idmanı varmış ki, ne Acem orduları dağıtmadık, ne bir karış Yunan toprağı çiğnemedik! Türk'ü cihangir eden bu kuvvet özümüzde hâlâ vardır. Bu kuvveti yeniden büyütecek, idmanlarımız hala vardır. İşte Türk Gücü evvel emirde bu idmanların ihyasıyla meşgul olacak." [Kuzucuoğlu] Tahsin, "Güççülük."

<sup>88</sup> The Turkish Force Association later changed its name to the Ottoman Force Association. In April 1914, a government decision introduced scouting activities into the school program to better prepare children for military endeavors.

<sup>89</sup> "Terhisi müteakip keskinde tayyare cemiyeti, hilal ahmer, himayei etfal, milli iktisat ve tasarruf cemiyeti, ticaret ve sanayi odası reisliklerinde bulundum. CHP kaza idare heyeti reisi olunca partimiz nizamnamesinin hökmüne uyararak diğer cemiyet reisliklerinden istifadeni ayrıldım. 11 senesen beri kaza parti reisi olmakla beraber on senedir de keskin belediye reisiyim. halen her iki vazifede gücümün yettiği kadar çalışmaktayım." Application file, Mustafa Başer, no date, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1. The document is undated, but based on its content, it is likely from either 1946 or 1950.

World War. This was due to the facilitation of military training for those who completed higher education after the general mobilization in August 1914.<sup>90</sup> Baki Tümtürk, another preacher from Daday (Kastamonu), was also taken to the training center while he was a student at the prestigious Istanbul High School.<sup>91</sup> Both preachers regarded participation in the First World War and the national struggle as essential elements of their life trajectory that would increase their chances of becoming a CHP deputy. They underlined their wartime posts and medals.

Başer boasted about being “among the first ones to take the sword” during the war. He detailed his wartime posts, mentioning his actions in the Mesopotamia-Iraq Front and the “Caucasus Division.” Tümtürk was relatively vague. He pointed out that he had fought on many fronts in World War I and the “national struggle.” On the other hand, Başer underlined his various military contributions, including his role in the Mosul Guard Battalion and participation in the “*tedip*” (disciplining and punishing) of the Yezidis in Sinjar.<sup>92</sup>

The term he used to characterize the treatment of Yezidis during World War I can be translated as “educating,” “correcting,” “punishing,” or “chastising, punishing for a fault.”<sup>93</sup> “*Tedib*” was also a commonly used state euphemism for the collective violence committed against non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations (Armenians, Assyrians, Yezidis, or

---

<sup>90</sup> Mesut Uyar, “İhtiyat Zabiti Namzedi Olmak..” *Çanakkale 1915*, June, 2013.

<sup>91</sup> “Kastamonuluyum. 331 yılında tam devreli İstanbul lisesinin 11inde okurken talimgâha alındım. İhtiyat zabiti olarak umumi harpte ve milli mücadelede bir çok muharebeye iştirak ettim. Harp ve kırmızı şeritli istiklal madalyalarile teltif olundum. 338 nasıplı istihkam üst-teğmeniyim. 940 yılında da tazviz edilerek emsalimle birlik terhis oldum. Application file, Baki Tümtürk, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/307-1248-2.

<sup>92</sup> “Umumi harp seferberliğinde (7064) sicil numarası ile mektebi harbiyeye ihtiyat zabiti namzedi olarak girdim. ilk mürettepten çıktım. ihtiyat zabitleri içinde ilk kılıcı takanlar meyanındayım. orhaniye, pendik talimgâhında heyeti talimiye meyanında bulundum. kırk dokuzuncu fırka 154 alay 2inci tabur 7inci bölük kumandanlığını yaptım. 6ıncı ordu emrinde 5inci kafkası tabur yaverliğinde ve musul muhafız taburu 2inci bölük kumandanlık vazifesinde bulundum. Sincarda yezidilerin tedibini harekâtına 23üncü alayla iştirak ettim. Harp madalyaları aldım.” Application file, Mustafa Başer, undated application dile, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>93</sup> “Action d’éduquer. Peu employé dans ce sens. Punition, correction.” Şemseddin Sami, “münevver,” 334; James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 474. Maurus Reinkowski, “The Imperial Idea and Realpolitik – Refom Policy and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire,” in *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2011), 468.

Kurds).<sup>94</sup> Yezidis faced destructive measures along with Armenians and Assyrians during World War I.<sup>95</sup>

Mustafa Başer's point about his participation in the "punishing" of the Sinjar Yezidis is one among many examples of People's Preachers' wartime experience of mass violence. Başer was also part of the national resistance created after the armistice, again created in his hometown, and was injured during a "difficult battle" of the Turkish War of Independence.<sup>96</sup>

Similarly, Hüseyin Talınlı, preacher from Kars, mentioned his works at the Defense of Rights Associations, the party's provincial administrative committee, as well as the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), stating that he was one of the founders of the Turkish Hearths' Kars section in 1922 and its last director before its closure while omitting his role as a People's Preacher.<sup>97</sup> Hamiyet Ülün, a preacher of Bolu, also prioritized her work for the administrative boards of the Turkish Hearths that preceded both the People's Preachers Organization and People's Houses and her "lectures" "to represent the party" instead of being listed as a People's Preacher.<sup>98</sup>

These examples show that, at least from the viewpoint of preachers, working for the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) before the foundation of the People's Houses was something of value for their advancement within the CHP structure. In other words, the People's Preachers' autobiographies pointed to a continuity between nationalist cultural organizations founded under the Second Constitutional Monarchy and those created during the republican era. They eventually linked the CUP with the CHP and its cultural sections, the People's Houses.

---

<sup>94</sup> Ahmet Kahraman, *Kürt İsyanları : Tedip ve Tenkil*; Tuğba Yıldırım, *Kürt Sorunu ve Devlet : Tedip ve Tenkil Politikaları, (1925-1947)* (Eminönü, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Maria Six-Hohenbalken, "The 72nd Firman of the Yezidis: A "Hidden Genocide" during World War I?," *Genocide Studies International* 13, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>96</sup> "Milli mücadelede keskin müdafaai hukuk cemiyetinde çalıştım. Garp cephesinde 7inci fırka 23üncü alay, linci tabur 1 inci bölük kumandanı olarak eski şehri, kütahya, afyon karahisar cephelerinde ve çal tepe çetin muharebesinde bulundum, çal tepedeki kanlı çarpışmada yaralandım. İstiklal madalyaasıle taltip olundum. (10768) İstiklal madalyasının numarasıdır." Application file, Mustafa Başer, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/340-1419-1.

<sup>97</sup> "Bendeleri 1923 tarihinden itibaren evvela Müdafaai hukuk cemiyetine ve 1925 den itibaren C.H.P. nde vilayet İdare Hey, etinde faal olarak çalışmaktayım. Bu meyanda 1922 karsta şubesi açılan Türk ocağının müessislerinden olup, Türk ocaklarının kapatılış tarihine kadar Ocak idare hey, etinde ve Reisliğinde çalıştım, Kars Türk Ocağının son reisiyim". Hüseyin Talınlı's application file, 28 January 1943, Kars, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

<sup>98</sup> "Türk Ocakları idare teşkilatında fırkanın temsili ile umumi konferansların, en önemli zamanlarda, sosyal birlikler teşkilinde, Kızılay kolları üzerine çalışmalarım." Hamiyet Ülün's application, 1950, 490-1-0-0/293-1180-2.

Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz, initially a preacher from Gaziantep, submitted a handwritten application detailing his past commitments. He asserted enrollment in the Aleppo section of the CUP under “Commander Ratıp Bey,” referencing a notable figure of the Cilician Front in the Turkish War of Independence.<sup>99</sup> This conflict opposed the Turkish militias to the French, alongside their Levant Army, including Armenian Regiments.<sup>100</sup> Ali Ratıp Bey had adopted the pseudonym Sinan Tekelioğlu during the armistice era as a member of the nationalist militia. He maintained this pseudonym as his official name in the republican era and later served as a CHP deputy from 1939 onwards. Although Ratıp Bey did not explicitly mention his CUP affiliation in his *terceme-i hal*, Dokuzoğuz’s mention suggests a connection between Ratıp Bey and the CUP before the national struggle. Along with this national resistance hero, Dokuzoğuz also mentioned a famous member of the CUP and the Special Organization (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*), namely Nuri Conker.<sup>101</sup> The Special Organization had played a central role in carrying out the genocide between 1915 and 1916.<sup>102</sup> He claimed that Conker was ready to endorse his candidacy if he did not unfortunately pass. Dokuzoğuz’s reference to his own CUP enrollment at the outset of his motivation letter underscores the perceived continuity between the two political entities.

Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş was not listed as a People’s Preacher, but he regularly gave lectures at the Gaziantep People’s House, which he later directed around 1935.<sup>103</sup> The form prepared for his application had specific fields regarding his political commitments before and during the CHP’s single-party rule. The last field was dedicated to supplementary remarks. In this resume, Ahmet Muhtar did not detail the lectures he delivered in the party’s name among his

---

<sup>99</sup> “Binbaşı Ratıp Bey zamanında İttihat ve Terraki Cemiyetinin Halep komitasında 81 numarasında kayıtlı idim.” Yılmaz Dokuzoğuz’s application file, 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/300-1215-2.

<sup>100</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*. The diary of the Commander Ratıp Bey published by the Turkish Armed Forces General Staff (Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Genel Kurmay Başkanlığı) underlines his activity against “Armenian Revenge Regiments” among the French forces in Cilicia (Fransız kuvvetleri arasındaki Ermeni İntikam Alayı Gönüllüleri). Sertif Demir, Suat Akgül, and Mesut Güvenbaş, eds., *Kuvayimilliyeye Komutani Tekelioğlu Sinan Bey’in Günlüğü* (Ankara: ATASE Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2012), 5.

<sup>101</sup> Marc Aymes, “La tâche de l’interprète.” Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 69.

<sup>102</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, 69.

<sup>103</sup> I cannot access his exact date of becoming the Gaziantep People’s House director because the documents were undated. Still, it is well known that Ahmet Muhtar became the People’s House director when the former director, Asım Aksoy, became a CHP deputy in December 1935.

“responsibilities within the party” despite delivering lectures in Antep since 1931 on various occasions.<sup>104</sup> Instead, he emphasized his contribution to the national struggle and his proximity to the great men of his time. He stated that he had been a party member since the creation of the Defense of Rights Associations, which dates back to paramilitary resistance against the occupation forces between 1918 and 1920. Ahmet Muhtar explained that he had attended private meetings organized in the apartments of Kara Vasıf and the Ottoman Ambassador Ahmet Muhtar Bey during the “armistice era,” which led to the establishment of the Karakol Society.<sup>105</sup>

The Karakol Society was established under the supervision of Talât Pasha in Berlin and had a direct connection with the CUP’s Special Organization. The Karakol Society was responsible for transferring the ammunition concealed by the Special Organization towards the end of World War I. Ahmet Muhtar considered these affiliations as his “responsibilities within the party,” indicating a clear link between the Karakol Society, the Defense of Rights Associations, and the CHP. The CHP cadre affiliated with Karakol faced a purge within the party after the attempted assassination of Mustafa Kemal in 1926. However, Kara Vasıf was acquitted before his death (1931). In this regard, mentioning Kara Vasıf could be risky for Ahmet Muhtar. Nevertheless, he believed this information was more valuable than his lectures for the party or his contribution to the local press, defending the views of the nationalist movement, which contested Allied occupation.

When questioned about his contributions to the party, Ahmet Muhtar claimed that he had been an active member since its inception and that he contributed to the expansion of the party’s district organization in Gaziantep after its foundation. Going back to the prehistory of the party, hence the armistice era, he explained how he convinced the Islamic Society (*Cemiyeti*

---

<sup>104</sup> I could not find the trace of 1931 speech in Antep. The official website of the Museum of the Defense of Antep (Antep Savunması Şehitliği ve Saygı Müzesi) mentions the 1931 commemoration organized in Antep during which Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş delivered a fervent speech.” Şehitler Abidesinin İnşası ve Şehitlerimizin Naaşlarının taşınması,” *Panorama25Aralık*, accessed 20 March, 2024, <https://panorama25aralik.com/sehitlerabidesi/tr/>. See also: *Gaziantep Halkevi Broşürü*.

<sup>105</sup> “Mütareke sırasında İstanbulda Kara Vasıf ve Sefir B. Ahmet Muhtarın apartmanlarındaki toplantılarda bulundum. Kara Vasıf Atatürkün isaretilerle İstanbulda yapılan hususî teşkilat [sic] için çalıştım. 931de, C.H. partisinin, merkez kasası idare heyeti başkanlığında bulundum. Kaza yönkurulu kaldırılmış olmağla İlyönkurulu üyeliğine seçildim.” Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş’s registration copy, undated document, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1.

*İslamiye*), a “significant and influential organization,” to join the Defense of Rights Associations<sup>106</sup> The *sicil* form included a separate question concerning his past political involvements following the questions about his services to the party and his “services to the state.” As part of his past political engagements, Ahmet Muhtar disclosed his membership to the CUP during the Second Constitutional Monarchy. He remained “in the party” until its abolition in October 1918, after which he attended political “clubs” in Antep and Istanbul. However, he had to discontinue his association with these political clubs after the French took them over, and Armenians denounced him in front of the martial court (*divan-ı harb*). After risking judgment in Istanbul for war crimes, Ahmet Muhtar went underground in Anatolia.<sup>107</sup>

The cases of Dokuzoğuz and Göğüş show that promoting the party was just one of the many steps in their political careers within nationalist organizations during their lifetimes, which were heavily influenced by their experiences during the First World War and the resulting national struggle. Due to the war’s duration, scope, and significant impact on their personal lives, People’s Preachers who were old enough to recall their war experiences greatly emphasized them. As a result, it is impossible to fully comprehend the history of the CHP, or that of People’s Preachers, without considering the legacies and consequences of the First World War, including the genocide against Ottoman Christians (Armenians, Assyrians) and the Turkish War of Independence.

Given the central role of war, genocide, and paramilitary experiences in the autobiographies of former People’s Preachers, it is expected that they address these topics in their public lectures. The next section will examine the role of People’s Preachers in resurfacing the genocidal past and violent present of early republican Turkey. It will show the continuity

---

<sup>106</sup> “Partiden hiç ayrıldım. Gaziantep’te ilk defa semt teşkilatı yaptım. Tahlif heyetlerinin sayısını semtlere göre arttırdım. Böylelikle üyeleri kısa bir zamanda çoğalttım. O zaman memlekette hususi ve hâkim bir teşkilat olan Cemiyeti İslamiyeyi takımıle Müdafaa-i Hukuka aldım.” Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş’s registration copy, undated document, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1

<sup>107</sup> “Meşrutiyetle beraber İttihat ve terakki partisine girdim. G. Antep ve Bakırköy, sonra Fatih kulupları kâtibi mes’ullüklerinde bulundum. Partinin mâlum dağılması üzerine Fatih kulübü mes’ul kâtipliğini kabul ettim. Kulup Fransızlar tarafından işgal edilmekle bu vazifeden ayrıldım ve Ermenilerin o zamanki harbi umumiye ihbarları üzerinde gizlenmek zorunda bulundum.” Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş’s registration copy, undated document, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/939-644-1. Taner Akçam and Vahak N. Dadrian, *Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2011).

between the “dark past” and “reformist” or “revolutionary” present in the ways preachers legitimized the newly established regime and its reforms.

### 10.3. Violent War Memories

---

Delivering speeches during celebrations and commemorative events was among the People’s Preachers’ tasks. In each city and town, People’s Preachers commemorated important moments of the First World War, the “War of Independence,” and the resulting liberation of cities and towns. These speeches show the particularity of the war experience because their language was marked by physical and destructive aspects of this long decade of war and one of the first genocides of the twentieth century.<sup>108</sup>

War-related deportations and massacres were widespread in Anatolia during the First World War, affecting various religious and linguistic groups depending on their population distribution. For instance, the Armenian Genocide had a significant impact on the Eastern Anatolian provinces due to the high concentration of Armenians in that area. However, this does not mean that Armenians in Western Anatolia were not deported and killed.<sup>109</sup> Additionally, various Greek-speaking Orthodox populations were targeted by massacres and deportations in Western and Northern Anatolia during and after the First World War. The violence of the Greek-Turkish War also brought considerable devastation to Western Anatolia.

Given the geography of the violence committed in the name of wartime or peacetime security and the availability of a large corpus of speeches, this section will draw on sources from distant provinces of early republican Turkey. It will emphasize the violence of war memory and its instrumentalization against future enemies. The focus will be on recurring metaphors of physical harm and exterminatory violence to reflect on the entanglement between war and genocide in early republican political discourse.

In Gaziantep, for instance, the memory of the city’s liberation was particularly violent. In December 1942, the former director of the Gaziantep People’s House, Ömer Asım Aksoy, sent an order to the CHP administrative committee in the province reminding them to commemorate

---

<sup>108</sup> On the brutalization of language, see George Lachmann Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 170.

<sup>109</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, 557-571.

the liberation. He attached a speech to his letter and ordered the party organization to read this speech on the local radio. The speech was about the heroism of the Gaziantep defense militias. This narrative of heroism did not exclude explicit depiction of violent death brought by the nationalist forces. Ömer Asım's speech stated that the "noble hero" of the national struggle "tied the hands of the enemy combatants with sword and dagger, mace and lasso, broke their feet, cut off their heads, and tore their chests."<sup>110</sup>

Ömer Asım remembered the weapons used and the physical violence inflicted upon enemies. Twenty years after the battles, guerrilla warfare was depicted with pride. Ömer Asım reminded his audience of a folk song about a gang leader named Karayılan (Black Snake). The latter was the pseudonym of Molla Mehmet (1888-1920), a hero of the national struggle born in Pazarcık (Maraş). The poem referred to the fights on the Antep-Kilis road. These roads were both areas of military confrontation with Allied soldiers and were deportation routes and return routes for genocide survivors.<sup>111</sup> Ömer Asım recited a popular song about these conflicts to his audience.<sup>112</sup>

Karayılan calls you to sit down  
We will bring heads from Kilis roads around  
French names will drown in the sink's overflow  
Shoot the gangs; the day of honor will show

This Karayılan gang has vowed to ruin the name of the French by beheading people. Since the first day of our national struggle, the foreign feet in our homeland made us breathe the fresh air of freedom and independence; we have been living in the bliss of complete liberation on our lands.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> "Boğuşma günü o asil kahraman kılıç ve hançerle, gürz ve kementle düşman muhاریplerin ellerini bağladı, ayaklarını kırdı, başlarını kesti, göğüslerini parçaladı." Ömer Asım Aksoy, Speech commemorating the liberation of Gaziantep to be diffused from the local radio station, 23 December 1942, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-896-1.

<sup>111</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l'élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 235-249.

<sup>112</sup> This popular song was later taken on by Nazım Hikmet in his *Legend of Nationalist Militia (Kuva-yı Milliye Destanı)* published in 1968. Hikmet, Nazım. "The Legend of the National Militia." In *Modernism: The Creation of Nation-States*, translated by Ahmet Ersoy. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010.

<sup>113</sup> "Yine halk türkülerimizden birinde çetebaşılardan Karayılan ağziyle Antep-Kilis yolu üzerindeki savaşçılar için şöyle denilir:

Karayılan der ki gelin oturak  
Kilis yollarından kelle getirek  
Fransız adını bütün batırak  
Vurun çetelerin namus günüdür



The national struggle was depicted as a war won by beheading the enemy as the soldiers progressed. The French were not only kicked out of the country, but their name and notoriety were “ruined.” The war also led to a “complete liberation” and a “fresh air of renewal.” These notions were reminiscent of what Dirk Moses called “permanent security” as a driving force of genocidal processes. According to Moses, permanent security is a reasoning that leads states and other political entities to take preemptive measures to become invulnerable.<sup>114</sup> The war depicted by Ömer Asım’s speech was an existential one.<sup>115</sup> As a result, each and every effort, including violent killing and torture, to prevent the destruction of the self was estheticized, even twenty years after the end of the war.

Narratives of heroic soldiers killing and crippling the enemy were useful to generate militarist pride in the national past. In early republican Turkey, violent war memories were also instrumental in threatening future potential enemies. The looming threats to the Turkish state’s and nation’s existence haunted the speeches delivered by People’s Preachers. People’s Preachers played a key role in threatening suspected enemies in return. In so doing, they also perpetuated the Unionist repertoire of action.<sup>116</sup> Wars should be waged against those who threatened the Turkish Republic. Ali Özkanat, a preacher from Ankara who was selected to deliver a speech from the People’s Chairs in Mamak, Ankara, used violence against past enemies to threaten future ones as follows.

OUR FATHER (Atatürk) entrusted the republic to us. [We will] cut out the hands reaching to deprive us of this treasure from their roots, [we will] broke [their] feet, and [we will] blind the eyes who look hostilely. My friends, my fellow countrymen! We are such a nation that no arm invented in the world can defeat us. We are the descendants of a nation who managed to beat the world’s most powerful seven states by using stones

---

Bu karayılan çetesi kelleler kese kese Fransız adını batırımıya ahdetmiştir. Milli mücadelemiz, yurdumuzdaki yabancı ayakları kırıp bize hürriyet ve istiklalın temiz havasını teneffüs ettirdiği günden beri topraklarımız üstünde tam bir kurtuluşun bahtiyarlığı içinde yaşıyoruz.” Ömer Asım Aksoy, Speech commemorating the liberation of Gaziantep to be diffused from the local radio station, 23 December 1942, Gaziantep, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-896-1.

<sup>114</sup> A. Dirk Moses, *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression*, 251.

<sup>115</sup> The trope of the existential threat to the “Turks” is also present in the memoirs studied by Duygu Tasalp. See Duygu Tasalp, *Cent ans de négation : les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l’Unionisme à l’Islamisme*, 73.

<sup>116</sup> Nathalie Clayer, “The Time of Freedom, the Time of Struggle for Power: The Young Turk Revolution in the Albanian Provinces,” 127; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha: Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018, 115.

against cannons, cockboats (*sandal*), armored cruisers (*çelik zırhlı*), and our chests against their bayonets despite all the hardships. If we are obliged to go to war for the sake [of the nation], we will go to war as if we were going to a wedding party.<sup>117</sup>

Özkanat described a conflict against “the world’s most powerful seven states” while notably omitting the Ottoman defeat of 1918. He was probably talking about the victory of the national struggle despite technical and economic shortcomings. Where did violence in his words – “cutting out hands from their roots, breaking the feet, and blinding the eyes” – originate from? Whose hands were cut “from their roots” during the national struggle?

This speech, delivered during the Republic Day ceremony in 1941, highlights several aspects of how war was conceptualized in speeches by the People’s Preachers. Firstly, the victory of the “Independence War” often obscured the Ottoman defeat in the First World War. This allowed the narrative of a victorious warrior nation to be maintained and perpetuated images of militarized masculinity that were central to nation-building in Turkey. Secondly, periodizations based on the dichotomy of war and peace differed in the Turkish context. The disregard for the Ottoman defeat in 1918 was possible because “the war” or “the General War” (*Umumî Harp*) held a broader meaning for People’s Preachers than the First World War (1914-1918).

We can further contextualize Ali Özkanat’s words on his preparedness to wage a new war, if necessary, in light of the Second World War and the anxieties of the Turkish government after the occupation of Greece by the Axis Powers in April 1941. These anxieties led the Republican People’s Party to mobilize People’s Preachers like Özkanat to organize educational and motivational lectures on war, such as “How to fight against parachutists?” or “How to protect oneself from poisonous gases?” countrywide.<sup>118</sup> However, before Turkish decision-makers started to anticipate the Second World War, the figure of the enemy and the war

---

<sup>117</sup> “ATAMIZ CUMHURİYETİ bize emanet etmiştir. Bizi bu hazineden ve emanetten mahrum etmek için uzanacak eller kökünden kesilecek, ayaklar kırılacak, yan bakan gözler kör edilecektir. Arkadaşlar, hemşeriler: Biz öyle bir milletiz ki İstiklâlimiz için Dünyanın en büyük en kuvvetli 7 devletine topuna taşla, süngüsüne göksümüzle, çelik zırhlılarına sandallarla karşı koymuş ve mağlup etmiş bir milletin evlâtlarıyız. O milletin ta kendiyiz. (...) Eğer bu uğurda mecbur kalırsak Düğüne gider gibi harbe gitmesini bilen bir milletiz.” *Emphasis on Ata and Cumhuriyet added by the preacher. This was a common practice in early republican sources.* Speech of Ali Özkanat, Republic Day, Mamak, Ankara, 29 October 1941, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/132-534-4.

<sup>118</sup> Reports on the lectures organized at the Van People’s House, Van, 11 July 1940, 490-1-0-0/1013-910-1; Reports on the lectures organized at the Kars People’s House\ Kars, 11 June 1940, 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

metaphors allowed them to talk about potential internal enemies. Another speech delivered by an officer of the Postal and Telegraph Organization in Ankara in 1941 to celebrate Republic Day reiterated the same metaphor: blinding the eyes.

Above all, as long as our independence is guaranteed by our daytime vigilance, our efforts within this country will never cease. If anyone falls into the delusion of coveting our territorial integrity, they should have no doubt about our strength to create legends that will overshadow Sakarya and Dumlupınar. So long as we, as a whole nation, form an unbreakable circle around our great leader İsmet İnönü, no foreigner will dare to look at us askance. If anyone does, the heroic Turkish army is more prepared and vigilant than ever to blind those eyes. The entire world must be certain that every Turk, from seven to seventy, is born a soldier and will die a soldier. This is not mere talk, my friends; our unparalleled national struggle, which has no match in the pages of history, is the closest witness to the miracles we have created. How happy is the one who says, 'I am a Turk.'<sup>119</sup>

People's Preachers used the concept of "war" to discuss a wide range of issues, from reforms to armed conflict with other states. Reforms were often described using wartime metaphors and sometimes referred to as wars, such as the "Language War" (*Dil Savaşı*). In speeches celebrating the "Language Revolution," speakers invoked the idea of a war without a clear beginning or end, describing it as a war of extermination. In Boyabat (Sinop), an education officer (*maarif memuru*), used these terms to connect past wars to ongoing cultural wars.

The Turkish nation, driven by the noble and exalted blood in its veins, cut off the vile feet and eyes of the enemies from the homeland and made those who dared to look blind and crippled by severing their legs at the root, rendering them unable to come or see, today it has also embarked on new struggles and efforts to establish our national unity. It has begun to walk this path with many arms.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> "bunların hepsinin üstünde iktiklalimizin garantisi gündüz nöbet bekledikçe bu memleket içindeki çalışmalarımıza son olmayacak gaflete düşüp de toprak büyünlüğümüze göz diken olursa ne yaman bir varlık olduğumuz sakaryalarla dumlupınarları gölgede bırakacak menkıbeler yaratmak kudretimizden kimsenin şüphesi olmamalıdır şu kadar ki bütün milletçe yüce başbuğumuz İsmet İnönünün çevresinde kenetlenmiş kırılmaz bir halka teşkil ettikçe hiç bir yabancının bize yan bakmasına imkan yoktur bakacaklar olursa kahraman Türk ordusu bu gözleri gör etmeye her zamandan ziyade hazır ve uyanık olarak vazife başındadır bütün dünya şundan emin olmalıdır ki Türk yedisinden yetmişine kadar asker doğmuş asker ölecektir bu kuru bir laf değildir arkadaşlar yarattığımız harikaların en yakın şahidi tarih sayfelerinde eşine rastlanmayan milli mücadelemizdir ne mutlu türküm diyene." Speech transcription by İhsan Onan, 23 October 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/132-534-4.

<sup>120</sup> "Türk millet damarlarındaki asil ve yüce kanın verdiği hızla nasıl ki anayurttan düşmanların pis ayak ve gözlerini kesti ve bakmak cüretinde bulunanların gözlerini kör, bacaklarını kökünden keserek topal edip te gelemez ve göremez bir hale koymuşsa bu günde milli nebliğimiz meydana konması için yeni uğraşma ve didinmiye yol açmış ve bu yolda bir çok kollarla yürümeye başlamıştır." Dündar Bey, 26 September 1934, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1170-109-02.

This was a war of extermination because the main objective was not to force the enemy to fulfill the Turkish or Ottoman state's will.<sup>121</sup> The goal was to cripple enemies, blinding them completely. The enemy was not always a relic of the past. While references to the past blurred the line between different foes of the First World War and the "War of Independence," references to future enemies blurred the distinction between political opponents from various camps. There were many potential enemies in interwar Turkey. A speech at Şehremini People's House in 1935 mentioned those who wanted to incite a class struggle, on the one hand, and "fanatics," on the other.

Some rebellions broke out in the country. People whose minds were dulled by bad superstitions fell under the influence of malicious foreign suggestions with the submissiveness and lack of will of a sheep. The specter of fanaticism dared to challenge the vigorous and prudent revolution. The mobilized Turkish army swiftly put an end to this. Just as it saved the homeland from enemy invasion, it also liberated it from the invasion of fanaticism and ignorance. It destroyed the roots of these issues and instilled a beautiful admiration for the revolution.<sup>122</sup>

This citation shows that the war metaphor was used against both internal and external enemies. The measures to be taken against the "specter of fanaticism" were no different from those used against the foreign enemy that had invaded the country after the First World War. But the "specter of communism" and class conflict, as well, was haunting Anatolia. It had to be fought with similar means: by destroying its roots.

If individuals who will [...] break the national unity by putting the nation's children in conflict, who will drag [the nation] into danger [...] emerge, if there is a class struggle, we will immediately drown and kill them without allowing them to take root and live.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>121</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard, Peter Paret, and Bernard Brodie (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 75.

<sup>122</sup> "Memlekette bazı isyanlar patladı. zihinleri kötü hurafelerle uyuşmuş olan kimseler bir koyun mutavaatı ve iradesizliği ile kötü yabancı alçakça telkinlerin tesiri altında kaldılar. hortlak ve kötü taassup dinç ve tedbirli inkılâbın yürümek cür'etini gösterdi. seferber Türk ordusu bir hamlede bunun önüne geçti. vatani düşman istilasından kurtardığı gibi taassup ve cehalet istilasından da kurtardı. asılları kahretti. inkılâba güzel bir hayret verdi." Hasene Ilgaz, "İstiklal ve İnkılap," [Şehremini Halkevi, İstanbul], 1935. The place where the speech was delivered is not specified on the document. However, since Hasene Ilgaz was the director of Şehremini Halkevi in İstanbul in 1935, it is probable that it was delivered in İstanbul. KEKBMV\_10002\_003\_182.

<sup>123</sup> "Fakat bugün milletin dik dilekte ve işte birbirini kıran ve onun milli bütünlüğünü parçalayıp bütün çocuklarını birbirine Karşı koyan onu bütün tehlikelere ve kara afiyetlere sürükleyen kimseler çıkarsa sınıf kavgası olursa onun yaşamasına gökleşmesine [kökleşmesine] meydan vermeden bugünün gençliği yarının ve bizler onu hemen boğacağız ve öldüreceğiz." Hasene Ilgaz, "İstiklal ve İnkılap," [Şehremini Halkevi, İstanbul], 1935. The place where the speech was delivered is not precised on the document. However, since Hasene Ilgaz

The spread of communism from the bordering USSR was among the concerns of the early republican leadership. The principle of populism was defined in the CHP 1935 program precisely to reject claims of class division and struggle in Turkey, adopting a corporatist discourse promoting the division of labor between different professional groups.<sup>124</sup> The Turkish Communist Party was founded in September 1920.<sup>125</sup> The founder of the party, Mustafa Suphi, and fourteen other prominent communists were murdered on the coast of the Black Sea in January 1921 through an operation in which the Ankara government was involved.<sup>126</sup> After this point, the Communist Party continued its activities clandestinely. Hence, Turkey played its part in the history of transnational anticommunism.<sup>127</sup>

The author of this speech excerpt, Hasene Ilgaz precisely used the terms “drown and kill [...] without allowing them to take root and live.” Since she was too young to participate in decision-making circles in 1921, her reference to drowning those who claimed a class struggle before they could take root and live was an almost explicit reference to the killing of the communists in 1921.

While the previous section tried to explain the violence of the words by the violent trajectory of some preachers who actively participated in the mass murder of Armenians, Assyrians, and Yezidis during the First World War and after, the violence of Hasene Ilgaz can only be explained by what is taken for granted and normalized in the early republican political discourse. We do not have enough proof to interpret the violence of her threats by her experience as a perpetrator or bystander. Still, we can better grasp Ilgaz’s words – far from exceptional – by referring to what she thought she was allowed and expected to say in this particular context as a chosen preacher of the new regime.

Like Hasene Ilgaz, many preachers threatened “enemies of the state and its laws” by invoking physical harm and destruction. These threats contained traces of genocide that

---

was the director of Şehremini Halkevi in Istanbul in 1935, it is probable that it was delivered in Istanbul. KEKBMV\_10002\_003\_182.

<sup>124</sup> *1935 CHP Program Taslağı*, 1935, T.B.M.M. Kütüphanesi, Ankara, Turkey.

<sup>125</sup> Bülent Gökay, “The Turkish Communist Party: The Fate of the Founders,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 2 (1993): 227.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>127</sup> Marla Stone and Giuliana Chamedes, “Naming the Enemy: Anti-Communism in Transnational Perspective,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 53, no. 1 (2018): 5.

normalized the annihilation of those who “threaten national unity.” For instance, the reference to “drowning” in the above quotation is not haphazard. Before the communists, many Armenians were drowned in the Black Sea.<sup>128</sup> There was thus a continuity between Unionists and Kemalists in the methods employed against different types of enemies. Republican sermons legitimized the exterminatory policies of the past, present, and future. They routinely affirmed how the “traitors” should be punished and killed by mentioning different torture and assassination methods such as drowning, blinding, and mutilation.

OUR FATHER (*ATA*) entrusted the republic to us. [We will] cut out the hands reaching to deprive us of this treasure from their roots, [we will] broke [their] feet, and [we will] blind the eyes who look hostilely.<sup>129</sup>

This citation is taken from a speech delivered on 29 May 1941 during Republic Day in Ankara. What is supposed to be a joyful occasion for Turkish citizens becomes an opportunity to threaten the enemies of “this treasure,” the Republic of Turkey. Many republican sermons used exterminatory metaphors around the idea of “root” (*kök*): cutting hands from their roots (*elleri kökünden kesmek*), preventing from taking root (*kökleşmesine izin vermemek*), extirpating or exterminating (*kökünü kazımak*). However, since they were all used as threats – prospective by definition – they were rather considerations about the near future, hence the present of the early republic. Therefore, the exterminatory rhetoric allowed not only the normalization of the past destruction but also perpetuated it, legitimizing the destruction of political groups who threatened the current order of things in the name of “permanent security.”

The Eternal Leader Ata’s legacy to us  
Whoever betrays the Republic  
We will shed their blood, destroy their life  
At any cost, we will keep his name alive.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, “L’extermination des Arméniens par le régime jeune-turc (1915-1916),” *Mass Violence & Resistance* (2010). Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide : A Complete History*, 733.

<sup>129</sup> « Bizi bu hazineden ve emanetten mahrum etmek için uzanacak eller kökünden kesilecek, ayaklar kırılacak, yan bakan gözler kör edilecektir. » Speech of Ali Özkanat, Ankara, 29 Octobre 1941, 490-0-0-1/132-534-4.

<sup>130</sup>“Ebedi Şef Atanın bizlere emaneti  
Cumhuriyete her kim ederse ihaneti  
Aktırırız kanını yok ederiz canını  
Ne bahasına olsa yaşatırız sanını” Poem recited by Darendeli Ahmet Ertem, Ankara, 29 November 1941, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/132-534-4.

People's Preachers participated in the securitization of different kinds of political opposition, perceived as existential threats, in the early republican era. The Unionist destruction political enemies by using extrajudicial means between 1908 and 1914 definitely left its legacy in the normalization of this political grammar among low-ranking CHP cadres such as People's Preachers. People's Preachers' constant analogy between the destruction, extirpation, and crippling of the enemy during a "war," without beginning or end, was also a proof of the imprint left by the Armenian Genocide.

In this sense, I understand the post-genocidal habitus as an attitude through which the early republican regime treated potential threats to its permanent security. Another episode of genocidal violence, conventionally called the "Dersim Massacres" by the scholarly community and "Tunceli Events" by the Turkish official historiography, happened, for instance, during the years (1937-1938) when preachers were highly active.

The examples provided so far offer glimpses into vague reminiscences of violent war experiences, devoid of clear beginnings or endings and without explicitly named enemies. The figure of the internal enemy in these speeches shifts from religious fundamentalists ("fanatics") to communists ("those who stirred class struggle") and to those who threatened Turkey's territorial unity. The next section will focus on a province that endured particularly violent experiences during the First World War and the "War of Independence," illustrating how the enemies to be destroyed become less ambiguous when we focus on a specific region and its actors.





## 11. Memory-Making in the Borderlands

---

In this chapter, we will focus on the Kars region and its preachers to explore how the People’s Preachers have contributed to the transmission of memory and historical narratives related to war and genocide. We will also delve into the connection between legitimizing the new regime and discussing mass violence, with a specific focus on the extreme case of Kars. Kars was originally a borderland region between the Ottoman and Russian Empires until the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. After the war, the city was ceded to Russia, significantly affecting the region’s population. Subsequently, the borderland province became Erzurum and had a Russian consul. The Muslim populations in the ceded territories could migrate to the Ottoman Empire or stay in their hometowns.<sup>1</sup>

Kars held significant strategic importance during the First World War. A crucial military defeat for the Ottoman Empire occurred in Sarıkamış, at the border between Erzurum and Kars provinces. This defeat heavily influenced Ottoman decision-makers, who convinced themselves that the Armenian populations of the region played a role in the defeat through draft evasion or collaboration with the Russian Army. The Battle of Sarıkamış is considered a turning point in the history of the Armenian Genocide, in further radicalizing important political leaders like Talât Pasha, the “architect” of the Armenian Genocide.<sup>2</sup> Kars was not a part of the Ottoman Empire during the genocide. Still, the subsequent “War of Independence” was particularly violent and important in the case of Kars because it was primarily fought with the motivation to prevent the Republic of Armenia from expanding into Eastern Anatolia.<sup>3</sup>

The first section will examine the biographies of selected preachers from Kars. The second, third, and fourth sections will analyze two speeches in Erzurum by a preacher from Kars, who

---

<sup>1</sup> İlber Ortaylı, “Çarlık Rusyası Yönetiminde Kars,” *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 9 (1978); Masha Cerovic, “Une Anatolie russe: appropriation, sédentarisation, colonisation de la frontière russo-ottomane après 1877” (Esperience de l’espace, espace de l’expérience dans les sociétés (post-)ottomanes, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 13 February 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, 220; Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha : Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 227-230.

later became a deputy of Kars, to explore further the relationship between preaching the republic and preaching the genocide.

### 11.1. The Case Study of Kars Preachers

---

I chose Kars for this case study because a preliminary examination of the People's Preachers, their speeches, and publications revealed how central the "Armenian Question" was for them. However, this does not imply that Kars is a unique case in terms of the centrality of Armenians and their persecution in how the People's Preachers explained the values and principles of the new regime. Cross-referencing the autobiographies and speeches of these preachers proved particularly challenging due to the scarcity of sources available throughout the research conducted for this dissertation. The limited and precarious nature of these sources made Kars the only location where I could effectively cross-reference a biography with a lecture through the lens of mass violence. Other researchers, notably Ümit Kurt, have documented similar "local perpetrators" or "proactive local perpetrators" in different regions.<sup>4</sup>

Kars also offered an interesting case study because it was underrepresented in the party archives. The province produced fewer documents relating to their partisan activities than the others. In March 1936, for the "Independence and Revolution" lecture series organized synchronically in many provinces, Kars sent brief telegrams reporting the success of the lectures with considerable delay. At first glance, the lack of Kars' integration into the state-party apparatus – exemplified by the small number of "party documents" produced in the province – seemed like a limit to drawing a case study about Kars. On the other hand, this small number of documents made tracing a relatively higher percentage of active party members easier.

While the CHP General Secretary sent the first order on 24 December 1935, the province organized the lectures only in mid-March 1936. This was also linked to meteorological conditions ([Chapter 9](#)). The party headquarters advised Zihni Orhon, the preacher for Kars,

---

<sup>4</sup> Ümit Kurt, "Proactive Local Perpetrators: Mehmet Yasin (Sani Kutluğ) and Ahmed Faik (Erner)," in *End of the Ottomans : The Genocide of 1915 and the Politics of Turkish Nationalism*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser et al. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2019).

who was meant to travel to Erzurum on this occasion.<sup>5</sup> The head of the Kars People's House, Hüseyin Talınlı, wrote about the "rush" of "crowds" and even people from surrounding villages attending the lecture.<sup>6</sup> Still, no speech transcription was included in the report. For the March 1936 lecture series, Kars sent a single speech transcription delivered by Zihni Orhon in Erzurum, two hundred kilometers west.

In March 1936, Osman Koptagel visited Kars to deliver a speech. On this occasion, he also produced a report about how the party organization in Kars functioned. According to Koptagel, the director of the party in Kars, Zihni Orhon was "fundamentally calm and good-natured," left a good imprint on Kars and won the respect of the people.<sup>7</sup> The director of the People's House, Hüseyin Han [Talınlı] from Yerevan, on the other hand, was depicted as "hardworking yet inexperienced in this domain."<sup>8</sup>

Between 1940 and 1950, seven preachers appointed to Kars, a city in northeastern Turkey's borderlands with contemporary Armenia, applied to run for legislative elections under the CHP list. The whole province, including the districts of Ardahan, Sarıkamış, Arpaçay, Çıldır, Göle, Kağızman, and Posof, was appointed sixty-two preachers. Aliyar Bey [Vural] and Fahreddin Bey [Erdoğan] in 1931, Zihni [Orhon], Hüseyin Talınlı, Rıfkiye Kağan, and Rasim İlker were appointed preachers of Kars' central district in 1938. The application files of five out of seven preachers contained information about their experiences in the late Ottoman Empire. The only preacher who did not mention her experiences before the proclamation of the republic was the youngest, the sole woman, and the only one born outside of the region: Rıfkiye Kağan. She was born in Bursa in 1908-1909 [1326]. Since her biography did not include her pre-republican

---

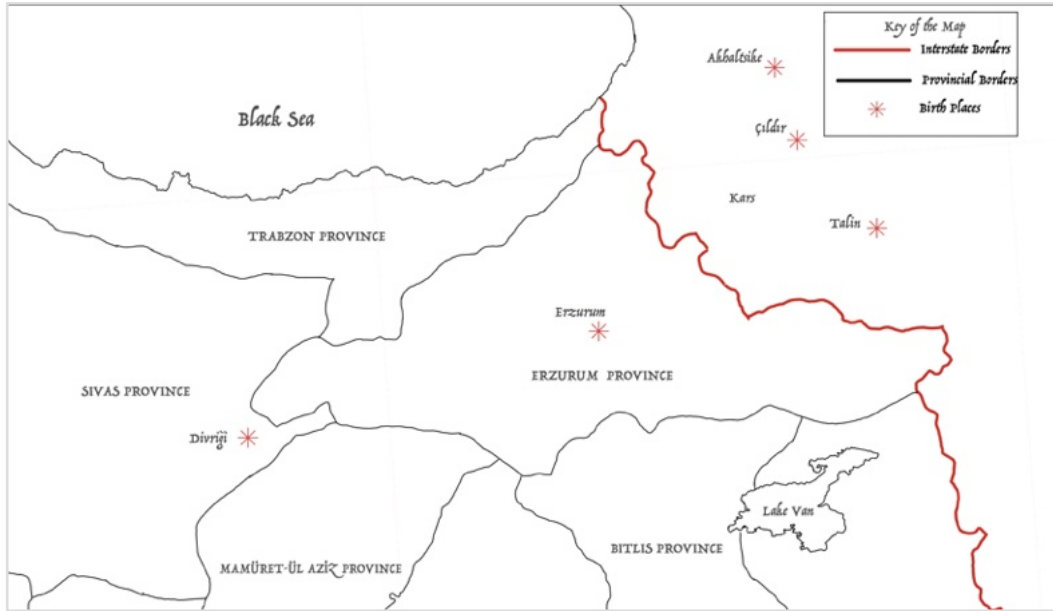
<sup>5</sup> Correspondence between the CHP General Secretary and Zihni Orhon, 24- 26 February 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>6</sup> "İlimize gelen Erzurum CHP başkanı general Osman Koptagel bugün saat 14/30 da sinema salonunda büyük bir kalabalık huzurunda inkılap konuları üzerine ilk konferanslarını verebilen Halk fazla rağbet göstermekle beraber köylerden dahi birçok yurttaşlar gelmişlerdi. İkinci konferanslarını yarın vereceklerini saygılarımla arz ederim." Telegram from Hüseyin Talınlı to the CHP General Secretary, 19 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>7</sup> "Esasen sakin ve haluk olan Zihni kars üzerinde eyi bir tesir bırakmış ve halkın saygısını kazanmıştır." Osman Koptagel to the CHP General Secretary, 31 March 1936, Kars, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-895-2.

<sup>8</sup> "Halkevi başkanı Erivanlı Hüseyin Han oldukça genç ve çalışkan ise de bu hususlardaki görgüsünün azlığı sebebiyle Kars Halkevi Erzurum Halkevi kadar çalışma sahasına geçememiştir." Osman Koptagel to the CHP General Secretary, 31 March 1936, Kars, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-895-2.

experiences, and no trace of her delivered speeches is to be found in the archives, she will be left aside for this section.



**Map 8. Birth Places of the People's Preachers Selected in Kars**

A couple of months after Koptagel's, the People's Houses organized one of the most spectacular celebrations of the 1930s: Language Day (*Dil Bayramları*). Around sixty provinces celebrated Language Day in 1936 ([Chapter 9](#)), mobilizing more than 300 speakers who all took the stage for the same purpose: explaining the Language Reform. Each report included a brief summary of the celebration with the enumeration of the events (concerts, film projections, poetry recitals, and lectures), summaries or transcriptions of the speeches delivered, and copies of the recited poetry. In this sense, it was a significant event regarding the festive "archival mobilization" of the single-party era.<sup>9</sup>

Language Day was celebrated for four days, synchronically in around sixty provinces in August 1936. While most provinces produced dozens of pages of celebration reports, including speech transcriptions, photographs, postal cards, and newspaper clippings, the governor and

---

<sup>9</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, "Dil Bayramı. Une lecture somatique de la fête politique dans la Turquie du parti unique," 508.

party provincial director of Kars, Ahmet Cevdet Erođlu, sent a vague and stale message to the CHP General Secretary.

On the occasion of the opening of the Third Turkish Language Congress on 24 August, ceremonies were held in all districts and the provincial center, and the present institutions celebrated the Congress Presidency. Speeches and lectures were also delivered on the significance of the congress, and publications were made in the provincial newspaper. I respectfully submit this information and extend my regards.<sup>10</sup>

In September 1940, the CHP General Secretary issued another order to discuss the ongoing war. While many telegrams sent by the party preachers reported about the successful lectures, only one, delivered by a House member, was sent to the party headquarters in Ankara. Kars sent three speech transcriptions to the party's general secretary between 1931 and 1950.

The party's weakness in Kars impacted the type and number of documents produced in the province. Inspection reports were negative overall, except for those of its central district. In 1938, Göle did not organize regular meetings.<sup>11</sup> Ardahan's party director resigned from his job, which caused a quasi-lack of activity in the party direction.<sup>12</sup> Çıldır's party organization was sluggish.<sup>13</sup> In Arpaçay, the party inspector did not "come across the party organization."<sup>14</sup> These factors considerably impacted the type of documents produced. Kars sent telegrams instead of letters and a relatively small number of documents to the CHP General Secretary.

Five preachers selected in Kars left short autobiographies (*terceme-i hal*) to the party general secretary to apply to run for legislative elections from the CHP lists. These autobiographies are uneven in terms of the information they contain. Nevertheless, they are valuable in demonstrating the centrality of the experience of war and the conflict with the

---

<sup>10</sup> "24 Ağustos Üçüncü Türk Dil Kurultayının açılışı münasebetile bütün kazalarda ve vilâyet merkezinde törenler yapılarak mevcut kurumlar tarafından kurultay Başkanlığı kutlunanmış ve kurultayın önemi hakkında söylev ve konferanslar verilerek vilâyet gazetesinde neşriyatlar yapıldığını arz eder, saygılarımı sunarım." Letter signed by the CHP Kars provincial director and governor, Ahmet Cevdet Erođlu, 1 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1168-104-1.

<sup>11</sup> Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, "Toplanmalar düzgün değil." 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>12</sup> "Başkan çekilmiş. Çalışma yok gibi Toplanılıyor. Parti halk ile alakadar değil." 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>13</sup> Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, "Teşkilat cansız. Toplanma yok. Dosyalar intizamsız. Hesaplar yeni tanzim edilmekte. Umumi alakasızlık görülmektedir." 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

<sup>14</sup> "Teşkilata tesadüf edilmemiş." Document signed by the CHP General Secretary and the Interior Minister, Şükrü Kaya, 1 June 1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/666-234-1.

Republic of Armenia, which impacted the local preachers. Aliyar Bey, for instance, hastened to recount his educational background and war experience, while Zihni Orhon delivered a detailed account of his wartime posts. Orhon and Fahrettin Erdoğan were members of the first National Assembly in Ankara. Both ran more than once for parliament, providing multiple occasions to trace how they narrated their life stories. Orhon's autobiography remained concise and limited to his military career. Erdoğan, on the other hand, improved his motivation letters in each new application. He also published his memoirs titled *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım* (My Memories in Turkish Countries) in 1954, four years before he died.<sup>15</sup>

Kars offers a rare chance to study People's Preachers as mnemonic actors through the cross-examination of their speeches and biographies. Upon closer inspection, it becomes evident that the experiences of these five men were shaped by the events that unfolded in the eastern regions of the Ottoman Empire and their neighboring territories during the late nineteenth century until the conclusion of the Turkish "War of Independence." The life stories of five preachers, Aliyar Vural, Fahrettin Erdoğan (1931), Hüseyin Talınlı, Zihni Orhon, and Rasim Ilker (1938), allow us to examine how local specificities of this contested borderland region that switched hands multiple times impacted the People's Preachers' life trajectories. Cross-reading two considerably long speech transcriptions delivered by Zihni Orhon with the biographies of these five preachers, including Orhon, the section will show how the borderland experiences impacted People's Preachers' past narratives. Since Kars was a site of violent territorial conflict and mass violence before, during, and after the First World War, it offers a unique opportunity to examine the spatiality of selective remembering and forgetting.

Kars was part of the Ottoman Empire since the mid-sixteenth century. The district, then part of the Erzurum province, was besieged three times throughout the nineteenth-century Russo-Ottoman Wars and was ceded to Russia as war compensation following the War of 1877-1878 (*93 Harbi*). The Brest Litovsk Treaty, signed following the Russian Revolution, promised Russian withdrawal from the region. This raised the hopes of the recapture of Kars both among Turkish and Armenian nationalists. Turkish nationalists close to the former Minister of War, Enver Pasha, created the Southwest Caucasus Provisional Government to prevent the

---

<sup>15</sup> Fahrettin Erdoğan, *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınlar Dairesi Başkanlığı, 1998).

expansion of the First Armenian Republic into Kars.<sup>16</sup> After the Turkish-Armenian War, from September to December 1920, Kars became a part of Turkey.

The territorial disputes, first between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, then between Turkish and Armenian nation-state builders, influenced the selection of its preachers. Three out of five preachers in the central district of Kars were born in the Russian Empire. Hüseyin Talınlı, 1889-90 [1307], came from Talin, a town near Yerevan in present-day Armenia. Aliyar Vural, born in 1891-92 [1309], was from Çıldır. Rasim İlker came from Akhaltsikhe (Ahıska), a city ceded to the Russian Empire in 1829. İlker claimed “taking refuge in the motherland,” meaning Anatolia, in 1336 [1918 or 1920],” following the Russian Revolution or following the start of the Turkish “War of Independence.”<sup>17</sup> Zihni Orhon was born in the central district of Erzurum, approximately two hundred kilometers southwest of the district Kars. The region became a borderland in 1878 following the conclusion of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78. Fahrettin Erdoğan, on the other hand, was born in a village located in Divriği (Sivas), which was not a part of the disputed Three Districts (*Elviye-i Selâse*) of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum or their borderlands. Erdoğan had relatives in Kars and spent a while in the province before its annexation to republican Turkey.<sup>18</sup>

Their local ties and sometimes trans-imperial trajectories impacted how the People’s Preachers of Kars were socialized politically. Their educational and professional backgrounds slightly differed from those of the other provinces because some grew up under the Russian Empire. Aliyar Vural mentioned a high school (*lise*), but he completed the “middle section” (*orta kısım*) under the Russian Empire. Hüseyin Talınlı graduated from the Gymnasium in Yerevan and the “Pedagogy Course” in Ganja, around four hundred kilometers east crossing the Sevan Lake in contemporary Azerbaijan.<sup>19</sup> Accessing this education level in the Kars Oblast under the Russian Empire was limited to a small elite within Muslim communities.

---

<sup>16</sup> Alexander E. Balistreri, “A Provisional Republic in the Southwest Caucasus: Discourses of Self-Determination on the Ottoman-Caucasian Frontier, 1918-19,” in *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century : Societies, Identities and Politics*, ed. Ali Sipahi, Dzovinar Derderian, and Yasar Tolga Cora (I.B. Tauris & Company, 2016).

<sup>17</sup> It is unclear whether the date in the document is using the Rumi or Hicri calendar. Application file, Rasim İlker, 18 March 1950, “336 yılında efradı ailemizle anayurda iltica ettik.” BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3.

<sup>18</sup> Fahrettin Erdoğan, *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım*, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Application file, Hüseyin Talınlı, Kars, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3.

According to İlber Ortaylı, only four percent of Muslim boys were enrolled in a gymnasium in 1900 Kars.<sup>20</sup>

Rasim İlker did not share information on his primary education, but he claimed to speak Russian. He might have learned Russian during his childhood in a territory that became Russian in 1829 (Akhaltseke). In 1918, when he was twelve, he moved to Ottoman lands, he could start and complete higher education at the Teachers Training College of Trabzon.<sup>21</sup> Fahrettin Erdoğan claimed to have different diplomas in separate application forms. In 1942, he qualified his education level as “high” (*âli*), while in 1943, he declared to have graduated from a preparatory school (*idadi*). He also purported to have lost his diploma in Siberia, where he was deported due to his activities in “Turkish Associations” in Kars and the Caucasus under Tsarist Russia.<sup>22</sup> We will return later to Fahrettin Erdoğan’s case.

Zihni Orhon was born in 1883 in Erzurum. He studied at a *rüşdiye* and then a military preparatory school (*askeri idadi*). When he was fifteen, Orhon enrolled in the War Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiye*) in Istanbul for a three-year training. He graduated as a cavalry officer (*süvari subayı*) in 1901.<sup>23</sup> Zihni Orhon’s educational and military career resembles that of the tribal members who participated in irregular cavalry units created in 1890 by Abdülhamid II. The Hamidiye Regiments (*Hamidiye Alayları*) were created within the framework of Abdülhamid II’s centralization policies following the defeat of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. The regiments aimed to secure borderlands such as Erzurum, Zihni Orhon’s hometown, and counter Armenian revolutionary organizations suspected of spreading their activities in the Six Provinces (*Vilâyet-i Sitte*), namely Erzurum, Van, Harput, Diyarbakir, Sivas, and Bitlis.<sup>24</sup> They gathered “tribal militia” from Kurdish families in the region, providing tax benefits to families who cooperated with the government.

---

<sup>20</sup> İlber Ortaylı, “Çarlık Rusyası Yönetiminde Kars,” 356.

<sup>21</sup> Application file, Rasim İlker, 18 March 1950, “336 yılında efradı ailemizle anayurda iltica ettik.” BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3.

<sup>22</sup> “1900 tarihinden itibaren çarlık rusiye zamanında Kars ve Kafkasta Türk cemiyetlerinin Reisliğinde bulunarak bunu haber alan Ruslar tarafından balkan muharebesinde Sibiryaya nef edildim. Fahrettin Erdoğan, Application letter, 14 March 1943, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

<sup>23</sup> Zihni Orhon, Application letter, 16 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3. [16]

<sup>24</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford University Press, 2011), 20-25.



The Hamidiye Regiments were formed chiefly but not exclusively with Kurdish families.<sup>25</sup> Zihni Orhon did not mention being Kurdish and even rejected the existence of the Kurdish nation by saying, for instance, that, “There is no such thing as a nation called the Kurds” in his 1936 speech in Erzurum.<sup>26</sup> He also threatened those “who consider themselves Kurds despite being nothing else than mountain Turks” that he would “smash their heads.”<sup>27</sup> Orhon attended military preparatory school (*askeri idadi*), then the War Academy. This educational trajectory was typical for men from collaborating tribes selected and trained for the Hamidiye Regiments.<sup>28</sup> The training lasted three years, and the students returned to their natal regions as cavalry officers, just like Zihni Orhon.<sup>29</sup>

After the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the Hamidiye Regiments remained in a restructured form. First, it changed its name to “Tribal Light Cavalry Regiments” (*Aşiret Hafif Süvari Alayları*), then to “Tribal Cavalry Regiments.”<sup>30</sup> They also played an essential role in the First World War on the Eastern Front. Zihni Orhon mentioned starting his career as a “cavalry officer” (*süvari subayı*) and mentioned “cavalry” or “tribal cavalry” regiments multiple times in his successive application letters.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, he condemned the Tribal Cavalry Regiments as one of the privileges accorded to Kurds along with other non-Turkish elements under Ottoman rule in a speech he delivered in 1936 in Erzurum. Whether he hailed from a Kurdish or non-Kurdish tribe coopted by the regime for the Hamidiye Regiments or was appointed to a regiment from above, his activity in the Cavalry Regiments will shed light on some aspects of the lectures that will be examined in the next section.

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>26</sup> “Kürt ismile bir millet yoktur.” Zihni Orhon, *İstiklal ve İnkılap*, 13 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>27</sup> “Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin sınırları içerisinde bulunan ve yürekleri bizim gibi çarpan, kafaları bizim gibi işleyen her fert Türktür. Hele yanlışlıkla kendilerini Kürt sayan ve halbuki dağlı Türklerden başka bir şey olmayan Kürtler de Türktürler. Bu Yurdun bir karış toprağı bile artık ayrılmak kabul etmeyen kutsal bir yurttur. Başka bir surette düşünenlerin kafası parçalanır bu böyledir.” Zihni Orhon, *İstiklal ve İnkılap*, 13 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>28</sup> Cezmi Erarslan, “Hamidiye Alayları,” in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara, 1997).

<sup>29</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*, 110.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>31</sup> Sema Yıldırım and Behçet Kemal Zeynel, *TBMM albümü : 1920-2010*, 2 ed., 4 vols., vol. 2, (Ankara: TBMM Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğü Bakanlıklar, 2010), 335,404,79. *The biographic entries in the TBMM Album are exactly the same as the application letters.*

Fahrettin Bey's education was of a "private" (*hususî eğitim*) kind. Like many other late Ottoman Empire provincial elites, Fahrettin's diplomas did not go beyond high school (*idadi*). Still, he was educated and socialized around influential men in the privacy of his large family, having relatives from Istanbul to Kars. In his memoirs, Fahrettin wrote about his stimulating conversations with his uncle and friends between 1889 and 1894 in Istanbul.<sup>32</sup> In another application letter found in the Turkish Grand National Assembly archives, Erdoğan claimed to have been privately tutored in history and literature in Istanbul while he lived with his uncle.<sup>33</sup> In his memoirs, Fahrettin told how he lived through Abdülhamid II's *istibdat* regime and learned the importance of Turkism (*Türkçülük*) and Patriotism, thanks to his discussions with political and administrative elites from Istanbul whom he met thanks to his uncle. He wrote that his private education allowed him to read works by Young Ottomans like Namık Kemal and Mithat Pasha.<sup>34</sup>

Rasim İlker, Aliyar Vural, and Hüseyin Talınlı spent their lives between two empires because they were born in the Three Districts (*Elviye-i Selase*) ceded to Russia. Fahrettin Bey also had a trans-imperial trajectory because of his political engagements. After completing his private education in Istanbul next to his merchant uncle, and with the alleged outrage caused by the Armenian revolutionary movements, Erdoğan traveled considerably in the Russian Empire.

Despite their fragmentary nature, all of these elements point to the preachers' political socialization before the First World War. Whether it was through private education within the limits of family resources or through public institutions, most preachers were familiar with pan-Islamist, pan-Turkist, or nationalist political sensitivities marked by an "imperial" or "imperialist" bias.<sup>35</sup> The experience of World War I transformed and reinforced those sensitivities. Aliyar [Vural], who grew up in Çıldır under the Russian Empire, did not detail his experience before 1920 but underlined that he participated in the "national struggle" as of

---

<sup>32</sup> Fahrettin Erdoğan, *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım*, 2-3.

<sup>33</sup> "İlk tahsilimi Divriği'de yaptıktan sonra 1909'de İstanbul'a giderek 5 sene hususî tahsil gördüm." TBMM Archives, Fahrettin Erdoğan, Tercüme-i Hâl, no date, No. 258. Cited by: Nebahat Arslan and Süleyman Tekir, "Cenub-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti'nden, TBMM'ye Fahrettin Erdoğan," *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 6 (2010): 21-22. Chapter 5 showed the importance of private tutoring for early republican provincial elites.

<sup>34</sup> Fahrettin Erdoğan, *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha : Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide*, 39.

1920 [1336] and received the “medal of independence” for his war efforts. In his application files, he did not explain how he participated in the “national struggle” despite growing up as a subject of the Russian Empire. Still, Fahrettin [Erdoğan]’s memoirs provide some answers concerning the life of Turkish-speaking Muslim citizens living in territories lost to Russia. Like Fahrettin Bey, Aliyar Bey might have socialized in Turkish nationalist associations founded under the Russian Empire.

The First World War started when Fahreddin Bey was still living within the borders of the Russian Empire. In his memoirs, Fahrettin Bey claimed to collaborate with a secret society, working against the Tsar and being followed by a Tsarist intelligence agent for being a Turkish subject.<sup>36</sup> In his application letters and memoirs, Fahrettin Bey wrote about his capture by Russian authorities and deportation to Siberia during the Great War. His memoirs traced his trajectory from Baku to Orenburg by November 1916.<sup>37</sup> Before ever really reaching Siberia, Fahrettin Bey escaped and returned to Erzurum.<sup>38</sup> The withdrawal of Russia from the war following the Russian Revolution created confusion about the fate of Kars. Enver’s hopes of recapturing the Three Provinces were crushed in the Sarıkamış Battle. Russia signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in March 1918. The treaty awakened hopes for an Ottoman re-annexation of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum among the delegation sent by Enver.<sup>39</sup>

The creation of the first Republic of Armenia in May 1918 increased military and diplomatic tensions around the region. Both Fahrettin and Hüseyin Bey [Talınlı] played an essential role in determining the future of Kars by founding the Southwest Caucasus Provisional Government (*Cenub-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti Muvakkate-i Milliyesi*) to prevent the region from becoming a part of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>40</sup> Alexander Balistreri argued that among the founders of the Southwest Caucasus Provisional Government, there were “Unionist extremists,” such as men associated with the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* (Special Organization), a paramilitary organization that played a key role in the Armenian Genocide; as well as Muslim

---

<sup>36</sup> “Türk tebaasından olduğum için...” Fahrettin Erdoğan, *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım*, 59.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>39</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918* (Berkeley,: University of California Press, 1967), 103.

<sup>40</sup> Alexander E. Balistreri, “A Provisional Republic in the Southwest Caucasus: Discourses of Self-Determination on the Ottoman-Caucasian Frontier, 1918-19,” 65.

local notables who held a different, a more regionalist perspective.<sup>41</sup> Two preachers from Kars, namely Fahrettin Erdoğan and Hüseyin Talınlı, were among the founders of the South Caucasian Provisional Government. In his memoirs, Erdoğan boasted about “fighting against the Armenians and the British with his organization” and “preventing the foundation of the Greater Armenia.”<sup>42</sup>

Talınlı was born in a village near Yerevan but left for Kars. Talınlı did not mention when exactly and why he left Yerevan but was sufficiently involved in nationalist circles that he became one of the first republican mayors of Kars (1926). A short biography of Talınlı was published on a website in 2015 by his daughter, Güven Talınlı. This article stressed that he moved to Baku with other Azeris, escaping the region as a child after being attacked by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Dashnaksutyun*). While there is no information regarding how Hüseyin Han ended up in Kars, he must have found a way to settle there by December 1918 to be able to participate in the short-lived provisional National Government of Southwestern Caucasus that resisted the incorporation of the province into the Armenian republic. Therefore, he most probably left Yerevan following the foundation of the Armenian Republic in May 1918. After becoming the “Foreign Minister” of the “provisional government” or “republic” of the Southwestern Caucasus in January 1919, Fahrettin Bey attended the Erzurum Congress, which was one of the most critical moments for the nationalist movement rejecting the terms of the Sèvres Treaty.<sup>43</sup>

The case study of Kars shows how People’s Preachers might have become credible actors relaying testimonial narratives about the late Ottoman past. The zoom-in on Kars allows privileged access to the memory of the extermination of Ottoman Armenians. Zihni Orhon, Hüseyin Talınlı, Fahrettin Erdoğan, Aliyar Vural, and Rasim İlker experienced the Great War

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> “Harbi umumide sibiryadan firar ederek Büyük Türkistan’da dört sene Türk ellerinde çalışım. Çarın sukutundan sonra karsa gelerek cenubi ğarbi Kafkas hükümetinin hariciye vekilliğini kabul ettim. Ermeni ve İngilizlerle 18 ay teşkilatımla arpaçayını keserek Büyük Ermenistanın teşkiline mani oldum. Kars ana vatana ilhak edinceye kadar bizzat bilfiil kıt’a başında harp ettiğime dair kırmızı ve yeşil kordelalı madaliye ile taltif edildim.” Application file, Fahrettin Erdoğan, Kars, 14 March 1943, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1241-4.

<sup>43</sup> “Atatürk Erzuruma geline murahhas olarak Erzurum Kongresi’ne iştirak ettim. Sonra Kâzım Paşa ordusu ile 9ncu firkada fillen Milli Mücadeleye iştirak ettim. Sonra Milletvekili seçilerek Büyük Millet Meclisine iştirak ettim.” TBMM Archives, Fahrettin Erdoğan, Tercüme-i Hâl, no date, No. 258. Cited by: Nebahat Arslan and Süleyman Tekir, “Cenub-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti’nden, TBMM’ye Fahrettin Erdoğan,” 21-22.

in different ways. Their local ties to the contested provinces of eastern Anatolia made them susceptible to experiencing episodes of mass violence as perpetrators or bystanders. As mentioned earlier, despite the wealth of information regarding preachers' life stories, the number of speech transcriptions accessible from the region is relatively low. The following section will analyze Zihni Orhon's Independence and Revolution lectures delivered in 1936 and Fahrettin Erdoğan's memoirs on the same topics. In so doing, it will identify major trends in the ways in which the People's Preachers thought of and remembered the late Ottoman past.

## 11.2. Breaking Bottles, Breaking Enemies

---

Zihni Orhon, then the director of the administrative committee of the CHP in Kars, left the city for Erzurum on 8 March 1936. He traveled a whole day and around two hundred kilometers to deliver two "lectures" (*konferans*) following the General Secretary's order sent in late December 1935. The party covered Orhon's travel expenses. Since the city was preparing to celebrate its liberation from Russian occupation during World War I, Zihni Orhon waited a few days before delivering his speeches.<sup>44</sup> He took the stage in the central district of Erzurum near the Military Cinema. The first speech was delivered on 13 March 1936, and the second three days later. Both lectures were organized following the CHP General Secretary's order to organize "Independence and Revolution" lectures in each province.<sup>45</sup> According to the report sent by the Erzurum CHP administrative committee, the second lecture was more impactful than the first one.

On this day, the lecture on the subject of independence had a greater impact on the people, and as the names of Atatürk, our Great Chief, who gave us our future, were mentioned, the people became excited and shouted hurra with continuous applause.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> "Erzurum kurtuluş gününü kutlulamak üzere hazırlık gördüklerinden birinci konferansı 13de ve ikinci konferansı 16 martta Ordu sinemasında verdim." Zihni Orhon to the CHP General Secretary, 28 March 1936, Kars, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>45</sup> Circular letter from the CHP General Secretary, Ankara, 24 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

<sup>46</sup> "Bu günde istiklâl konusu hakkındaki konferansın halk üzerinde daha büyük tesir uyandırarak bizleri istikbâlimize kavuşturan Büyük Şefimiz Atatürkün Adları geçtikçe halk heyecana gelerek arkası kesilmeyen sürekli alkışlarla yaşasın diye bağırılmışlardır." Report from the Erzurum provincial administrative committee to the CHP General Secretary, 21 March 1936, Erzurum, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-895-2.

For the provincial centers, the speakers were determined from the top; in other words, the CHP General Secretary, which was based in Ankara. Each provincial administrative committee determined a speaker for the lectures to be delivered in the districts. Whether they were determined by the General Secretary or the provincial administrative committees, the speakers were often also those who appeared on People's Preachers lists. The CHP Erzurum direction selected Zihni Orhon, who was originally from Erzurum but resided in Kars in 1936. Orhon appeared on the list of People's Preachers in 1938 and was presented as the director of the CHP provincial administrative committee in Kars and former provincial governor (*eski vali*). In turn, Kars welcomed General Osman Koptagel, who was then the Malatya Deputy.<sup>47</sup> The circular letter suggested the speakers used Recep Peker's "Notes on Revolution Lectures" (*İnkılap Dersleri Notları*). The party General Secretary sent the notes in book format to all People's Houses and provincial offices. These notes were based on lessons Recep Peker taught during the 1934-1935 academic year at Istanbul and Ankara Universities.<sup>48</sup>

This section will analyze two speeches delivered by Zihni Orhon, comparing their content with Recep Peker's lectures. It will delve into how this retired military figure, who was "injured four times" during the First World War and in the Eastern front of the Turkish "War of Independence," remembered late Ottoman history. Orhon's speeches will be examined for their explanations of early republican reforms, with a notable emphasis on the figure of the internal enemy in its relation to the imperial management of difference.<sup>49</sup> Through this analysis, the chapter aims to illuminate the discursive traces of state-sponsored mass violence in its aftermath. Furthermore, it will reflect on the early republican state-building process, shedding light on the past, present, and future of ensuring state sovereignty.

---

<sup>47</sup> Telegram from Hüseyin Talınlı to the CHP General Secretary, Kars, 19 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>48</sup> Circular letter from the CHP General Secretary, Ankara, 10 January 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-2.

<sup>49</sup> Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History : Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010); Baer, Marc, Ussama Makdisi, and Andrew Shryock. "Tolerance and Conversion in the Ottoman Empire: A Conversation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 4 (2009): 927-40.

### 11.2.1. Overview of Zihni Orhon's Lectures

---

Excerpts from Zihni Orhon's lectures were also used in previous chapters. This chapter provides an overview of the lecture by focusing on the extraordinary aspects of Orhon's speech. As mentioned earlier, Independence and Revolution (*İstiklâl ve İnkılap*) lectures were organized nationwide by the order of the CHP General Secretary at that time, Recep Peker. Despite the order to organize the lectures nationwide, the archival trace of this lecture series was rather limited. Many People's Houses merely sent reports about the organization of the revolution lectures without including a speech transcription or summary.<sup>50</sup>

### 11.2.2. A Rule-Abiding but Exceptional Lecture

---

Following the orders, Orhon devoted his first "lecture" to the concept of "revolution" and the second to "independence." Orhon also followed the structure and content of Recep Peker's "Revolution Lectures" (*Inkılâp Dersleri*). He used many talking points drawn from Recep Peker's lectures. He briefly defined key concepts, namely "independence" (*istiklâl*) and "revolution" (*inkılâp*). He spoke about Ottoman history as opposed to republican history. He enumerated early republican reforms such as the electoral franchise for women, the alphabet change, and language standardization. He spoke about the nationalization of the economy and developmental efforts by referring to the construction of railways and state-backed industrialization efforts. The first lecture left out many scholarly aspects covered by Peker following the lecture orders diffused in December 1935. The directives specified that 14 out of 54 pages of Recep Peker's lectures were outside the scope of the "Independence and Revolution" lectures organized in the provinces.<sup>51</sup> In this sense, Orhon diligently followed the orders and the blueprint given by Recep Peker's Revolution lectures.

Nevertheless, Orhon, like many other preachers, had some leeway about the content and form of his speeches. His chosen language register was lower than Peker's university lessons. Lowering the language register and adapting the content of the lectures to broader audiences was part of the People's Preachers job description. His adaptation implied adopting many

---

<sup>50</sup> Ağrı, 490-1-0-0/1007-885-2. From the Fourth General Inspectorate to the CHP General Secretary, Elazığ, June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>51</sup> Circular letter from the CHP General Secretary, 24 December 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-17.

talking points found in Peker's booklet. Yet, in some cases, he had specific examples to make it more concrete or easier to understand for his audience in Erzurum.

Orhon's adaptation of Peker's lectures implied using more concrete examples from Ottoman history, such as naming people and specific events. When Recep Peker spoke about a "Rum," hence a Greek-Orthodox deputy who outraged Turkish nationalists of the 1908 parliament, Orhon gave the names of not one but three deputies, including two Greek-Orthodox and one Arabic-speaking deputy from the same parliament. While Recep Peker spoke of 'internal enemies' in vague terms, Orhon often named them by using religious and linguistic groups such as the Armenians, Bulgarians, Rums, Kurds, or Arabs. Peker did not point out such religious and confessional differences or an ensuing hierarchy between Ottoman subjects or citizens. Orhon's speech opposed Turks to non-Turks and Muslims to implicit non-Muslims, and sometimes directly to "Christians." When Recep Peker spoke about foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, especially the counterinsurgency against the nationalist and revolutionary movements that emerged from Ottoman subjects, Orhon specifically named the General Inspector in charge of repressing many armed insurrectional movements from Yemen to the Balkans during the first decade of the twentieth century.

His adaptation also implied localizing the historical narrative found in Peker's lecture. Orhon's lecture was more context-dependent and anecdotal. He drew many examples from Erzurum's local history and individuals from different districts of Erzurum and the bordering province Kars, supposedly known to his audience. For instance, by speaking about the activities of a Sufi tariqat "deported" at the beginning of the twentieth century, he told his audience that this was a well-known event for "those of his generation and from Erzurum."<sup>52</sup> He mentioned local figures such as Unionist Hacı Akif Bey, the Russian Consul in Erzurum Skaryabin, the dispatch clerk of Kötek (Kars), a retired colonel, and a bottleshop in Hasankale (Pasin before 1928) belonging to an Armenian family, the Ayvaziyans.<sup>53</sup> In all of these local examples, one Turkish and Muslim subject of the Ottoman Empire was contrasted with one

---

<sup>52</sup> "Benim çağымda bulunan Erzurumlular bilirler ki 319 veya 320 de Bitlis ve Beyazıt taraflarından bazı sivri külahlıları hükümet getirip başka taraflara sürdü." Zihni Orhon, 13 March 1936, *Ibid.*, §22

<sup>53</sup> Zihni Orhon, *Istiklal ve İnkılap*, 13-16 March 1936, Erzurum, Lecture 1, §37, Lecture 2, §11.



external (the Russian consul) or externalized individual (Armenians of Erzurum protected by the Russian consul).

Second, Orhon's lecture was more historical than Recep Peker's one. Practical examples were also drawn from Ottoman and international history. Orhon was relatively well-informed in historical knowledge. He spoke about the wave of revolutions in Europe and the Americas (§5), the Bulgarian, Serb, and Hungarian independence movements (§6), the Hauran Druze rebellions in Ottoman Syria (1909), uprisings in Yemen (1904-1907), and the Albanian revolts of 1912 (§18). He mentioned Osman II's reformism, the Tanzimat (Reorganizations) or "measures for regulating order" (§13), as hopeless attempts to save the empire.<sup>54</sup> He remembered the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, the First World War, and the "national resistance." He named historical actors such as the Chief Black Eunuch of the Ottoman Palace (*Dârüssaâde ağası*) and a Chief Chamberlain of the Ottoman Palace (*Serkârin*) Cevher and Gani Aghas active during Abdülhamid II reign.<sup>55</sup> He named the Ottoman sultans Osman II (1604-1618) and Selim III (1761-1808). He remembered provincial notable Alemdar Mustafa Paşa as a "martyr of progress."

Orhon's speech had a particular focus – if not obsession – on "Armenians" when he spoke about non-Muslim and non-Turkish subjects of the Ottoman Empire and their dangerous activities. While Ottoman Armenians are relatively absent from the rest of the corpus, Orhon's speech mentioned "Armenians" eight times, an Armenian revolutionary (Andranik Ozanian) by his name once, and an apparently Armenian family. He also emphasized the historical events of the late Ottoman era in which "Armenians" played a key role. Orhon mentioned the Ottoman Bank takeover (1896), the Second Sasson Revolt (1905) by Armenian revolutionaries, and the role of "Armenians" in the Eastern Front of the "Turkish War of Independence." Still, his emphasis on Armenians was not exclusive. Armenian "gangs" (*çete*) were often coupled with Bulgarian ones. The Kurds were remembered by referring to the 1914 Kurdish uprising in Bitlis. "Arabs" were remembered through their collaboration "with the

---

<sup>54</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, "The Imperial Idea and Realpolitik – Reform Policy and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire," 455.

<sup>55</sup> "Bir zamanlar olduki hükümeti merkeziye darulsuada (Dârüssaâde) ağası habeşli gani ve ser karin (Serkârin) sudanlı cevher ağaların elinde kaldı. Böyle bir diyardan hayır umulur mu?" Zihni Orhon, *Ibid*.

enemy” during the First World War and their insurgencies during the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

Lastly, Orhon’s speech was exceptionally violent. In many occurrences, he spoke about the necessary treatment of the “gangs,” “rebels,” or “those who revolt against whichever government.” His prescriptions against state-led counterinsurgency were indiscriminate killings or physical harm bordering on torture. Recep Peker’s lectures or other intellectual sources that influenced many Unionists were not as explicit as Orhon’s lectures about the violence of counterinsurgency tactics. While Zihni Orhon’s lectures had similarities with the rest of the corpus of speeches, his lecture was exceptional in its explicitness, both about the identity of ‘internal enemies’ and the overall violence of their ‘necessary’ treatment.

### *11.2.3. A Locally Bound Narrative*

---

These exceptional aspects of Orhon’s adaptation and interpretation of Recep Peker’s Independence and Revolution lectures can be explained to some extent by local history and Orhon’s biography. Erzurum played a central role in Orhon’s life story. He was born in Erzurum, and most of his military positions were around Erzurum and the bordering province of Kars. Both provinces had a considerable Armenian population before the genocide. After the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, the Three Districts were ceded to the Russian Empire, and Erzurum became a borderland province. Russia occupied Erzurum several times in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the last occupation occurring during the First World War. The territorial contestations around these regions often implied the religious and linguistic differences between their inhabitants: Armenians, Kurds, and Turkish-speaking populations. Orhon worked as a cavalry officer (*süvari subayı*) until his election to the last Ottoman parliament in Erzurum.

Erzurum was home to a considerable number of Ottoman Armenians who were subjected to massacres and land-grabbing since the late nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup> Before the start of the First World War and the Armenian Genocide, there were around 202,391 Armenians living in the province. According to Raymond Kévorkian, the deportation of the Armenians from the

---

<sup>56</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*, 122-32.

province started very early on, and only eight percent of the local Armenians survived.<sup>57</sup> Many massacres occurred also within the borders of the province of Erzurum.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, Mustafa Kemal organized the first congress to plan resistance against the Sèvres Treaty in July 1919. For the Eastern front of the organization of the “national resistance,” preventing the foundation of an independent Republic of Armenia was vital.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, the Erzurum Congress was held in an Armenian boarding school for girls in Erzurum, known as the Sanasarian College.

In his speech, Orhon repeated several times the role played by Erzurum in the national struggle (1919-1923) and the constitutional “revolution” (1908) that preceded it. In the first lecture delivered on 13 March 1936, a few weeks after the celebration of the liberation of the city (12 March), he celebrated Erzurum’s inhabitants for their role in the “revolution,” using the term “revolution” for both the reinstatement of the Constitution in 1908 by the Committee of Union and Progress and for the national resistance that followed the foundation of a secular republic under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.

While discussing the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, he acclaimed, “You, too, the people of Erzurum, have an important role to play in this revolution.”<sup>60</sup> His reference to Erzurum’s role in the Young Turk Revolution was unclear since he did not mention any specific person or event. He might have referred to prominent Unionist Bahaeddin Şakir’s activities in the province when he was in exile in Erzurum around 1905.<sup>61</sup> Bahaeddin Şakir was part of the leadership of the Special Organization (*Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*) and played a crucial role in the decision to deport Ottoman Armenians as well as in its implementation in specific localities in central and eastern Anatolia.<sup>62</sup> Orhon’s reference to Erzurum’s role in the

---

<sup>57</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 227.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>59</sup> Richard G. Hovannisian, “Armenia and the Caucasus in the Genesis of the Soviet-Turkish Entente,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 2 (1973), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/162238>.

<sup>60</sup> “Bu inkılâpta Erzurumlular, sizin de mühim rollarınız vardır.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Unionist Presence in the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1912,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 59, no. 4 (2023): 562.

<sup>62</sup> Hilmar Kaiser, “Financing the Ruling Party and Its Militants in Wartime: The Armenian Genocide and the Kemah Massacres of 1915,” *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, no. 12 (2019): §10; Tigran Martirosyan, “Shakir, Bahaeddin,” in *1914-1918-Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. Daniel Ute et al. (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 17 January 2022 2022).

constitutional monarchy's proclamation might also refer to the activities of Mehmet Emin [Yurdakul], another prominent Unionist, who was sent into exile as a customs director in the city.<sup>63</sup>

His second reference to the town of Erzurum in revolutionary movements was about the organization of a nationalist militia – also called the “National Forces” (*Kuva-yi Milliye*) – that opposed the occupation of Anatolia after the end of the First World War. Orhon praised the Defense of Rights Association formed in the city to “save Eastern Anatolia.”<sup>64</sup> “Eastern Anatolia meant “Western Armenia” for those who wanted the expansion of the Republic of Armenia, and “Northern Kurdistan” for those in favor of an independent Kurdish State.<sup>65</sup> For this reason, it was impossible to perceive the history of the Eastern Front of the “national struggle” without the confrontation with the Armenians.

These contextual elements only help to read between the lines of Orhon's lecture. Since the lecture celebrates the people of Erzurum for their role in vaguely defined revolutions, it would not be enough to state that the way in which Armenians of the city or their decimation are resurfaced from Orhon's lectures. Still, numerous occurrences in the Ottoman past revealed the centrality of the question of the suspected others of the Ottoman Empire in Orhon's perception of independence and revolution.

#### *11.2.4. From Party Ideologues to Provincial Intellectuals*

---

Orhon's adaptation and interpretation of the orders from Ankara, along with the booklet by Recep Peker, were not only shaped by their immediate context but also by a broader intellectual milieu in which nationalists of his era found themselves. Among these influential figures, one of the most prominent was Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924), who was deeply immersed in the works of thinkers such as Herbert Spencer and Gustave Le Bon. Gökalp, a member of the central committee of the CUP, came across Emile Durkheim in the 1910s, finding in him a profound

---

<sup>63</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Unionist Presence in the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1912,” 562,66.

<sup>64</sup> “Erzurumda bir müdafayı hukuk cemiyeti kuruldu. Maksudı şarki anadoluyu kurtarmaktı.” Zihni Orhon, *İstiklal ve İnkılap*, Erzurum, 16 March 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1.

<sup>65</sup> For these various local denominations, I got inspiration from the presentation of Alice von Bieberstein. Alice von Bieberstein, “Placing the Armenian Genocide within Kurdish Studies: Methodological and Analytical Reflections from the Position of Ethnography” (*Études kurdes*, Paris, EHESS, 4 April 2023).

influence, eventually becoming Turkey's inaugural professor of sociology at Istanbul University in 1912.<sup>66</sup>

The impact of Gökalp on the political discourse of the late Ottoman and early republican periods has been extensively studied and documented. It could be argued that his ideas continued to hold sway, transcending seemingly opposing political ideologies in contemporary Turkey. A significant yet previously overlooked aspect of Ziya Gökalp's political philosophy, as observed by Hans-Lukas Kieser, was his implicit endorsement of violence in the service of the Turkish nation, leading Kieser to label him a "proto-fascist."<sup>67</sup>

In one particular segment of Orhon's lectures concerning late Ottoman deputies, a vivid example emerges in the flow of texts, highlighting what could be termed intertextuality. This instance underscores Ziya Gökalp's pervasive influence, not just in the realms of norm-setting and decision-making within the intellectual and political hubs of Istanbul and Ankara, but also among provincial intellectuals in places like Erzurum and Kars.

Again, relying on this freedom (*hürriyet*), a Rum deputy said from the pulpit of the Ottoman Parliament (*Meclis-i Mebusan*): "I am as much Greek on the inside as I was Ottoman on the outside." Finally, the Ottoman Assembly kept silent before this in the name of freedom. A journalist was killed on a bridge because the things he wrote by exercising press freedom could not be banned by law. Neither this nor that was necessary.

Recep Peker, *İnkılap Dersleri*, 1935<sup>68</sup>

You, too, the people of Erzurum, have an important role to play in this revolution. There had been riots for the revolution for a couple of years. This revolution was carried out in a bookish way (*kitaplarda yazılan şekilde*) without reflection on its adaptation to this country. Armenians, Bulgars, etcetera, who escaped from the country, on their way back filled the country with bombs and weapons. § Press freedom was also abused. They stirred anarchy [in the country] with bombs, weapons, and dagger-like newspapers.<sup>69</sup> In the Ottoman parliament, those like Boşo, Kozmedi, and Talip Paşa went so far as to insult the Turk from the pulpit of parliament.

---

<sup>66</sup> Taha Parla, *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1876-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 11-13.

<sup>67</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Europe's Seminal Proto-Fascist? Historically Approaching Ziya Gökalp, Mentor of Turkish Nationalism," *Die Welt des Islams* 61, no. 4 (29 Apr. 2021): 30.

<sup>68</sup> "Gene bu hürriyete güvenerek bir Rum mebus, Mebusan Meclisi kürsüsünden Benim dışım ne kadar Osmalı ise, içim de o kadar Yunanlıdır diyor ve nihayet Osmanlı Meclisi buna karşı hürriyet namına susuyordu. Matbuat hürriyetinden istifade ederek yazdığı şeyler kanunla menedilemediği için de bir gazeteci bir köprü üstünde öldürüldü. Ne ona ne de buna lüzum vardı." Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 26.

<sup>69</sup> Redhouse, 886, "a knife or dagger."

This sequence of Orhon's lectures strictly followed the main argumentative thread of Peker's university lectures. One of the main slogans of the Second Constitutional Monarchy (July 1908) was "freedom, equality, justice, and fraternity" (*hürriyet, 'adalet, müsāvāt, uhuvvet*).<sup>71</sup> Both Peker and Orhon emphasized the point about freedom (*hürriyet*), which encompassed freedom of expression, for instance, in the Ottoman parliament, and freedom of the press. Both Peker and Orhon spoke about press freedom and the outraging words of Ottoman parliamentarians. As mentioned earlier, Peker generally avoided naming names. When he spoke of the Rum deputy, he did not name him either. Twenty-six Rum deputies sat in the Ottoman parliament between 1908 and 1912. Peker argued that this Greek-Orthodox deputy felt emboldened to express his Greek identity in parliament due to "freedom" (*hürriyet*). The remainder of the parliamentary body chose to remain silent in response to these declarations in the name of "freedom."

Against this background, Orhon named not one but three members of Ottoman Parliament: Talip Pacha, Yorgo Boşo, and Kozmedi Efendi. The first was the deputy of Basra, also known as Seyip Talip Pasha or Talip al-Naqib, who opposed the CUP.<sup>72</sup> The third, Kozmidi Pandilaki Efendi, was also a vocal opponent of the CUP who represented Istanbul in the 1908 parliament. Kozmidi also published a newspaper in Istanbul, *Sada-yi Millet* (Voice of the Nation). This newspaper was accused of being a "Rum" instead of an "Ottoman" newspaper and of diffusing similar political opinions as the "ones published in Athens" by the Unionist press.<sup>73</sup> The

---

<sup>70</sup> "Bu inkılâpta Erzurumlular, sizin de mühim rollarınız vardır. Burada iki üç sene kadar inkılâp için ihtilâller yapmıştır. Bu inkılâp kitaplarında yazılan şekilde tatbik edildi. Memlekete uygun bir şekilde tatbiki düşünülemedi. Memleketten harice kaçmış olan Ermeniler, bulgarlar ve saire memlekete dönerken memleketi bomba ve silahla doldurdular. § Matbuat hürriyeti de yine kötü kullanıldı. Bomba, silâh, hançer gazeteleri ortalığı anarşiye verdiler. Osmanlı meclisi mebusanında Boşolar, Kozmediler, Talip Paşalar meclis kürsüsünden Türke küfürler savuracak kadar ileri gittiler." Zihni Orhon, 13 March 1936, *Ibid.* Orhon talks about three Ottoman deputies known as Yorgi Boşo Efendi, Kozmidi Pandilaki Efendi and Talip-al Naqib.

<sup>71</sup> *Jön Türk İhtilâli ve Kanun-i Esasî hatıra kartpostalı. Courtesy of İsa Akbaş, 1908. Hürriyet- Adalet- Müsavat- Uhuvvet', üzerinde Abdülhamid'in portresi olan Yaşasın Kanun-i Esasi!' ve geleneksel Padişahım çok yaşa.' sloganlarını birleştirmektedir. SALT RESEARCH.*

<sup>72</sup> Aline Schlaepfer, "Between Ruler and Rogue: Sayiid Talib al-Naqib and the British in Early Twentieth-century Basra," in *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, ed. Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 235.

<sup>73</sup> Mehmet Pınar, "II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Patrikhanenin Gölgesinde Sıra Dışı Bir Milletvekili Kozmidi Pandalaki Efendi (1908-1912)," *İçtimaiyat* 7, no. 2 (November 2023): 575.

editorials published on *Sada-yi Millet*, in turn, claimed that the newspaper was in favor of Ottoman subjects including Albanians, Armenians, Rums, and Arabs.<sup>74</sup> Throughout the 1910s, various Unionist journalists accused both Yorgo Boşo and Kozmidi of seditious activity in relation to Greece. In 1914, Kozmidi's citizenship rights were removed, and his property was confiscated based on another accusation of treason. In 1920, he was acquitted, and his citizenship rights were returned. Still, his property remained seized.<sup>75</sup>

While speaking about their alleged abuse, Orhon slightly distorted Peker's points and accused these three deputies of "insulting the Turk from the pulpit of parliament."<sup>76</sup> In this logic, if Orhon referred to the same event as Peker, then putting forward one's difference by pointing out non-Turkish roots or differences in religion amounted to the same thing as offending the Turks. Among the mentioned deputies, Yorgo Boşo was a "Rum" known for harshly criticizing the Turkification and centralization policies implemented by the CUP.<sup>77</sup> Kozmidi Efendi, another Rum, remained in the Ottoman Parliament until 1914.

Orhon's reference to these political actors was one of the most striking examples of the role of different channels of politicization, which impacted his perception of the Ottoman parliament during the Second Constitutional Monarchy. These channels might include his discussions with his colleagues at the War Academy and his readings throughout his life. Even though the directives were clear that Orhon had to read Recep Peker, he could discern other texts that informed Peker's framing of Boşo and Kozmidi in the Ottoman parliament. Orhon's reminiscence of the deputies of the 1908 parliament showed that he did not copy Recep Peker's lectures, but definitely read them to outline his speeches and reflect on their content. The blueprint given by Recep Peker's lectures determined the talking points, yet Orhon, like all other preachers, had some leeway about the content of his speeches. This leeway connected Recep Peker's utterances to other intellectual figures for the CUP and their successors, the

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 576.

<sup>76</sup> Zihni Orhon, Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press), 82. Cited by: Erol Ülker, "Empires and Nation-Building: Russification and Turkification Compared," 87.

CHP. Peker's reference to the Rum deputy was a wink to the party's ideologist, Ziya Gökalp. Orhon's cited Ziya Gökalp almost verbatim.

Every individual has the same ideal, the same language, the same customs, and the same religion.

Its parliament is clean, and there is no place for "Boşos"'s word there.

Ziya Gökalp, *New Life*, 1918<sup>78</sup>

Ziya Gökalp expressed his ideas and wishes for a "New Life," as the title of his book suggested, in the immediate aftermath of the First World War and the Armenian Genocide. The exchange of populations with Greece had not yet started. The poem titled "Motherland" (*Vaṭan*) in this anthology was the one Zihni Orhon referred to. The poem was, in fact, a reformulation of Ziya Gökalp's political ideas outlined in his previous work for a broader audience.<sup>79</sup> It was prescriptive overall. It expressed, for instance, Gökalp's wish that the call to prayer be cited in Turkish instead of Arabic. This wish was realized in 1932 under Mustafa Kemal's presidency. The poem also expresses Ziya Gökalp's desire to live in a country where "Boşos would not have a word;" hence, people like him, who put forward their non-Muslim and non-Turkish origins in parliament, would not "have the right to speak."<sup>80</sup>

Regarding press freedom, Peker used the example of the journalist of *Serbestî* (Free), Hasan Fehmi, who was a vocal critic of the CUP and tried to organize an oppositional meeting in Istanbul against recent press regulations promulgated by the CUP. Hasan Fehmi was assassinated while he wanted to reach the meeting on Galata Bridge in Istanbul in April 1909. The CUP was widely accused of organizing this assassination.<sup>81</sup> Peker blamed Hasan Fehmi and the impossibility of banning his oppositional voice through the press in his assassination.

Before switching to the point of press freedom, Orhon added that the Bulgarian and Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire, "who escaped the country" during the Hamidian era, could also return due to the "freedom" brought by the Second Constitutional Monarchy.

---

<sup>78</sup> "Her ferdinde mefkûre bir, lisân, 'âdet, dîn birdir. Mebusânı temiz, orada « Boşo »larıñ sözü yok." Ziya Gökalp, *Yeni Hayat*.

<sup>79</sup> I thank Erol Köroğlu for this remark. Erol Köroğlu, *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918)* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2016), 257-261.

<sup>80</sup> "(...) orada « Boşo »larıñ sözü yok." Cited by Hamit Bozarslan, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian, eds., *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens: 1915 à nos jours* (Paris: Tallandier, 2015), 401.

<sup>81</sup> Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 237.



On their return, they “filled the country with bombs, daggers, and weapons.” Peker’s lectures did not reference Bulgarians, Armenians, or their revolutionary activity. The consequence of the relative press freedom following thirty years of Hamidian control implied press censorship, and the political exile of the dissidents, including Hasan Fehmi, was interpreted differently by Zihni Orhon.<sup>82</sup> While keeping the bit about the abuse of press freedom, Orhon added “bomb, weapon, and dagger-like newspapers” instead of mentioning the assassination of Hasan Fehmi.

According to Orhon’s interpretation of Recep Peker’s lectures, Ziya Gökalp’s writings significantly influenced the provincial leaders of the CHP. As a trained military officer, Orhon must have read Ziya Gökalp’s works and press articles of the time, since he was so specific about the deceptive comments of the Ottoman deputies during parliamentary debates. Additionally, Orhon’s inclusion of the Bulgarian and Armenian revolutionary movements and their violent means suggests that his knowledge and experience of the era played a role in his interpretation of Recep Peker’s lecture.

### 11.3. Law and Order and Internal Enemies

---

The Bulgarian and Armenian revolutionaries who filled the country with weapons and their corollaries who published in newspapers that Orhon likened to the same weapons raise the question of the late Ottoman perceptions of “order” (*nizam*) and the more central concept of “public order” or “public tranquility” (*asayiş*) facing the increase in insurgency against imperial rule.<sup>83</sup> Orhon’s speech presented a large and heterogeneous group as the makers of disorder under late Ottoman rule. These problem makers were at times presented as “traitors,” “backstabbers,” or “internal enemies.” The centrality of the problem makers and his prescriptions about the resolution of the problems made Orhon’s speech a fruitful resource for understanding the memory of state-sponsored mass violence (forced population movements, genocide, massacres) in the late Ottoman Empire and the transmission of this memory in the early republican era in Eastern Anatolia (Erzurum, Kars).

---

<sup>82</sup> Özgür Türesay, “Censure et production culturelle. Le champ éditorial ottoman à l’époque hamidienne (1876-1908),” *Études Balkaniques-Cahiers Pierre Belon*, no. 16 (2009 2009): §4.

<sup>83</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, “The State’s Security and the Subjects’ Prosperity: Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century),” 455; Alp Eren Topal, “Order as a Chronotope of Ottoman Political Writing,” *Contemporary Levant* (2020),.

### 11.3.1. Heterogeneity of “Dangerous Elements”

The opening of the chapter emphasized the Armenian Genocide and the centrality of Armenians in Orhon’s speech; and in the speech the list was long with names of late Ottoman problem-makers or “dangerous elements” of the ever-threatened Ottoman rule.<sup>84</sup> Talip al-Naqip’s example showed that religious opposition between Muslims and non-Muslims was necessary but not sufficient to explain the phenomenon. The only occurrence of the term “dangerous elements” in Recep Peker’s lectures was when he was speaking about the “31 March Incident” (April 1909), framed as the pinnacle of Islamic “reaction” (*irtica*) at the expense of the recognition of its anti-Unionist and constitutionalist nature.<sup>85</sup> Hence, a particular form of Islamic reaction was key to the enumeration of the problem-makers. Zihni Orhon did not speak about opposition to the April 1909 insurrection. He instead spoke about the Arab Revolt as the “backstabbing” of the Turks (*arkasından vurdular*), or the “grandchildren of the prophet” by collaborating with the “enemy,” or the British, during the First World War.

The Ottoman Sultan Mehmed Reşad (1908-1918), in turn, was accused of being naïve enough to expect the “Islamic world” to respond to his call for jihad during the Great War.<sup>86</sup> Orhon mentioned two revolts in Bitlis between 1903 and 1915 that were led by a Sufi sheikh. The rebels of the first one were depicted as “walking on all fours” and “ululating” towards their sheikh. According to Zihni Orhon’s narrative, they were “deported” (*sürüldü*) from Bitlis. If the date is correct (1319-1320 without specifying which calendar), the group he referred to was the Khalili-Naksibendi order in the region, which was not known for wearing conic hats.<sup>87</sup> Otherwise, the conic hats (*sivri külah*) were associated with Alevi and Kurdish groups in different sources.<sup>88</sup> The second revolt in Bitlis, dated 1330 without specifying which type of calendar, was likely the Kurdish Revolt of early 1914. Orhon explained that “hundreds of

---

<sup>84</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Ahmet Kuyaş, “La guerre des constitutions. La vraie nature de l’insurrection du 13 avril 1909 à Istanbul,” in *Mouvements révolutionnaires et droit constitutionnel*, ed. Lina Megahed and Nicolas Pauthe (Institut francophone pour la Justice et la Démocratie, 2023).

<sup>86</sup> “Cihan savaşına başlarken halife Reşat cihat ilân etti. Güya dünyadaki müslimanlar bu cihada iştirak edeceklerdi. Kaç müsliman geldi? Bilakis peygamberin torunları düşmanlarla birleşerek Türkü arkasından vurdular. İşte hilafet münheldir. Bize lüzumu yoktur.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> I thank Sedat Ulugana for this information.

<sup>88</sup> Baran Zeydanlıoğlu, “Seyyahların Gözüyle Bitlis Ahalisi ve Giyim Kuşamları,” *Bitlisname*, Updated 22 January 2022, <https://www.bitlisname.com/seyyahlarin-gozuyle-bitlis-ahalisi-ve-giyim-kusamlari-1600-1900/>.

people perished” during this revolt and qualified its instigator “Sheik Selim” (most probably Sheik Said Ali of Hizan) as a “murderous criminal” (*cani*) who later “escaped to the Tsar’s consulate.”<sup>89</sup>

These examples show that the issue of “dangerous elements” or “internal enemies” cannot be reduced to religious differences. Still, Zihni Orhon’s speech drew an implicit hierarchy between the internal threats coming from non-Muslim, non-Turkish, and Turkish but non-secular political factions. The insurgency organized around Sufi sheiks could have been rendered controllable by the laws prohibiting Sufi convents. The example of the rebellion of the dervishes wearing conic hats, for instance, was directly linked to the argument about the secularization of education and the abolition of the Sufi convents. The problem of the backstabbing of the prophet’s grandchildren was, in turn, resolved by the abolition of the caliphate.<sup>90</sup>

Still, the formulation and proposed solution for the question of non-Muslim “elements” (*unsur*) was more ambiguous. When he was expected to discuss the concept of “nationalism,” Orhon highlighted the “despicable” condition of “the Turk” before the nationalist revolution. This deplorable state placed the country’s “genuine children” of Anatolia at a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the non-Turkish but supposedly Muslim “Arabs” and “Albanians” as well as “Christians.”

All of the burden was on the Turks’ shoulders. The Arabs and the Albanians did not join the army. Privileges were accorded to the Kurds by creating tribal regiments. Those studying at the medrese and those living in Istanbul were exempted from military service. Christians avoided military service by paying a tax of as little as 72 piastres as they progressed more in demography, wealth, and education. The Turkish element carried all of the burden and exhausted.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> “330 da Bitliste bir şeyih istayı olmuş, yüzlerce insan telef olmuştu. Cani şeyih Selim bitlis çarlık konsolosluğuna girmişti. Zayıf hükümet bu caniyi alamadı. Taki seferberlik ve harp oldu şeyh konsolosluktan alındı.” Zihni Orhon, 16 March 1936, §8.

<sup>90</sup> “Evvelce hilafet ünvanı için rekabete düşenler onu alsınlar inkılaptan birisi de tekke ve medreselerin ilgasıdır.” Zihni Orhon, 13 March 1936, §22.

<sup>91</sup> “Bütün yükler Türklere yüklendi. Arap, Arnavut askere gelmedi. Aşiret alayları teşekkül ederek Kürtlere imtiyazlar verildi. Medreselerde okuyanlar ve İstanbul halkı askerlikten affedildi. Hıristiyanlar sene 72 kuruş gibi ufak bir vergi vermek suretiyle askerliğe gelmiyorlardı. Fakat nüfusça, servetçe, maarifçe ilerliyorlardı. Türk unsurları bütün yükleri çekiyor ve bitiyordu.” Zihni Orhon, Ibid. §8

Orhon's mention of the Ottoman military exemption system should be contextualized. He was born in 1883. He started his military career in the early twentieth century. Orhon delivered his "Independence and Revolution" lectures in 1936, when he had retired from the military five years before. The Ottoman military exemption system indeed excluded Christians until a certain point. Still, the facilitation of the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects' exemption from military service remained in place only until 1909. Similarly, the exemption of students at religious schools and residents of Istanbul was limited or abolished under CUP rule after 1909.<sup>92</sup> Orhon defended the military mobilization of "Christians," referring to a potential political debate that took place under the Second Constitutional Monarchy. He also reminded his audience of a local Unionist, Hacı Akif, who was against the recruitment of Christians because of "false suggestions." His respectful remembrance of this Unionist who was "kidnapped by Armenians" and "died in Baku" and his mention of his opposition to the conscription of Christians due to naivety meant that Orhon supported the military policies of the Committee of Union and Progress.

"Christians" were central to Orhon's understanding of the Ottoman military conscription system and its evolution. Still, his critique went beyond the religious difference between Muslims and non-Muslims. Among the Muslim citizens of the Ottoman Empire, there was also a hierarchy between those practicing 'popular' and more acceptable forms of Islam promoted by the early republican leadership. This understanding excluded communitarian organizations such as Sufi convents and the organization of Islamic medreses, which produced their own communities with a particular *esprit de corps* that was perceived as uncontrollable by the early republican leadership. From his analysis of military conscription policies, Orhon did not exclude Sufi organizations and other types of Muslim dignitaries – along with their own symbolic capital. For him, the exemption system for religious dignitaries allowed a legitimate kind of draft evasion. As a result, Orhon defended the abolition of Sufi convents (September

---

<sup>92</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844-1914," *International Review of Social History* 43, no. 3 (1998): 447.

1925) and religious schools (*tekke ve medreseler*) (March 1924).<sup>93</sup> This allowed him to hit two birds with one stone: secularism and Turkification.

Despite the complexity of the issue, which included non-Muslims, non-Turks, and potentially Turkish religious elites, the burden was carried by “Turkish elements” (*Türk unsurları*) as opposed to non-Turkish and non-Muslim populations living under the Ottoman Empire.<sup>94</sup> This narrative neglected some facts about military conscription policies pointed out by historian Mehmet Beşikçi. Beşikçi, who researched the mobilization of manpower during the Great War, argued that the nationalist narrative undermined the desertion of the Turks and Muslims and highlighted the non-Turkish and non-Muslim elements such as the Armenians, Rums, and Arabs.<sup>95</sup> The nationalist narrative Zihni Orhon shared also silenced the Ottoman state’s impossibility to comply with its responsibility to cloth and nourish the recruited soldiers during the Balkan Wars and the First World War. The difficult living conditions rather than the issue of loyalty also increased draft evasion during these wars.<sup>96</sup>

In short, Zihni Orhon told the well-known story of Ottoman rise and stagnation, followed by corruption and decline, shared by many official historians of the 1930s.<sup>97</sup> Still, he placed specific emphasis on the prism of military power and put non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations at the core of the problem in more explicit ways. In the sequence’s conclusion, he argued that exemptions and desertions of those enumerated allowed “Christians” to “progress” and flourish “demographically, economically, and intellectually” (*maarifçe*). The interchangeability of non-Turks and “Christians” in Orhon’s discourse did not make much

---

<sup>93</sup> “Evvelce hilafet unvanı için rekabete düşenler onu alsınlar inkılâptan birisi de tekke ve medreselerin ilgasıdır. Bunuda iyi ettik. Bu sınıflar o kadar cahil idilerki gözleriyle gördükleri yeri dünya ve komşularını da yer yüzünde bulunan hükümetler zannediyorlardı. Buralar asker kaçaklarıyla dolmuşudu. Tekkeler miskinhane halini almışdı.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid*.

<sup>94</sup> “Bütün yükler Türklere yüklendi. Arap, Arnavut askere gelmedi. Aşiret alayları teşekkül ederek Kürtlere imtiyazlar verildi. Medreselerde okuyanlar ve İstanbul halkı askerlikten affedildi. Hıristiyanlar sene 72 kuruş gibi ufak bir vergi vermek suretiyle askerliğe gelmiyorlardı. Fakat nüfusça, servetçe, maarifçe ilerledikçe ilerliyorlardı. Türk unsurları bütün yükleri çekiyor ve bitiyordu.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid*.

<sup>95</sup> Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance*, 248.

<sup>96</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844-1914,” 443; Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance*, 248.

<sup>97</sup> Büşra Ersanlı, “The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography,” in *Chapter Three The Ottoman Empire in the Historiography of the Kemalist Era: a Theory of Fatal Decline*, ed. Fikret Adanir and Suraiya Faroqhi (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 153.

sense following his argumentative line. It was almost a slip of the tongue. The way Orhon slid away from a group of non-Turks, including “Arabs and Albanians,” to “Christians” reflected again the hierarchy established between the Muslim and non-Muslim non-Turks.<sup>98</sup>

The bit about draft evasion or the exemption system allowed Orhon to put forward another critical aspect of his arguments. Because of a set of privileges such as the exemption from military service, some subjects “progressed” while others ‘lagged behind.’ In Orhon’s narrative, “Christian” subjects of the Ottoman Empire progressed in adopting nationalism earlier than Muslim ones. At the same time, Muslims were behind because they did not become “nationalists” early enough. The imperial management of difference under the Ottoman Empire put the non-Turks and non-Muslims in a privileged position. Against this background, ‘nationalist revolution’ meant reversing a situation of oppression in which “the Turks” were exploited for the wealth and progress of non-Turks.

Orhon’s take on Turkish and Muslim backwardness in regard to non-Turkish and non-Muslim elements’ “progress” (*terakki*) was also a common trope among ideologues of the CUP and the CHP starting with the famous Ziya Gökalp.<sup>99</sup> Official historiography developed in the 1930s adopted the narrative of “Ottoman fatal decline” facing the “progress” of non-Muslim nations concerning the Ottoman Empire.<sup>100</sup> These intellectual debates were not confined to people (Ziya Gökalp) and organizations (Turkish Historical Association) whose affiliation with the party was more evident since it was organic. The concern over backwardness also invaded literary debates around the authenticity and originality of the Turkish novel in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>101</sup> Many of those political and literary debates occurred through newspaper columns (Chapter 1). Even though Orhon was trained in the military and continued his career in provincial governments as a ‘man of law and order’ until his retirement in 1931, his perception of change brought by the republican regime echoed the concerns of (high) intellectual circles of his time.

---

<sup>98</sup> Elif Becan, “Une famille étrangeté: L’accueil des immigrants musulmans des Balkans en Turquie (1923-1964)” (Ph.D. Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2021), 5.

<sup>99</sup> Orhan Koçak, ““Westernisation against the West”: Cultural Politics in the Early Turkish Republic,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem, and Philip Robins, St Antony’s Series (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010), 308.

<sup>100</sup> Büşra Ersanlı, “The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography,” 137.

<sup>101</sup> Nurdan Gürbilek, “Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel.”

Orhon's narrative of late Ottoman history was marked by a succession of outraging events prompted by the 'naivety' of Young Turks and the individualized moral corruption of other political decision-makers, such as the sultan. This still echoed the official line.<sup>102</sup> Still, the threat posed by suspected enemies was more prominent than in newspaper articles, party brochures, and other types of published material. In Orhon's narrative, the Ottoman Empire, then the Turkish Republic, was threatened on each front. Orhon said that Armenian and Bulgarian revolutionary organizations used physical violence to obtain autonomy and independent "gangs" (*çete*). Intellectual circles active in the press were publishing 'treacherous' (dagger-like) newspapers, which were likened to armed attacks and assassinations committed by Armenian and Bulgarian gangs. Non-Muslim or non-Turkish deputies insulted Turkishness when they criticized the nationalist turn of the Unionists or demanded more equality between Sunni-Muslim Turks and others. In this sense, Zihni Orhon's speech echoed the concerns of "imperiallly biased" nationalists who wanted the continuation of imperial domination of non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire but, at the same time, introduced nationalism into the political discourse.<sup>103</sup>

When he had to define the key terms of the lecture, which were, after all, "two fundamental concepts of the revolution," Orhon defined them through their absence. These negative definitions allowed him to discuss the practical obstacles to implementing these principles of "revolution" and "independence." These obstacles were, indeed, a group of internal and external enemies. Orhon's lecture was similar to Recep Peker's Revolution lectures about the centrality of the figure of the internal enemy. Recep Peker mentioned "internal and external enemies" multiple times throughout his lectures. On the other hand, Orhon spoke about the "disloyalty of some of our compatriots" and mentioned that he personally suffered from this disloyalty.<sup>104</sup> He also reminded his audience that "the Turks" had suffered like himself and that "it was necessary to know gratitude as well as vengeance."<sup>105</sup> While Peker contended himself by repeating the danger of posed by internal enemies, Orhon named some of them.

---

<sup>102</sup> Büşra Ersanlı, "The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography," 135.

<sup>103</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha : Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide*, 25-30.

<sup>104</sup> "Düşenin yarı olmaz doğrudur. Bizimde yarımız olmadı. İçi yanmış bir insan sıfatile söylerimki içimizdeki bazı yurddaşlarımızdan da vefasızlıkta gördük." Orhon 16 March 1936, §12.

<sup>105</sup> Orhon, 16 March 1936. §11.

Naming these enemies is one of the main ways in which populations targeted for extermination can be traced in Zihni Orhon's political discourse. As mentioned before, Peker did not identify groups such as "Armenians" or "Bulgarians" within the group of "internal enemies." Orhon, on the other hand, introduced them as soon as he started speaking about the Second Constitutional Monarchy. According to Donald Bloxham, the process that led to the Armenian Genocide was one of "cumulative policy radicalization."<sup>106</sup> Turkish nationalism developed, in part, in reaction to nationalist and independentist movements that emerged among Ottoman subjects. The interventions of external powers and Armenian nationalism played an important role in this radicalization process.<sup>107</sup>

This "cumulative policy radicalization" process was somewhat legible in Orhon's account of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. Zihni Orhon qualified the period between the Russo-Ottoman War (1877-1878) until the proclamation of the Second Constitutional monarchy as a period during which the "country groaned, the Turk became abased and despicable." Against this background, Orhon had an overall positive assessment of the Second Constitutional Monarchy and its instigators despite their role in later participating in the Great War and orchestrating the genocide. It was a good revolution conducted to save the empire likened to a "dying person," the Sick Man of Europe. In Orhon's narrative, the constitutional revolution was prompted by "sporadic revolts" around the country that could not accept the terms of the Reval Meeting (June 1908) between King Edward and the Tsar of Russia, which in turn aimed to "discuss the terms of the distribution," hence the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>108</sup> The idea of preserving the empire and the supremacy of Turkish-speaking Muslims within the imperial sociopolitical order was crucial for Orhon's understanding of the past.

The main actors of the 1908 revolution were not named. The revolution of 1908, which reinstated the suspended constitution of 1878 following the defeat of the Russo-Ottoman War (1877-1878) by the autocratic sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), was depicted positively. The

---

<sup>106</sup> Donald Bloxham, "The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy," *Past & Present*, no. 181 (2003): 143.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>108</sup> "Muhterem arkadaşlar, yatan bir insan sıhhatta olsa nihayet sıhhati bozulur, etleri çürür ve ölür. Ayakta duranın kuvveti kesilerek düşer, yürüyen yol alır. 93 den 324e kadar memleket inledi, durdu. Türk zelil ve hakir oldu. Nihayet imparatorluğun taksimi için Reval mülakatı vaki oldu. Memlekette yer yer isyanlar başladı. Meşrutiyet idare ilân edildi." Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.* para. 14.



war that turned Erzurum into a borderland was, in turn, described as a catastrophe. The 1908 revolution was worthy because it was prompted by a group of unnamed but presumably heroic individuals – naïve at least – who had good intentions but who “carried out the revolution in a bookish way.” The organizers of the 1908 revolution were accused of not thinking through its adaptability to the specificities of the Ottoman context.<sup>109</sup> No other negative comments were made about the Unionists’ decision to enter the war on the side of Germany or perpetrate the genocide.

In contrast, the naivety and bookishness of the Unionists created an excellent opportunity for ‘dangerous elements’ or ‘internal enemies’ within the Ottoman Empire. Orhon claimed that the Young Turk Revolution brought “Armenians and Bulgarians” who escaped the country” back, who, in turn, used this opportunity to fill the country “with bombs and armory.”<sup>110</sup> Following the actual weaponry, “bomb, weapon, and dagger-like newspapers” instilled “anarchy.”

Using the term “anarchy” for Armenian and Bulgarian revolutionaries requires some attention. Axel Çorlu has shown that the Ottoman state’s surveillance institutions started to report about “anarchy” in the empire starting from the second half of the nineteenth century. These reports mainly concerned “Armenian” revolutionary organizations (circa 70%).<sup>111</sup> Most reports used the term “anarchy” to refer to different situations in which “law and order” were at stake instead of referring to “genuine” anarchist organizations.<sup>112</sup> Çorlu argued that rather than the ideology itself, the association of the label anarchist with already suspected populations was what truly made the issue a matter of security. Duygu Tasalp, on the other hand, showed how the Armenian problem was framed within a sort of terrorism framework by emphasizing violent political actions of Armenian revolutionaries.<sup>113</sup> In both Recep Peker’s

---

<sup>109</sup> “Memlekete uygun bir şekilde tatbiki düşünülemedi.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.* para. 15.

<sup>110</sup> “Bu inkılâpta Erzurumlular, sizin de mühim rollarınız vardır. Burada iki üç sene kadar inkılâp için ihtilâller yapmıştır. Bu inkılâp kitaplarında yazılan şekilde tatbik edildi. Memlekete uygun bir şekilde tatbiki düşünülemedi. Memleketten harice kaçmış olan ermeniler, bulgarlar ve saire memlekete dönerken memleketi bomba ve silahla doldurdular.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Axel B. Çorlu, “Anarchists and Anarchism in the Ottoman Empire, 1850-1917,” in *History From Below-A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), 561.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 562.

<sup>113</sup> Duygu Tasalp, *Cent ans de négation: les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l’Unionisme à l’Islamisme*, 56-191.

and Zihni Orhon’s lectures, “anarchy” meant not only “the political and social disorder resulting from the absence or disregard of the government,” but also “the use of violence to achieve political goals” by already suspected groups within the late Ottoman or early republican citizenry.<sup>114</sup>

The sequence on anarchy brought by the liberty of the Second Constitutional era was followed by a reference to the diversity of Ottoman parliamentarians. Greek-Ottomans or Arab-Ottomans criticized nationalism and “insulted the Turk” from the pulpit of parliament during that time. The “Houran, Yemen, and Albanian uprisings of the Second Constitutional era required repression. The “sons of Anatolia,” read the Turks, had to “spill” and waste their blood to maintain “security” or “public order” (*asayiş*) in Arabia and Yemen.”<sup>115</sup>

### 11.3.2. *Inside Threats, Outside Influence*

---

The portrayal of the Ottoman imperial order highlighted the role of suspected and externalized Ottoman subjects, termed the “foreigners within,” in their relationship with imperialist powers like Britain, Russia, and France. Recep Peker emphasized the significance of “foreign” intervention in defining “independence” during his lectures. The presence of external threats compounded the perceived danger posed by internal enemies in both Peker’s and Orhon’s lectures.

Although there were phases of confrontation with foreign forces in the American Wars of Revival (American Revolutionary Wars), they were not without great difficulties. At the beginning of the last Russian revolution, there were also clashes on Soviet territory with reactionary forces united with foreigners. However, neither the American, French, nor Russian battles are like the life and death struggles for the liberation of the motherland from foreign boots while at the same time dealing with internal enemies and deep-seated bigotry, as in the Turkish liberation and revolution.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>114</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, “anarchy, n., sense 1.a.i,” in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2024); Oxford English Dictionary, “terrorism, n., sense 2.a,” in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2023).

<sup>115</sup> “Anadolu evladı Arabistanın, Yemenin asayışı uğurunda kanını, arabı doyurmak için malını verdi. Bu hal yüzlerce sene devam etti.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.* para. 22. “Tranquilité, ordre, sécurité publique, maintien de la sécurité et de la tranquillité” See Sami, “münevver,” 18.

<sup>116</sup> “Amerikanın diriliş savaşlarında dış kuvvetlerle çarpışma safhaları varsa da, bu arada büyük ölçüde güçlükler yoktu. Son Rus inkılabı başlarında, ecnebilerle birleşmiş reaksiyoner kuvvetlerle Sovyet topraklarında da çarpışmalar yapılmıştır. Fakat ne Amerikanın, ne Fransanın ve ne de Rusyanın bu çarpışmaları, Türk kurtuluş ve inkılabında olduğu gibi, bir taraftan iç düşmanlarla, derin taassup mukavemetleriyle uğraşılırken, ana yurt

In his Revolution lectures, Peker defended a form of Turkish exceptionalism. He argued that the Turkish Revolution was unique because of its dual struggle against internal and external enemies. Hence, the exceptional character of the revolution stemmed from the exceptional character of the security threats. Peker contended that there might have been “clashes” in Soviet Russia, probably referring to the most recent Russian Civil War. However, the characteristics of these clashes were different. Not only were internal enemies often portrayed as proxies for external ones, but they also had an enduring nature, and the struggle against them was a matter of life and death. This way referring to the revolution and its enemies securitized the struggle against them.<sup>117</sup>

Another parallel drawn between Orhon’s and Peker’s lectures pertained to the involvement of foreign embassies in domestic affairs. The General Secretary of the party contended in his university lectures that the “interpreters of any foreign embassy” could swiftly arrive at the Sublime Porte and “settle a matter (*mesele*) in a single meeting” by “pronouncing a single word” often to the detriment of Ottoman interests. Peker could not emphasize the facility of foreign intervention in the late Ottoman era more. He asserted that such interventions in the past would incite widespread outrage among the “nation” today, to the extent that “the entire nation” would be prepared to spill blood to rectify the situation.<sup>118</sup> The nation’s readiness to shed its blood also implied shedding the blood of the others.

Peker’s rhetoric undeniably carried an inherent tone of aggression. However, the contentious aspect of diplomatic intervention was conspicuously silenced in his narrative. This outcome was hardly surprising, considering that his lectures underwent editing and publication by the party. Moreover, his position as the party’s general secretary afforded him a distinct level of visibility. One of his students reviewed the notes before publication, a process that

---

topraklarının yabancı çizmeleri altından kurtarılması için yapılan hayat memet boğuşmalarına benzemez.” Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 12.

<sup>117</sup> Antonia Does, “3. Securitization Theory,” in *The Construction of the Maras* (Genève: Graduate Institute Publications, 2013).

<sup>118</sup> “Herhangi yabancı devlet elçiliği tercümanı Babıaliye gelir, bugün bir tek kelimesinin telaffuzu ile bütün ulusu ayaklandıracak ve kanını dökmeye koşturacak bir meseleyi bir görüşmede devlet aleyhine halleder, padişahın iradesini alır ve giderdi.” Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 118. For the English translation of the quote, “The interpreter of any foreign embassy would come to the Sublime Porte, settle a matter against the state in a single meeting that would today cause the whole nation to rise up and shed its blood with the pronunciation of a single word, get the sultan’s will and leave.”

inevitably tempered Peker's discourse compared to the impassioned speeches often delivered by the People's Preachers.

In contrast, Orhon took a different approach by committing his speech to writing. He knew it would only be heard by those present during his address in Erzurum, in front of the Military Cinema, and read by those within the confines of the CHP's General Secretary's office. Orhon diligently talked about foreign diplomatic intervention in internal affairs. Still, he made the narrative more vivid by mentioning historical actors, which made it easier to identify his historical references. Orhon mentioned a newspaper he used to read circa 1903 [1320], shortly after he graduated from the War Academy. The newspaper in question was *Tercüman* (The Interpreter) and was published in April 1883 in Bakhchysarai, Crimea, by İsmail Gasprinski (1851-1914), a Crimean Tatar intellectual who widely influenced Ottoman nationalists, especially on linguistic nationalism and modern education.<sup>119</sup> Ziya Gökalp had respectfully remembered İsmail Gasprinski in his *Principles of Turkism* among the "great Turkists" of Russia.<sup>120</sup> He started his speech by stating, "The deeds of the past fall into oblivion. But those who attract the eye, the important ones, are not forgotten."

The inspector Hilmi Pasha wrote a ciphered telegram (*şifre*) to the grand vizier. "We cornered Bulgarian gangs in a forest. We started to dispose of them (*tenkil muamelesine başladık*)." This coded telegram is transmitted to the grand vizier in the Sublime Porte. At this moment, the Austrian ambassador visits the grand vizier at the Sublime Porte. [The ambassador says], "Why do you tolerate these gangs like this? You should banish them violently (*tenkil*). Because we also have Slavic subjects, and they also get spoiled," and leaves. [Then,] the grand vizier orders the preparation of [another] coded telegram on the violent banishment (*tenkil*) of the gang. He proofreads the draft, and it starts to be coded. Then, the ambassador of the Tsar comes to visit [the Porte]. [He says,] "You use violence against gangs in Rumelia. [You] should tolerate them a little bit because the pan-Slavists in our country grumble," then he leaves. The grand vizier demands the coded telegram [again]. He orders them to "take the necessary [measures] while avoiding spilling blood as much as possible." I could not forget, until this day, this utterance that kicked me where

---

<sup>119</sup> "Kırım'da bahçe sarayda tercüman ismile bir gazete çıkardı bunu çıkaran İsmail Gaspirinski rahmetlisi idi 320 senesinde bir baş makale yazmıştı makalenin hulasası şu idi." Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.* Zaynabidin Abdirashidov, "Gasprinski, İsmail," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three Online*, ed. Kate Fleet et al. (Brill, 2015); Hakan Kırımlı, "Gaspiralı, İsmâil Bey," in *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi* (TDV İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1996). <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/gaspirali-ismail-bey>; Ingeborg Baldauf, "Jadidism in Central Asia within Reformism and Modernism in the Muslim World," *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2001).

<sup>120</sup> "Türkiye'de Abdülhamit bu kutsi cereyanı durdurmaya çalışırken, Rusya'da iki büyük Türkçü yetişiyordu. (...) İkincisi Kırım'da (*Tercüman*) gazetesini çıkaran (İsmail Gasprinski)'dir ki Türkçülükteki şiarı (dilde, fikirde ve işte birlik) idi. *Tercüman* gazetesini Şimal Türkleri anladığı kadar Şark Türkleriyle Garp Türkleri de anlardı. Bütün Türklerin aynı lisanda birleşmelerinin kâbil olduğuna bu gazetenin vücudu canlı bir delildi." Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, 6-7.

it hurt at that time. I am asking if this Empire had any independence [at all]. Which independent government puts up with this kind of treatment? Which government does not drown the rebels with blood and fire?<sup>121</sup>

Hilmi Pasha, whom Zihni Orhon vividly remembered, was the General Inspector of the Three Provinces (Monaster, Thessaloniki, and Kosovo) as of 1902. The General Inspectorates was a regime of exception established in the late Ottoman Empire and maintained in the early republican era for law and order purposes, often following the rise of insurrectional movements in a region.<sup>122</sup> The revolutionary action of the “Bulgarian gangs” most probably referred to the guerrilla warfare of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), which played an important role in revolutionary actions in Ottoman Macedonia, including during the Ilinden Uprising that sparked following the formal acceptance of the Mürzteg Program proposed by the Austrian and Russian governments to the Sublime Porte.<sup>123</sup> The Ilinden Uprising (August-November 1903) was “the only episode of open rebellion in Ottoman Macedonia.”<sup>124</sup> Hilmi Pasha was a General Inspector with exceptional powers. This implied prevailing over provincial governors for quick decision-making on securitized issues.

Orhon praised Hilmi Pasha’s swift response, advocating for the “violent punishment” or “destruction” (*tenkil*) of these “gangs.” He condemned Russian and Austrian intervention in Ottoman affairs. Hilmi Pasha was indeed pulled between the imperial state’s interest in self-

---

<sup>121</sup> “Geçen zamanların işleri unutulur. Fakat nazarı çekenler, ehemmiyetlileri unutulmaz. Kırırmda bahçe sarayda tercüman ismile bir gazete çıkardı bunu çıkaran İsmail Gaspirinski rahmetlisi idi 320 senesinde bir baş makale yazmıştı makalenin hulasası şu idi. Müfettiş Hilmi Paşa Sadrazama şifre yazıyor. Bulgar çetelerini filan ormanda sıkıştırdık. Tenkil muamelesine başladık şifre babıalide sadrazama veriliyor. O sırada sadrazamı avusturya sefiri ziyaret ediyor. Bu çetelere ne için bu kadar müsamaha gösteriyorsunuz bunları şiddetle tenkil ediniz. Çünkü bizimde islav tabalarımız var bunlarda şımarıyorlar diyor çıkıyor. Sadrazam çetenin tenkili hususunda şiddet gösterilmesi hakkında cevap yazılmasını emrediyor. Müsveddeyi görüyor şifre edilmeğe başlanıyor sonra çarlık sefiri ziyaret geliyor. Rumelide çetelere karşı şiddet gösteriliyor. Bunlara biz az müsameha yapmak lazım çünkü bizdeki penslavizler homurdanıyorlar. Diyup çıkıyor. Sadrazam şifreyi istiyor. Mümkün mertebe kan dökülmemekle beraber icabının icrasına hizzet buyurula gibi dişi bir emir veriyor. Beni o zamanlar can evimden vuran bu mükaveleyi bu güne kadar unutmadım. Rica ederim. Bu imparatorluğun istiklali var mıydı? HANKİ MÜSTAKİL HÜKÜMET BÖYLE MUAMELELERE MÜDAHALELERE KATLANIR? HANKİ HÜKÜMET KENDİSİNE KARŞI İSYAN EDENLERİ KAN VE ATEŞLE BOĞMAZ.” Orhon, March 16, 1936, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/1011-901-1.

<sup>122</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Umûmî Müfettişlikler*.

<sup>123</sup> İpek Yosmaoğlu, “The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, and the Great Powers on the Road to Mürzsteg,” in *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908* (Cornell University Press, 2013).

<sup>124</sup> Keith Brown, *Loyal unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013). Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen, *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 17.

preservation and Austrian and Russian impositions, who had conflicting interests on the Slavic subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Still, the measures he took against the insurgents were quite violent, to the point of “rendering tens of thousands subjects into refugees.”<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, Zihni Orhon bewailed his moderation.

Zihni Orhon’s portrayal of the conflict between the “Bulgarian gangs” and the Ottoman government was inspired by Gasprinski’s article published shortly after the events.<sup>126</sup> It is plausible that Orhon indeed read the article and retained its contents from thirty-three years prior. Alternatively, this historical reference may have been reiterated in the early republican press. A final possibility is that this was a familiar reference for Orhon and other men who were involved in, and even lead, the provincial organizations of the party in the 1930s.

Zihni Orhon’s precise knowledge of key Ottoman politicians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and the thresholds of history was remarkable. He remembered one of the most famous figures of the previous generation of politicians, Hilmi Pasha. Before his appointment to the Three Provinces, Hüseyin Hilmi played an essential role in state intervention against Armenian revolutionaries in Cilicia in the 1890s.<sup>127</sup> After his appointment to the Three Provinces in the Balkans, Hüseyin Hilmi was also responsible for repressing revolts in Yemen (1911) and Houran (1909).<sup>128</sup> Zihni Orhon briefly mentioned the Yemen and Houran revolts in his speech as unfortunate events of late Ottoman history during which the blood of the “sons of Anatolia” was spilled in vain in the name of “public order” (*asayiş*) in these regions.<sup>129</sup>

Orhon’s precise knowledge of late Ottoman history was marked by a state-centric approach bordering on “state philia.” Orhon not only saw the state as a necessity and as an organization with the right of self-preservation, but he also identified with the state apparatus. His professional and political career can explain this attitude. As mentioned earlier, Zihni Orhon

---

<sup>125</sup> Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen, *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, 17.

<sup>126</sup> Despite my efforts, I was unable to locate the specific article.

<sup>127</sup> Sena Hatip Dinçyürek, “Reading a Bureaucratic Career Backwards: How Did Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha Become the Inspector-General of Rumelia?,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 53, no. 3 (5 May 2017): 394.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 392.

<sup>129</sup> “Yemende, Arnavutlukta, Havranda ihtilaller oldu.” Zihni Orhon, 13 March 1936, §17. “Ondan sonra bu ünvanndan Türklerin çekmediği belalar kalmadı. Anadolu evladı Arabistanın, Yemenin asayışı uğruna kanını, arabı doyurmak için malını verdi” *Ibid.*, §21.

had passed through the War Academy in Istanbul and had military positions at the intersection of policing and national security throughout his career. He had worked in the province of Erzurum as a light cavalry officer, where not “Bulgarian” but “Armenian gangs” were an important challenge for the imperial administration.

As a military and later statesman born in 1883, he had many occasions to cross paths with other students and graduates of the War Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiye*). Erik-Jan Zürcher qualified this generation, schooled at the turn of the century in specific institutions created to preserve the state, the “generation of the 1880s.”<sup>130</sup> Many former students of this prestigious military academy, which trained the “crème de la crème” of the Ottoman army, participated in political organizations such as the Committee of Union and Progress. Orhon did not disclose his membership to the CUP, but his lectures delivered an overall positive account of the organization. In any case, his attachment to “public order” (*asayiş*) can be explained by his professional career independently of his CUP membership.

Another reason Orhon was so precise about late Ottoman history was again the local context in which he was born and spent most of his professional life. He emphasized the prism of revolutionary “gangs” (*çete*) and Austrian and Russian ambassadors meddling with internal affairs because these issues were highly pertinent to Eastern Anatolia. The Russo-Ottoman War profoundly impacted the fate of Ottoman territories in the Balkans. Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia had become independent, while Bulgaria had become autonomous with the signing of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878.<sup>131</sup> The same treaty ceded Batumi, Kars, and Ardahan to Russia, transforming Zihni Orhon’s hometown into a borderland. It also imposed on the imperial government a reform plan in the “provinces inhabited by the Armenians.” Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty then became the legal basis for Ottoman Armenians who sought the intervention of Great Powers to protect themselves.<sup>132</sup>

The issue of the Great Powers’ intervention in local affairs also appeared in the exemplary lectures delivered by the CHP General Secretary. Recep Peker emphasized the critical need for

---

<sup>130</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “Afterword,” in *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, ed. Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen (Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 387.

<sup>131</sup> Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen, *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, 11.

<sup>132</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, “Afterword,” 387.

a unified legal framework applicable to all citizens, encompassing both “Turks” and “foreigners.”<sup>133</sup> He also highlighted the concept of “a mass within the majority,” referring to the minorities within the empire and the republic. Peker argued that there should be no disparity in privileges among citizens of the same nation. If a minority group, called “a group within the majority,” asserts special privileges and exemptions based on differences in religion, lineage, or ethnicity, it jeopardizes the principle of independence.<sup>134</sup> Orhon’s take on this remark was more local and anecdotal. To illustrate the principle of judicial independence in Peker’s lecture, Orhon referred to the Russian consul in Erzurum, Skaryabin, and his interference in local affairs.

There was no independence in judicial affairs either. According to the requirements of the capitulations, some rights and privileges were given to foreigners. The embassies proceeded with lawsuits between Turkish citizens and foreigners. Those who are my age know the name of İskaryabin. The Turks should know vengeance as well as gratitude. The Tsarist consul had Kötek’s dispatch clerk fired just because it took him a couple of minutes to write a telegram; [The same consul] also had the district governor dismissed just because he refused to prostrate himself when [the consul] arrived at the [Ottoman] border. Here [in Erzurum], only because of a matter of trade, they deported to Bayburt the Fortress Commandant Zöhtü in the middle of the night...<sup>135</sup>

Orhon reminded his audience of a well-known figure in Erzurum: Iskaryabin [Nikolai Aleksandrovich Skriabin], the Russian consul in Erzurum between 1904 and 1909. He used Skryabin’s arbitrary dismissal of the dispatch clerk to produce a feeling of injustice within his audience concerning Russian interference in the empire’s internal affairs. Two Ottoman civil servants, one dispatch clerk and a colonel were humiliated by the interference of the Russian consul. The sentence that interrupted the non-contestable assertion about state sovereignty and

---

<sup>133</sup> “Bu yurt içindeki yabancıların tabi olacakları adlî şartlar, istiklâlleri tamam olan başka yurdlarda, türklerin tabii olacakları şartların aynı olmalıdır. Kaza hakkı kapitülasyonlar veya herhangi bir dış tesirle bozuk bir hale geldiyse, o devletin istiklali derinden yaralanmış sayılır.” Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 105.

<sup>134</sup> “Bir yurt içinde kanun gözünde müsavi hak ve şerefte olan yurddaşlar arasında imtiyaz farkları da olmamalıdır. Bir yurdda yaşayan çokluğun içindeki bir kütlenin din, kan veya ırk ayrılığı gibi iddialarla ve yabancı kuvvetlere dayanarak kendilerine imtiyazlar ve masuniyetler temin etmek yolunu gütmeleri, o yurdun iç durumuna bakışla istiklali, tehlikeye maruz bırakır.” *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>135</sup> “Adli işlerde de istiklal yoktu. Kapitülasyonlar icabınca ecanibe bazı haklar, imtiyazlar verilmişti. Türk vatandaşile bir ecnebi arasında çıkan davalarına konsoloshane tercümanları muhakimde bulunuyorlardı. Onların hukuk davalarına konsoloshaneleri bakıyorlardı. Ben çağda bulunanlar iskaryabin ismini bilirler. Türkler şükürü de, intikamı da bilmelidirler. Çarlık konsolosu daha hududdan içeri girerken kötek teğiraf memuru teğirafını göya bir kaç dakika tahir etmiş, nahiye müdürü kendisine secde etmemiş diye derhal bu memurları azl ettirdi. Burada bir çift at alış verişi meselesinden dolayı Kale kumandanı miralay Zöhtüyü bir gecenin içerisinde Bayburda nefyettirdiler.” Orhon, March 16, 1936, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/1011-901-1.



the concrete example of the consular intervention were also revealing. “The Turks should know vengeance as well as gratitude.” Again, it is not clear whose vengeance Orhon referenced. Vengeance from the Russian consul? If that was the case, the late Ottoman and early republican governments did not do much to take revenge on the Russians.

The anecdote that immediately followed the example of Skriabin’s mistreatment of Turkish officers was about his intervention in the defense of the rights of an Armenian shopkeeper mistreated by a Muslim military officer. Since the Berlin Treaty (1878), the Russian consul, Skriabin, had the right to interfere when it was a question of violation of the rights of Ottoman Armenians in the region. This, in turn, allowed Orhon to bring the issue back to Armenians. Orhon continued his illustration of judicial independence by telling the story of a quarrel in an Armenian bottle shop in Hasankale.

There was a bottle shop in Hasankale called the Ayvaziyans. Now, retired colonel Rıza Bey was lieutenant at that time. He enters their shop. While shopping, they misbehave, and Colonel Rıza Bey slaps [someone] in the face, or not... They claim that they are the subjects of the Tsardom. Iskaryabin presumptuously meddles in the affair. The government pays them 700 liras in compensation. I beg you; how many bottles can be broken in a shop during whatever disturbance? There were [probably] 700 liras of capital in the whole shop. Any incident may happen against the consul or the ambassador. In the end, there is a Department of Justice (adliye) in this country. This is the job of the courthouse; the courthouse adjudges. Has this treatment been applied among African savages?? I do not want to sadden the youth among us by giving more examples.<sup>136</sup>

Again, the main issue of the anecdote was the possibility of the Russian consul in intervening and defending the rights of Ottoman Armenians. This was somewhat framed as a continuity in Ottoman capitulations, which granted commercial privileges to foreign merchants

---

<sup>136</sup> “Hasankalede Ayvaziyancılar isminde bir şişeci mağazası vardı şimdi miralaylıktan müteakid bay Rıza o zaman milazım idi, bunların dükkanına giriyor. Alış esnasında terbiyesizlik ediyorlar bir tokar vuruyor ve ya vuruyor bunlar çar tabiiyetinde bulduklarını iddia ediyorlar. Iskaryabin küstahlıkla işe giriyor. Hükümet bunlara yedi yüz lira tazminat veriyor. Rica ederim bir dükkanda herhangi bir karğışalı da kaç paralık şişe kırılır? Tekmil dükkanda yedi yüz liralık sermaye varmı idi? Konsolosa sefire karşı herhangi bir hadise olabilir. Nihayet memleketin adliyesi vardır. Adliyeye iş düşer, adliye hüküm verir. Bu muamele afrika vahşilerinde tatbik edilmiş midir? Daha böyle hayatta görülen bir çok misaller söyleyerek içimizde bulunan gençlerin yüreklerini sıztatmak istemem.” Orhon, March 16, 1936, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/1011-901-1.

operating in Ottoman lands by Ottoman sultans.<sup>137</sup> By the nineteenth century, these commercial privileges had become more binding as part of bilateral agreements. Consuls were responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms of the capitulations concerning their subjects and their Ottoman protégés. This gave them the right to intervene in some judicial affairs.<sup>138</sup>

The “Ottoman capitulations” issue was a recurrent trope of the sermons of the People’s Preachers. “Capitulations” obtained a new signification with the Gökalgian expansion of its meaning into the linguistic and cultural field.<sup>139</sup> However, the intervention in question in Zihni Orhon’s anecdote was more tightly linked to the imposed reform program in the “Six Provinces” in Eastern Anatolia following the defeat of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78. Skriabin became the consul of the city with the responsibility of intervening in cases of abuse by civil servants and local populations against Ottoman Armenians, which had become a diplomatic issue since the Crimean War.<sup>140</sup>

Armen Manuk-Khaloyan has translated a petition addressed to Nicolai Skriabin, detailing grievances from Armenian peasants in the Gân village (known as Dadaşkent since its toponym change in 1928) of Erzurum. The petition, dated April 1907, lamented the imposition of mandates by Muslim authorities upon Armenian craftsmen within the village. Allegedly, instead of settling their debts, Muslim individuals resorted to verbal abuse, physical assault, and even fatal violence against these craftsmen on multiple occasions. Furthermore, the petition disparagingly portrayed tax collectors, who were regular visitors to the village. They were depicted as alcoholics who brazenly encouraged villagers to resort to desperate measures, such as offering their women into prostitution, to settle their financial obligations.<sup>141</sup>

This petition resonates with an anecdote that Zihni Orhon recounts, wherein Colonel Rıza Bey patronizes an Armenian-owned “bottle shop” (or liquor store). The shopkeeper’s behavior,

---

<sup>137</sup> J. Wansbrough et al., “Imtiyāzāt,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. P. Bearman et al., Encyclopaedia of Islam (Brill, 2012).

<sup>138</sup> Feroz Ahmad, “Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations 1800-1914,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2000).

<sup>139</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, “Gouverner par les mots: une histoire linguistique de la Turquie nationaliste,” 522.

<sup>140</sup> İpek Yosmaoğlu, “The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, and the Great Powers on the Road to Mürzsteg.”

<sup>141</sup> Armen Manuk-Khaloyan, “The Inhabitants of Kan to Russian Consul General Nikolai Skriabin in Erzurum,” April 2, 1907.

deemed disrespectful by the colonel, remains ambiguous in Orhon's narrative — perhaps he demanded payment for the purchased bottles. In response, the colonel administered one or two slaps to the shopkeeper (*bir tokat vuriyor ya da vurmuyor*). However, the shopkeeper invoked his allegiance to the Russian Tsar to assert his rights in the face of mistreatment.

Orhon's normalization of slapping the Armenian shopkeeper is reminiscent of the reflection of Marie Muschalek on "unspectacular" violent acts such as slaps, kicks, and beatings not as "deficits" but as the very actions that produce a colonial order.<sup>142</sup> Without getting into the coloniality of the relations in Eastern Anatolia with Ottoman Armenians,<sup>143</sup> Muschalek's revision of the Weberian "state" is fruitful in understanding how Orhon perceived the legitimacy of the military officer's slaps on an Armenian shopkeeper's face. According to Muschalek, "the organization of state power was not merely a matter of claiming the monopoly of force and proscribing any excessive, disruptive or non-official violence," but about "diffusing and regulating" such violence.<sup>144</sup> In this framework, military officers waiting in Erzurum, the siege of the Ottoman Third Army, or police officers were the main actors in legitimizing violence.<sup>145</sup>

### *11.3.3. Early Republican State Idiom and the Origins of the "Terrorism Framework"*

---

Orhon's lectures were fruitful for analyzing the change in the state idiom in the early republican era and observing the ruptures and continuities compared to the state idiom of the mid-nineteenth century. Maurus Reinkowski analyzed nineteenth-century Ottoman state documents, focusing on the concepts of order and disorder. He observed that the shift in the state's language regarding "order" was also reflected in how state documents referred to specific populations. For example, in the case of Northern Albanian Mirdites, documents initially referred to them positively, citing their "long-term good service and loyalty." However, when the state's perception of "order" changed, the same group of people was

---

<sup>142</sup> Marie Muschalek, *Violence as Usual: Policing and the Colonial State in German Southwest Africa* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2019), 7.

<sup>143</sup> Marc Aymes, "Many a Standard at a Time: The Ottomans' Leverage with Imperial Studies.," Özgür Türesay, "L'empire ottoman sous le prisme des études post-coloniales: à propos d'un tournant historiographique récent," *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine* 2, 60, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>144</sup> Marie Muschalek, *Violence as Usual: Policing and the Colonial State in German Southwest Africa*, 9.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

referred to as “notorious rebels,” with the specific mention of their long-standing unruly behavior (*öteden beri*). The Mirdites were then characterized as “barbarous” (*vahşi*) and associated with “ignorance,” and the language used in state documents regarding their treatment also changed.

When a population was considered ignorant, rebellious, or barbarous, the usual treatment was to chasten and punish them to teach good manners (*tedip* and *terbiye*). The change in the concepts of order also affected how the identified problems were addressed. The new and more “ambitious” solution was to force the problem-makers to “completely succumb to ıslah (amelioration, betterment, improvement, reformation) and *inzibat* (discipline).”<sup>146</sup>

Compared to the example the CHP General Secretary had set, Orhon’s lectures were more concerned with notions of order and disorder. Recep Peker’s lectures mostly mentioned order, disorder, and revolts concerning foreign examples.<sup>147</sup> He also occasionally used the terms “revolt” (*isyan*) and “rebellion” (*ihtilal*) in positive ways to discuss legitimate contestation of “bad governance since the olden times” and in negative ways as challenges posed to various governments.<sup>148</sup> Against this background, Orhon mentioned “order” (*nizam*) once but gave many examples of the historical cases in which “order” was disrupted.

In Orhon’s narrative, the only positive “revolt” (*isyan*) was the one that led to the Second Constitutional Monarchy. “Ihtilal,” which means “rebellion” but also “revolution,” was used to refer to the French Revolution and rebellions in Albania, Yemen, and Houran, which all occurred shortly before the start of the First World War. The common characteristic of all the mentioned revolts and rebellions as challenges to Ottoman imperial rule was the contestation of the measures taken by the Unionist government during the last decades of Ottoman history. Among the mentioned revolts, those organized by “Bulgarians” (read IMRO) and “Armenians,” referring to the Armenian Revolutionary Organization (Dashnaksutyun) stood out.

---

<sup>146</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, “The Imperial Idea and Realpolitik – Refom Policy and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire,” 467-68.

<sup>147</sup> Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 9,15,16,47,49,50,82

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

The first and only occurrence of the term “order,” or more precisely, “order and law” (*nizam ve kanun*), was when Orhon was discussing Ottoman history through the prism of corruption and decline. While commercial power emerged in Europe and “changed the world,” the Bulgarians, Serbians, and Hungarians who were “subjects of the Ottoman Empire” started to catch up with the “progress” (*terakkiyat*) in Europe. At the same time, the “Islamic elements” (*islâmi unsurlar*) of the empire remained asleep.” This was the cause of the decay of “law and order” (*nizam ve kanun*).<sup>149</sup> “Order” was mentioned three times in Zihni Orhon’s lectures. The first was about its corruption in the late Ottoman era. The second was about the tentative attempts to restore it (*Nizam-i Cedid*) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century under Sultan Selim III to improve the military and political power of the empire. The last occurrence of “nizam” was actually about the creation of a code of practice for the organization of nationalist militia during the Armistice era.

Nonetheless, the specter of disorder loomed large in Orhon’s discourse. Consequently, “law and order” (*kanun ve nizam*) emerged as a prominent theme, albeit negatively, throughout the lecture. Orhon articulated the threat to order using two key concepts. Firstly, he referred to “isyan” or “revolt.” Secondly, he touched upon “ihtilal,” which encompassed meanings ranging from “insurrection” to “revolution.” Orhon did acknowledge one instance of “revolt” (*isyan*) positively, celebrating the movement that resulted in the reinstatement of the 1878 Constitution in July 1908.<sup>150</sup> Still, subsequent references predominantly centered on various uprisings against the government, including those involving Armenians, Bulgarians, the followers of a Sheik in Bitlis (Kurds), and other disturbances in Anatolia. These events were portrayed as disruptions to “law and order,” prompting serious deliberation on the necessity of their suppression.

Concerning the repression of the revolts instigated by “Bulgarian gangs,” Zihni Orhon evaluated the decision-making process between General Inspector Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, the Grand Vizier in Istanbul, and the foreign ambassadors. According to Zihni Orhon, Hilmi Pasha

---

<sup>149</sup> “Avrupada tüccar kuvveti ortaya çıktı. Dünya değişti. Tarakkiyat başladı. Osmanlı imparatorluğuna tabii bulunan Bulgarlar, Sırlar, Macarlar ve saire Avrupa terakkiyatına ayak uydurmaya başladılar. İmparatorluktaki islâm unsurlar uykuda devam ettiler. Nizam, kanun bozuldu.” Zihni Orhon, 13 March 1936, §7.

<sup>150</sup> Orhon, 13 March 1936, §14.

should have “relocated” (*tenkil*) the rebels as violently as possible to “discipline and punish” (*tenkil*) them effectively. Because of foreign interference, Hilmi Pasha avoided “shedding blood as much blood as possible” (*mümkün mertebe*) instead of avoiding spilling blood at all costs.

According to Orhon’s narrative, the Ottoman statesman’s will did not matter because of the lack of “independence” (*Istiklal*) in the Ottoman Empire during its last decades. Hilmi Pasha’s will and reflex to “discipline and punish” (*tenkil*) the rebels by shedding as much blood as possible did not matter because the center of decision-making was the Grand Vizirate in Istanbul. The Grand Vizier was torn between the Austrian and Russian ambassadors. In the end, the palace decided to avoid killing the insurgents “as much as possible” (*mümkün mertebe*), while it should have “drowned” (*boğmak*) them in “blood and fire.”

As mentioned earlier, Orhon’s lectures were exceptionally implicit and violent compared to the rest of the lectures analyzed within the framework of this dissertation. Despite this extraordinary nature, the key concepts used by Zihni Orhon to speak about rebellion and counterinsurgency were part of the ordinary vocabulary of the state used since the mid-nineteenth century.

Within his discourse, one could discern the grammar of the Ottoman state regarding the treatment of unruly behavior, such as insurrection and armed resistance for national independence. “Educate” (*tedip*) and “punish” (*tenkil*) were euphemisms used to refer to violent counterinsurgency techniques adopted by the Ottoman state. Their meaning evolved into “chastising” to “provide a salutary example” throughout the nineteenth century, hence a form of ‘state terror’ or “*terreur salutaire*.”<sup>151</sup>

Orhon did not employ the term “educate” (*tedip*) or other key concepts of the early republican regime such as “tenvir” (to enlighten), “*telkin*” (to inculcate), or “*irşad*” (to guide through the right path). Still, he overused the word “*tenkil*,” which progressively obtained the meaning of inflicting punishment to discourage future rebellion, or even “complete

---

<sup>151</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, “The State’s Security and the Subjects’ Prosperity: Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century),” 203. Some scholars also translate “*tedip ve tenkil*” as “discipline and punish,” which in my opinion is another euphemism. Yener Koç, ““Taxing” the Tribes in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of the Tribes of Mutki (1839-1908),” in *Histories of Tax Evasion, Avoidance and Resistance*, ed. Korina Schönhärl, Gisela Hürlimann, and Dorothea Rohde (London: Routledge, 2023), 89.

annihilation, mass eradication, and extermination,” according to some late Ottoman dictionaries.<sup>152</sup>

It is well known that whoever revolts against whatever government will be punished and annihilated (*tenkil ve imha*). The empire did not even have the right to do so. You would remember that the Armenians revolted in 1317, and [only] eight battalions were sent against them. Those battalions cornered the Andranik gangs around the Arak Monastery. However, no artillery fire was fired against them because it was deemed that this or that government would not tolerate this. This gang escaped. The blood of hundreds was spilled in vain. One of the Armenian revolts started by blowing up the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul. The blood of thousands was spilled while the rebels escaped to an embassy. They were sent to another country with a ship that belonged to the embassy and were under their protection before the Sultan’s eyes (*hakan-ı müezzim*). They were sent [to this foreign country] for training to return and spill the Turks’ blood again.<sup>153</sup>

Zihni Orhon referred to the event, also known as the Battle of Holy Apostles Monastery, that occurred in November 1901. Armenian revolutionary militia gathered around Andranik Ozanian (1865-1927), seized the Arakelots Monastery near Muş, and resisted Ottoman troops for nineteen days.<sup>154</sup> The occupation of the monastery ended when the imperial government sent troops against the rebels. Still, the main organizer of the resistance, Andranik Ozanian, managed to escape.

Zihni Orhon was unsatisfied with the number of battalions sent to repress the revolt. He also accused the moderation of the counterinsurgency techniques of causing the deaths of “hundreds,” exaggerating the death toll. Ottoman ambassador in Great Britain, Costaki

---

<sup>152</sup> “A punishing, making an example of.” James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 602.; “1. Kovma, uzaklaştırma. 2. Herkese örnek olacak şekilde cezalandırma. 3. Topluca ortadan kaldırma, yok etme, tepeleme, kökünü kazıma.” “Tenkil,” in *Kubbealtı Lugatı [Online]*. <http://lugatim.com/s/tenkil>. “Züchtigen, Ausrotten” Galandcızâde Hakkı Tevfik, *Türkisches-Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Otto Holzer’s Nachfolger, 1917), 103. “Action de se faire reculer, action de sévir, action de réprimer, action d’étouffer une révolte. Chatiment, destruction, faire reculer, châtier, étouffer une révolte, détruire.” Sami Bey Frascbery, *Resimli Kamus-i Fransevi : Fransızca’dan Türkçe’ye Lügat-ı Kitabi = Dictionnaire français-turc : illustré de 3000 gravures* (Constantinople: Mihran, 1905), 408.

<sup>153</sup> “Her hangi bir hükümete isyan edenler şiddetle tenkil ve imha edilirler. İmparatorluğun buna da hakkı kalmamıştı. Bilirsiniz ki 317 de Taloride Ermeniler isyan ettiler üzerlerine gönderildi, sekiz tabur Antiranik’in çetesini arak manastırında sardı. Fakat filan ve filan devletler hoş görmez diye üzerlerine topçu ateşi açılmadı. Bu çete kaçtı. Yüzlerle insanın kanı beyhude yere aktı gitti. Ermeni isyanlarının birisi İstanbulda osmanlı bankasını bombalamakla başlar. Binlerce insanın kanı aktı asiler bir seferat haneye girdiler o sefaretin İstanbul limanında bulunan gemisinden çıkarılan askerlerin himayesinde olarak ve hakani müezzimini gözü önünde bu asiler başka memlekete gönderildilerki orada daha ziyade talim ve terbiye görüp tekrar gelerek türkün kanını akıtsınlar.” Zihni Orhon, 16 March 1936, §8.

<sup>154</sup> “Convent Seized by Armenians,” *The New York Times* (1857-1922), 24 November 1901; “The Disorders in Armenia: Bandits Withdraw from the Monastery Near Mush,” *The New York Times* (1857-1922), 27 November 1901.

Autopulos Pasha, reported on the other hand, “One soldier dead, and four injured.”<sup>155</sup> In sum, Orhon looked back to the events of 1901, lamenting the moderation of measures taken against the Armenian revolutionaries. He explained the lack of “independence” of the Ottoman Empire by its incapacity to slaughter those categorized as “rebels” indiscriminately by artillery fires if they caused disorder with their revolts (*isyān*).

These concepts were also broadly used by newspapers in referring to early republican counterinsurgency, especially against the Kurds. Such was the case of the massacre of several thousand Kurds in Zilan, in the Ağrı province, reported by *Cumhuriyet* (Republic), the leading national daily, on July 10, 1930, as a campaign of “annihilation” (*imha*): “From place to place, the bandits are annihilated. Some of the bandits are surrounded.”<sup>156</sup> Another mainstream newspaper of the period, *Vakit* (Time), reported the same event with the title, “The situation of annihilation and relocation (*imha ve tenkil*) is developing in our favor.”<sup>157</sup> In his “Revolution Lectures,” Recep Peker briefly mentioned “instruments of annihilation” (*imha vasıtaları*) while touching upon what the “Turks” risked during the First World War.<sup>158</sup> If we go back in time, the term “imha” was also used in the middle of the First World War by the Ottoman Interior Ministry in referring to the “annihilation of the Nestorians,” another community victim of genocidal policies between 1915 and 1916. A coded telegram sent to the Interior Minister in July 1915 from the vice governor of Mosul province stated that “the army commander was encouraging the return of troops and the artillery. If the Nestorians were not pursued and completely annihilated, the present execution would not be of any great benefit. In these mountains, which are very difficult to reach, it is not possible to achieve the goal with a force composed solely of tribes (*‘aşā‘ir*) and without canons.”<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>155</sup> “Le Morning Post contient seul dépêche Reuters Constantinople du 29 novembre disant que la bande de brigande arménien commandée par Andranik a de nouveau occupé le ~~couvent~~ monastère d’Arak et que l’édifice a été comme dans l’occasion précédente cernée par nos troupes qui sont exposées à la fusillade de la bande. Un soldat a été tué, quatre blessés.” Coded telegram between Costaki Autopoulos Pasha and Tevfik Pasha, December 2, 1901, BOA HR. SFR.3.503.16. *The word “couvent” is crossed out in the original.*

<sup>156</sup> “Şakiler yer yer imha ediliyor: Eşkıyanın kısmı küllisi ihata edilmiş bir vaziyettedir..”

<sup>157</sup> “İmha ve Tenkil Vaziyeti Leyhimize İnkışaf Ediyor.”

<sup>158</sup> “Bereket versin ki en büyük imha vasıtaları ve en ezici hadiselerle bile bozulması mümkün olmayan tek bir şey, Türk kanı, bütün bu gürültüler içinde temiz kalmıştı.” Recep Peker, *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*, 5.

<sup>159</sup> “Ordu kumandanı ‘asker ve topların ‘avdetini te‘cil ediyor. Naştüriler ta‘kīb ve kemālen imha edilmez ise şimdiki icrā etmek büyük bir fā‘ide te‘min edilemez pek şarb olan bu dağlarda şırf ‘aşāirden mürekkeb kuvvetle



Furthermore, the examples following the assertion that the rebels should be “punished and annihilated” in Orhon’s narrative mostly concerned the activities of the Armenian Revolutionary Organization. The first was the Battle of the Arakelots Monastery. The second example was the seizure of the Ottoman Bank in August 1896, demanding the release of the Armenian political prisoners and the dismissal of the patriarch. The revolutionaries who organized the attack were indeed saved by the Russian representative and left the town with a Frenchman heading to Marseille.<sup>160</sup> Zihni Orhon’s reference to the Armenian revolutionaries being trained in France to “spill the Turk’s blood” again most probably referred to the Légion d’Orient, Armenian legionnaires returning after the end of the First World War to the cities occupied by the French, such as Antep. Outside this particular sequence, “Armenians” also appeared in Orhon’s narrative as those who “kidnapped” the well-intentioned Unionist of the region, Hacı Akif Efendi.<sup>161</sup>

The more the narrative advanced in time, the more the ‘Armenian threat’ became palpable with the potential occupiers of Eastern Anatolia and the main enemy of the Eastern front of the Turkish “War of Independence.” In Orhon’s narrative of the armistice era, the same “Armenians” were depicted as invaders who “arrived up until the frontiers of 1878” and “slaughtered Turkish and Muslim elements.”<sup>162</sup>

Orhon’s speech echoed what was termed the “Armenian Question” (*Ermeni Meselesi*) and its “resolution” in two interrelated ways. First, Orhon’s speech portrayed Armenians as long-term rebels of the Ottoman Empire instead of the “loyal nation” (*millet-i sadıka*), another expression used to refer to the Ottoman Armenians until the adoption of centralizing and homogenizing policies. The identification of the “Armenians” as an existential threat was key

---

bilhaşsa topsuz olarak maksadın huşulü mümkün değil.” From vice-governor of Mosul (Musul Vâli vekîli) to the Interior Ministry, 2 July 1915 [H. 19-09-1333] BOA DH.EUM.2. - 8 - 63

<sup>160</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, “*They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else*”: A History of the Armenian Genocide, 125-26.

<sup>161</sup> “Bilirsiniz burada bir Hacı Akif vardı. Nur içinde yatı. Ermeniler esir götürmüşler Bakûnun sığ köyünde ölmüştür. Erzurum inkılâplarına çalışmışıdı. İttihat ve Terakkida çalışdı. Hıristiyanların askere alınmasının faidesini takdir edememişıdı. Bunun faidelerini anlatırdım. Kail olurdu. Bir müddet sonra yine tereddüt gösterirlerdi. Anlardım ki yine yanlış telkinat vermişler. Tekrar izah ederdim, kardaş her kes senin gibi demiyor ki şöyle böyle diyorlar şimdi kandımdı derdi.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> “Bu zamanlarda doğu cihetlerimizde Ermeniler bazı yerlerde 93 hududuna geçmişlerdi. İçlerinde kalan türk ve islam unsurunu kırıp geçiriyorlardı.” Zihni Orhon, *Ibid.*

to the genocide as it is key to many genocidal policies. The principal perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide, namely Talat and Cemal Pasha, also depicted Armenians as traitors and existential threats in their memoirs.<sup>163</sup>

Secondly, when discussing the issue of restoring order, Orhon employed the term “tenkil” alongside “*imha*” (destruction, annihilation) rather than “*tedib*.” In this context, the couple “*tenkil ve imha*” (punishment and annihilation) can be translated as “annihilative punishment,” which is reminiscent of another state euphemism, “*tehcir*” (relocation, deportation), concerning the Armenian Genocide.

Orhon, a professional of ‘law and order,’ was resolutely convinced by the “logic of permanent security,” a belief system that deemed the proclamation of a group as “rebels” enough to justify taking annihilative measures against them.<sup>164</sup> This rigid perspective, which he inherited from his political socialization at the War Academy, the Light Cavalry Regiments, the Eastern Front of the First World War, and successive governments of Northern (Sinop) and Eastern (Bitlis) Anatolia, shaped his understanding of ‘law and order’ and prevented him from perceiving annihilative measures as “excessive or transgressive.”

#### 11.4. Perpetrator Memories

---

Zihni Orhon fought the First World War on the Caucasian and Baku fronts.<sup>165</sup> While applying to run for elections, he highlighted all the fronts and armies in which he was active during the Great War and stressed that he was injured four times and received a couple of war medallions. He also mentioned his “mobilization seniority raises” (*seferi kıdem zammı*) thanks to his (exceptional) war efforts. The complete list of his military posts shows that he remained in Eastern Anatolia. Orhon’s complete list of his regiments (*alay*) indicates that he circulated between Hınıs (Erzurum), Karaköse (formerly Karakilise, the Black Church, and current Ağrı), and Viranşehir, Başkale (Van), which were Tribal Cavalry Regiments’ main zones of

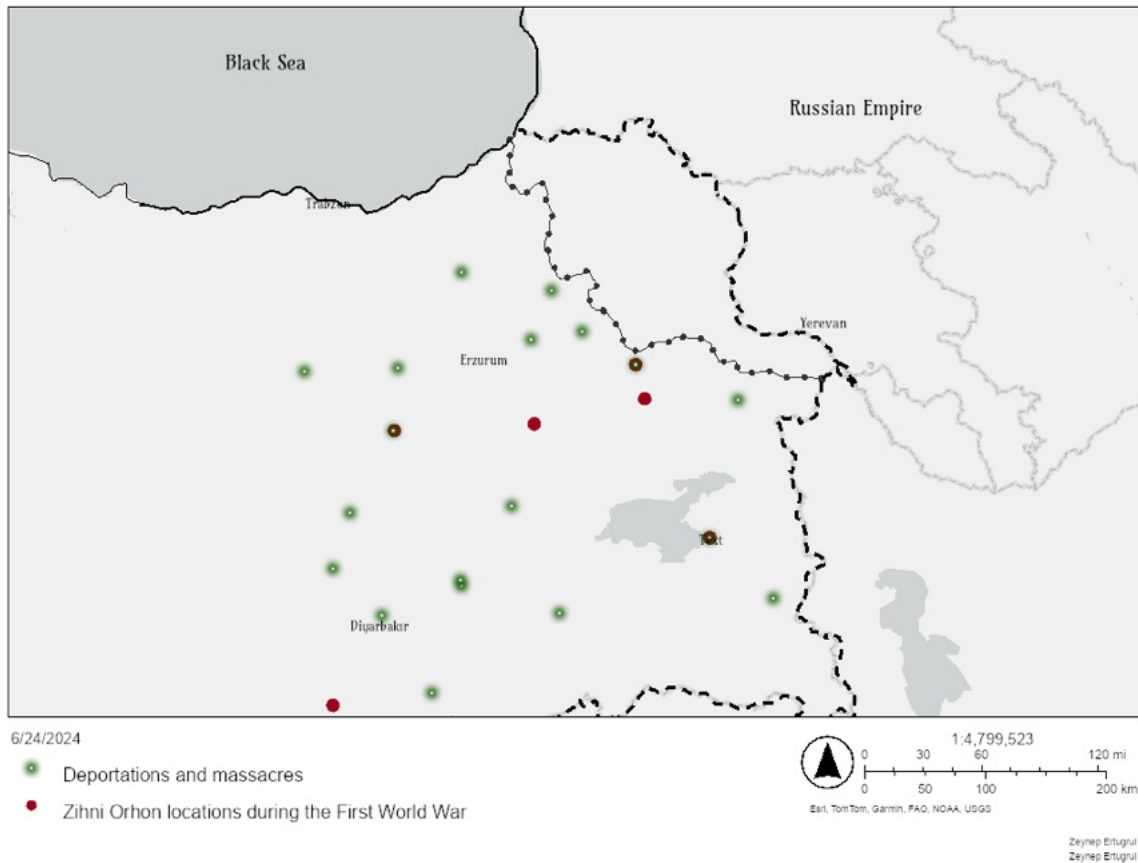
---

<sup>163</sup> Duygu Tasalp, *Cent ans de négation: les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l’Unionisme à l’Islamisme*, 95.

<sup>164</sup> A. Dirk Moses, “Permanent Security,” in *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression*, Human Rights in History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

<sup>165</sup> Application file, Zihni Orhon, Kars, 16 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3.

activity.<sup>166</sup> These places were also sites of military conflict, as well as the forced deportation and mass killings of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects, primarily Armenians, during World War I. In the sanjaks of the Erzurum province, the army played an important role in the deportations and massacres.<sup>167</sup> Hınıs and Karakilise stood among the province's towns where the population was either deported or escaped to Russia.<sup>168</sup>



**Map 9. Zihni Orhon during the First World War**

<sup>166</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*, 170.

<sup>167</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, 292.

<sup>168</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide : Mustafa Kemal et l'élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*, 228.

Orhon became a member of the last Ottoman parliament gathered in March 1920. Probably due to his parliamentary activity, he spent a short period in Istanbul. In his Independence and Revolution speech, he talked about a wedding he attended in Istanbul during the Armistice era. He claimed “escaping” to Ankara following the occupation of Istanbul to participate in the first Turkish Grand National Assembly. After less than a month of parliamentary activity, he resigned from the parliament on Mustafa Kemal’s request to appoint him as the Sinop district governor (*mutasarrıf*). According to Zihni Orhon’s application letter, he was appointed to the district government of Sinop in the Kastamonu province because of its “importance.”<sup>169</sup>

The importance of the Sinop district stemmed from its strategic position as a natural port, which was used to transport arms from the Eastern to the Western front during the war between 1919 and 1923. Sinop’s communication infrastructure was also reinforced during Zihni Bey’s mandate with the construction of the Telegraph and Post Office.<sup>170</sup> During the armistice era, the conflict between the Istanbul and Ankara governments also led to the nominating of competing governors to this province.<sup>171</sup> Sinop was also an important site of Greek Orthodox political activity. Zihni Bey’s role in the Sinop might also be intimidating opponents supporting the Istanbul government or overseeing the deportation of Pontic Rums in the region and its surroundings.<sup>172</sup> Mustafa Kemal appointed Zihni Bey in 1922 to Bitlis “contrary to (his) wishes.”<sup>173</sup>

Orhon spent a long career as a professional military graduate from the prestigious War Academy. Considering how the Tribal Cavalry Regiments operated as a part of murderous “law enforcement” in Eastern Anatolia, it is not surprising that Orhon’s last two positions before his retirement were within the Ministry of the Interior instead of the army. Zihni Bey

---

<sup>169</sup>“Sinop sancağının ehemmiyet teşkil etmesi üzerine Atatürk’ün emirleriyle mezkür sancak mutasarrıflığına deruhte ettim.” Zihni Orhon, Tercüme-i Hal, TBMM Arşivi, Sicil No: 165. Zihni Orhon resigned on 27 November 1920.

<sup>170</sup> “Sinop,” Black Sea Project Port Cities, accessed 10 December 2023, <https://cities.blacksea.gr/en/sinop/2-1-2/>.

<sup>171</sup> İsmail Efe, “Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Sinop’ta Güvenlik ve Lojistik Faaliyetleri,” *Karadeniz Araştırmaları* XV, no. 60 (2018): 55-56.

<sup>172</sup> About Mustafa Kemal’s order concerning the deportation of Pontic Rums, Thea Halo cites consular reports written by the American Consul in Aleppo, Jesse B. Jackson. Thea Halo, “The Genocide of the Ottoman Greeks 1913-1923: Myths and Facts,” in *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks, 1913-1923*, ed. George Shirinian (New York: Berghahn, 2017), 311.

<sup>173</sup> Application file, Zihni Orhon, Kars, 16 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/306-1242-3.

concluded his career as the head of law enforcement as the district governor in Sinop during the War of Independence and in Bitlis between 1922 and 1924. Orhon's successive appointments as the district governor to the Eastern provinces might also follow the logic of a fraction of the Unionists since the Balkan Wars. Zürcher argued that the CUP government sent reliable party members to "key administrative positions (...) where law and order matters were at stake."<sup>174</sup> After his retirement in 1931, Orhon started to work on the administrative board of the CHP Kars provincial organization.<sup>175</sup> When he delivered his "Independence and Revolution" speech in his hometown, Erzurum, in March 1936, he was head of the CHP provincial organization in Kars, where he became a CHP deputy three years later.

These elements in Orhon's social trajectory allow us to understand his lectures' ordinary and exceptional aspects. While his lectures contained surprisingly violent sequences concerning the treatment of Bulgarian and Armenian "gangs" and those who claimed Kurdish nationality, they were not completely out of touch with the Ottoman political idiom concerning the maintenance of 'law and order' starting from the mid-nineteenth century. Orhon's lecture was more violent compared to the rest of the corpus. But he had a rather classical trajectory as a military and law enforcement agent of the late Ottoman Empire and early republican Turkey in Eastern Anatolia. He was one among many *anciens combattants*, having a career in the provincial sections of the CHP during the single-party era. If that is the case, why did not the other veterans, of whom we know there are some among the people's preachers, have the same degree of straightforwardness in their speeches?

Zihni Orhon found himself deeply entrenched in geographic regions like Erzurum and Kars, which bore the indelible scars of the deportation and mass slaughter of Ottoman Armenians. Moreover, his ties extended to military establishments such as the Light Cavalry Units, which were instrumental in quelling insurgencies, including those led by Armenian Revolutionary Organizations. Kars, the town where he spent his formative years during the republic's early days, straddled the border with Soviet Armenia. Here, the post-war administration grappled with the contentious issues of managing or perpetuating the genocide through the disposition

---

<sup>174</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, "The Unionist Presence in the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1912," 569.

<sup>175</sup> Zihni Orhon, *Tercüme-i Hal*, TBMM Arşivi, Sicil No: 165.

of abandoned properties (*emlak-ı metrūke*), resettling *muhacirs* (Muslim migrants), and the persistent conflict and intimidation faced by the Kurdish population.

Zihni Orhon's direct engagement on the Eastern Front during the First World War, along with his service in the Hamidiye Regiments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, heightens the likelihood of his involvement in the persecution of Ottoman Armenians and the brutal suppression of activities by the Armenian Revolutionary Organization, possibly as a perpetrator. In this context, his recollections of late Ottoman history framed through the lens of internal enemies, such as "Bulgarian gangs" and "Armenian rebels," reflect the perspective of a perpetrator.

Orhon's reflections on both local events (such as the "bottle-shop incident") and broader imperial history (like the Ilinden Uprising) shed light on various facets of how the tumultuous past was remembered in the Republic of Turkey. He underscored the ease with which the past can slip from memory but also emphasized that crucial aspects remain if one remains attentive. The narrative he presented to exemplify what should be remembered runs counter to the prevailing notion of "silencing" concerning Turkey's genocidal history and the turbulent early years of the republic. Like many others of his ilk, Orhon rationalized and downplayed the elimination of political adversaries and deemed it a requisite for achieving "independence."

Zihni Orhon's emphasis on the "rebels" of late Ottoman history highlights the fact that the "terrorism framework," often scrutinized within the context of denialist discourse, did not originate solely from the ASALA attacks of the 1970s. Instead, its roots extend back to earlier periods of Ottoman and republican history. Contrary to assertions by some historians of denial, the Armenian Genocide was not a disregarded issue during the early years of the republic.

By connecting past insurgents with the perceived threats of 1930s Turkey, Orhon's recollection of the Armenian Genocide finds a more apt context within a framework of a "genocidal habitus" rather than a "post-genocidal" one. This is because the looming presence of internal threats and their consequent devastation and annihilation are not confined to the past but resonate in the present. The next chapter will delve into how the People's Preachers addressed the ongoing violence during another episode of mass violence of the early republican era, namely the Dersim Massacres that occurred between March 1937 and September 1938.

## 12. Fighting the Never-Ending War in Dersim

---

“You are mistaken,” I said.” He is no longer in any condition to harm anyone. Our republican government will give him the punishment he deserves. The revenge for all of you will be taken. There will no longer be any fear for your village, city, or our fellow brothers and sisters. In fact, these troublemakers could not commit their misdeeds during the time of our republican government; they are relics of the sultanate era. Now, smile and enjoy yourselves. This banditry, like all other evils, has become history. Rejoice.” The grandmother’s hands, raised to the sky, closed with heartfelt prayers. Forgetting to say goodbye to us, she left to show this news to her fellow villagers and share the good tidings with them.<sup>1</sup>

This is a quote from Hasene Ilgaz’s memoirs published in 1991 entitled *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*. In this two-page-long anecdote titled “Seyyit Rıza and a Mother from Kemaliye,” Ilgaz talks about a conversation between her and an old lady whose grandson does his military service in Kemaliye (Elazığ). Since the title of the anecdote refers to Seyyit Rıza, one of the political leaders of the Dersim Revolt, the anecdote refers to the Dersim conflict and massacre.<sup>2</sup> The author of these lines, Hasene Ilgaz, has been a People’s Preacher since 1931. She was highly active in İstanbul’s Şehremini district, including the Şehremini People’s House. After a long career as a teacher, People’s Preacher, People’s House member, and director, Ilgaz became a CHP deputy in 1943.

According to her biography, Hasene Ilgaz did not work outside of İstanbul. Therefore, the conversation mentioned above must have taken place in the former capital. Was it about her mother, also from Kemaliye (Erzincan)? If her mother was from Kemaliye in the Erzincan province, Ilgaz came from a region close to Dersim (80 kilometers from Çemişgezek). However, it is also possible that Hasene Ilgaz—like many other preachers—traveled to another province for a party-related duty during the conflict in Dersim.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Yanıyorsunuz dedim. Artık hiç kimseye fenalık edecek, zararı olaak halde değildir. Cumhuriyet hükümetimiz ona lâyük olduğu cezayı verecektir. Sizlerin hepinizin intikamı alınacaktır. Köyünüze, şehrinize, bütün kardeşlerinize bundan sonra korku yoktur. Esasen bunlar Cumhuriyet hükümetimiz zamanında fenalıklarını yapamamış, saltanat devrinin belâli adamlarıdır. Artık gülünüz, eğleniniz. Bu şakavet işi de, her fenalığı gibi tarihe kavuştu. Gözünüz aydın olsun. Ş Ninenin semaya açılan elleri en kalpten dualarla kapandı. Resmi memleketlilerine göstermek ve bu müjdeyi onlara verebilmek için bizimle vedalaşmayı unutarak çıktı gitti.” Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*, 72.

<sup>2</sup> Élise Massicard, “Seyyit Rıza,” *Mass Violence & Résistance* (28 September 2009); Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938* (Zürich: Chronos, 2000), 409.

Hasene Ilgaz's anecdote is intriguing as it highlights both the relationship of early republican enlighteners with the common people or peasantry and their connection to state-sponsored mass violence. Ilgaz described this woman as an illiterate old lady with hennaed hair and bright, intelligent eyes, representing the purity and chastity of the Turkish peasantry. Ilgaz was the one who was more "enlightened" about the country's affairs within the context of this interaction. The peasant lady did not know what was happening in Dersim and worried about her grandson. She asked Hasene Ilgaz if she had any news of Elazığ. Ilgaz wanted to reassure the old lady by saying that since the counterinsurgency efforts were successful, the "evil-minded bandits" were no longer a threat. They had become "history."

Hasene Ilgaz's anecdote referred to one of the most violent episodes of early republican history: the Dersim Massacre, which was the extremely violent military response to the revolts in this region located in the province of Elâziz/Elazığ since the mid-1930s. The repression of the Dersim Revolt was violent and did not distinguish combatants from noncombatants.<sup>3</sup> It was also one of the first remarkable episodes in republican history in which the state used aerial bombings and chemical weapons against civilians. Because of these factors, many prominent scholars in the field debated the genocidal character of the Dersim Massacre.<sup>4</sup>

The Dersim Massacre was the last response to ongoing Kurdish rebellions in Turkish Kurdistan. The local population was the target of yet another attempt to assimilate the Kurds into the Turkish national body forcibly.<sup>5</sup> The set of state euphemisms referring to the repression of the revolts were "educating and disciplining" (*tedip*) and "punishing and relocating" (*tenkil*).<sup>6</sup> If the main goal of the state was to eliminate the rebels, the civilian death toll of the Dersim Massacre was remarkable.<sup>7</sup> "Thousands of civilians were killed, villages destroyed,

---

<sup>3</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide of the Kurds," in *The Widening Circle of Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review*, ed. Israel W. Charny (New York: Routledge, 1994), 168.

<sup>4</sup> İsmail Beşikçi, *Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi* (Istanbul: Yurt, 1992); Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide of the Kurds," 167; Tessa Hofmann, "Short Transnationale Ideologien und Strategien im Zusammenhang mit dem Genozid von Dersim." Hans-Lukas Kieser characterized the Dersim Massacre as an ethnocide. See Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*, 408.

<sup>5</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Genocide of the Kurds," 169.

<sup>6</sup> "Tunceli Asileri Can Çekişiyor: Asiler Bir Daha Baş Kaldıramayacak Bir Derecede Tenkil Edilmektedir", *Ulusal Birlik* (İzmir), 18 June 1937; "Tuncelinde Son Kalan Asi Aşiretler Tenkil Ediliyor," *Tan*, 8 July 1939; "Dersim Tedip Hareketi Son Safhada," *Ulus*, 30 August 1938.

<sup>7</sup> Kieser, "Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938."



and crops burned.”<sup>8</sup> The suppression of the Dersim revolts was one of the bloodiest. Bruinessen referred to these sets of events as the “blackest pages in the history of republican Turkey.”<sup>9</sup> The state correspondence of the era often used the term “annihilation” (*imha*), talking about the repression of the rebellion. The official discourse on “counterinsurgency” was aggressively racist against the Dersimis.<sup>10</sup>

The Dersim Massacres happened in an area where the party organization was relatively weak. As mentioned earlier, the provincial administrative board of Elazığ selected no People’s Preachers in 1931 or 1937. Still, there was a People’s House with regular attendees, mostly teachers and other civil servants like Hasene Ilgaz. Ilgaz was never appointed to Elazığ province. Still, one of the other preachers we followed throughout this dissertation, Cemile Aytaç, along with her husband Şevket Süreyya Aytaç, were nominated teachers in Elazığ during the conflict and massacres.

Hasene Ilgaz’s anecdote is remarkable for the questions of this chapter. In continuation with the last two chapters, which examined the salience of the memory of the genocides committed during the First World War, this one aims at situating the People’s Preachers and People’s Houses members in a context of ongoing military conflict with local inhabitants and state-sponsored mass violence.

If we return to Hasene Ilgaz’s anecdote, we see that the story was told from the state’s viewpoint. Like Zihni Orhon in the previous chapter, Hasene Ilgaz also identified with the state apparatus. Ilgaz only empathized with the soldier and his grandparents. The grandparent had told Ilgaz that she was personally afraid of Seyyit Rıza, the political and spiritual leader of the Dersim rebellion. Ilgaz reassured the grandmother that the “republic” would “take her revenge.” Seyyit Rıza, along with most of his family members, was killed in November 1937.<sup>11</sup>

Hasene Ilgaz’s memoirs also show that working actively in the region, hence having a first-hand experience of both the “rebels” and their suppressors, was unnecessary for her to feel

---

<sup>8</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, “Genocide of the Kurds,” 168.

<sup>9</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, “Genocide in Kurdistan? The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38) and the Chemical War Against the Iraqi Kurds,” in *Genocide : Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*, ed. George J. Andreopoulos (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 3.

<sup>10</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, “Genocide of the Kurds,” 167.

<sup>11</sup> Élise Massicard, “Seyyit Rıza.”

entitled to talk about the crisis. It was enough to identify with the state apparatus and read the newspapers to learn how ‘our state’ “disciplined” (*tedip*) the region’s inhabitants and took the old lady’s “revenge.” The fact that Hasene Ilgaz introduced the issue of “revenge” to the discourse is also remarkable, while the press and the official documents talked about “discipline.”

The previous chapters aimed to reflect on the meaning-making processes in the aftermath of mass violence and tried to show how the experience of genocide impacted the political discourse transmitted by the People’s Preachers. The long-term experience of warfare, coupled with a genocide and followed by a violent population exchange, affected the way state-affiliated individuals like Hasene Ilgaz or others who identified more with the “law and order” of the state than the civilian losses perceived these events. This chapter will reflect on how the ongoing state-sponsored violence against civilians might influence the lives and activities of the People’s Preachers on the ground.

The figure of the internal enemy mentioned in the previous chapter was still vivid in 1930s Turkey. It was epitomized by the Armenians likened to “backstabbers” and Kurdish “separatists” and was already powerful enough in the official political discourse of the 1930s propagated by the People’s Preachers. Concerning the Kurds, the discourse responded to the longevity and persistence of the revolts since the beginning of the “national struggle” with the Koçgiri-Dersim Revolts (1920-1921) and the Sheikh Said Revolt of 1925 prompted the government to rule in a state of exception, which was prolonged multiple times.<sup>12</sup> The Ararat Rebellion (1930) in Eastern Anatolia was also perceived similarly. The press reported the repression of the Ararat Rebellion in terms of “annihilation” of the rebels or “putting [them] to the sword” (*kılıçtan geçirmek*).<sup>13</sup>

There was an intellectual and practical continuity between the decimation of the Ottoman Christians during and after the First World War and the attitude towards those called

---

<sup>12</sup> Élise Massicard, “The Repression of the Koçgiri Rebellion, 1920-1921,” in *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence* (28 September 2009).

<sup>13</sup> “Şark Hududunda Tenkil: Şakilerin ihatası bitmiş gibidir, bir iki güne kadar kat’î netice bekleniyor,” *Akşam* (Istanbul), 10 July 1930; “Suvarilerimiz Şakileri Kılıçtan Geçirdiler!..”, *Milliyet*, 10 July 1930; “Şakiler yer yer imha ediliyor: Eşkayanın kısmı küllisi ihata edilmiş bir vaziyettedir.”; “Tenkile Devam Ediyoruz: Ağrı Dağı Temizlenmekte Şakiler Dehalet Arzusu Göstermektedirler,” *Vakit*, 10 July 1930.

“minorities” after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923.<sup>14</sup> The recognized minorities, according to this treaty, were the remaining Armenians, Jews, and Greeks. However, from the point of view of the discourse on the internal enemies, there was a continuity between recognized “minorities” and other minoritized populations, such as the non-Turkish and non-Sunni inhabitants of the Dersim region. These populations were seen as backward, unaware of their Turkishness, and were to be assimilated by force.

Faced with this perception of a newly founded republic—to which they were attached—many People’s Preachers and higher intellectuals of the time feared the type of political movements that might emerge from the internal enemies. In 1932, a prestigious writer and columnist of the era who regularly wrote in party-state-aligned newspapers such as *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* (The Will of the People) published an article on the newly founded *Kadro*.

Foreigners are too shrewd to be content with this and meticulous enough to pursue their national interests further. We have not sought to make our language accepted by our own minorities, not even as much as one would engage in conversation when buying from a grocer. In places like Tatavla, Tünel, Balat, and Fener, the obstinacy of the community of the Ottoman Empire continues to ruminate. Those who do not speak our language well enough to shop at a grocer will eventually learn our language, forget their own, adopt our culture, and abandon their attachment to Galata. The Antisemitism in Germany should serve as a lesson to us. To be as hospitable as the Turks, one must have been a ruling nation throughout history like the Turks. However, every guest must eventually either assimilate or leave. Our minorities have not learned to assimilate, but it would undoubtedly benefit both them and us if they sought and found sincere ways to integrate on their own.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Concerning the continued persecution of the Christian and Jewish populations in republican Turkey, see Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*; Emmanuel Szurek, ““Yan, Of, Ef, Viç, İç, İs, Dis, Pulos ...”: the Surname Reform, the “Non-Muslims,” and the Politics of Uncertainty in Post-genocidal Turkey.”; Emmanuel Szurek, “Ce que le génocide des Arméniens a fait aux juifs de Turquie” (Les juifs et les autres minorités dans l’Islam méditerranéen, XIXe-XXIe siècles, Musée d’art et d’histoire du judaïsme, 10 June 2021); Emmanuel Szurek, “Autodafé à Istanbul. La première crise négationniste de la Turquie nationaliste (1935).”

<sup>15</sup> “Eloğlu bunlarla iktifa etmeyecek kadar açığız olduğu gibi milli menfaat hesabını çok daha ileri safhalarda arayacak kadar da titizdir. Biz kendi azlıklarımıza, doğru dürüst, meselâ bir manavdan alışveriş edecek kadar bile dilimizi kabul ettirmek yollarını aramadık. Tatavla ile Tünel, Balat’la Fener arasında, Osmanlı imparatorluğunun cemaat serkeşliği, Aya Stefanos’un gevişini getirmekle meşguldür. Bir manavdan alışveriş edemeyecek kadar dilimizin dışında oturanlar, daha dilimizi öğrenecekler, daha kendi dillerini unutacaklar, daha bizim harsımıza girecekler ve daha Galata’dan ve Galatalılıktan vazgeçecekler!.. Almanya’daki Yahudi aleyhtarlığı, umarız ki bizimkilere de bir ders olur. Türk kadar misafirperver olmak için, Türk kadar tarih içinde efendi millet olmuş olmak lazımdır. Fakat, her misafirliğin sonu, ya evdekilere karışmak yahut misafirliği uzatmamak değil midir? Bizim azlıklar, evdekilere karışmasını, şimdiye kadar hiç bilemediler. Fakat bundan sonrası için bunun samimi yollarını biz göstermeden kendilerinin arayıp bulmaları, şüphe yokki hem onların hem de bizim lehimize.” Burhan Asaf, “Bizdeki Azınlıklar,” *Kadro*, March, 1933, 52.

Burhan Asaf's tentative intimidation against the inhabitants of Tatavla, Tünel, Balat, and Fener in Istanbul by showing his appreciation of the Antisemitism of Nazi Germany was interesting to understand the case of the People's Preachers. Burhan Asaf was a self-acclaimed intellectual living in Istanbul. As an Istanbulite, he talked about Istanbul's "minority" neighborhoods housing Jews, Rums, and Armenians mainly. However, the issue of "integration" passed through speaking the official language of the newly founded republic more than other things. Since the remaining Armenians were forced to leave the Anatolian provinces and move to Istanbul in post-genocide Turkey, it was understandable that Burhan Asaf was most concerned about his own neighbors. Still, if we go outside Istanbul and travel around the Eastern Anatolian provinces, Jews, Armenians, and Rums (legally recognized "minorities") were not the only ones targeted for not speaking the official language of the Republic of Turkey.

The inhabitants of Dersim did not have the legal status of "minority" in early republican Turkey. Still, one might argue that it was a minoritized population of the language difference and confession. Most of Dersim's inhabitants spoke Kirmandjki or Kurmanji as their first language rather than Turkish.<sup>16</sup> They were also predominantly Alevi and not Sunni Muslims. The Alevis were the "most important heterodox group in Anatolia."<sup>17</sup> Alevism was used to refer to a large "set of heterodox groups" with religious practices reminiscent of Shi'a Islam but also containing Christian and Zoroastrian practices and beliefs.<sup>18</sup> As such, the Dersimis were subordinated to the Turkish-speaking Sunni Turks in the early republican era.

As shown in the previous chapters, the early republican official discourse depicted the Sunni Turks as the "true owners of the country." Burhan Asaf's piece of 1933 reduced Jews, Armenians, and Rums who had lived in Anatolia for centuries to the position of "guests." Those who were assigned to the position of the "guests" had to assimilate or leave. Burhan

---

<sup>16</sup> Kieser, "Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938."

<sup>17</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Muslim Heterodoxy and Protestant Utopia: The Interactions between the Alevis and Missionaries in Ottoman Anatolia," in *A Quest for Belonging: Anatolia Beyond Empire and Nation (19th-21st Centuries)* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 116.

<sup>18</sup> Elise Massicard, *The Alevis in Turkey and Europe : Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity* (Oxford: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012), 4.

Asaf's invitation to learn Turkish, make themselves invisible, or leave reflected the continuous suspicion towards non-Muslim citizens in early republican Turkey.

The treatment of the Sunni or Alevi Kurds was different. The republican state moved these populations around and tried to penetrate their regions with increased state control to "assimilate" the Kurds.<sup>19</sup> The Dersimis had a unique position within this conjuncture. According to Zeynep Türkyılmaz, while the Sunni Kurds of the region were recognized as Kurds, the government saw the Alevi Kurds as confused Turks who were being "Kurdified" by the manipulation of the regional feudal chiefs.<sup>20</sup>

Burhan Asaf was a self-acclaimed intellectual. He was among the founders of the *Kadro* magazine, which accorded itself the role of developing the ideology of the existing political regime: "the ideology of the revolution." His article about non-Muslim minorities is telling how he saw his mission and responsibility as an intellectual. Threatening and bringing potential internal enemies into line was among his intellectual responsibilities.

If Burhan Asaf thought that his intellectual role comprised hectoring around at times to intimidate potential political dissidents or resisters to forced assimilation efforts, was it the case for the provincial intellectuals? This chapter will focus on the archival trace of the public lectures organized by the order of the CHP in the Elâziz (then Elazığ) province to examine what roles were played by the People's Preachers in a context of conflict between the state and other armed groups and extreme violence perpetrated by the state in the name of "law and order."

### 12.1. Preaching in Elazığ and Dersim

---

Because of the conflict concerning the province's Kurdmandjki or Kurmanji-speaking Kurdish population, its name underwent several changes under the CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) and the CHP (Republican People's Party) government several times. The province was called Mamuret'ül Aziz in 1868. In the second half of the nineteenth century, it divided into three sanjaks: Mamuret-ül Aziz, Malatya, and Dersim. In 1928, the province's

---

<sup>19</sup> Ümit Uğur Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)*.

<sup>20</sup> Zeynep Türkyılmaz, "A Community Entrapped between Kurdishness and Turkisness": Rethinking Republic's Dersim Anxiety" (Turkologentag, Vienna, 21 September 2023); Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*, 409.

name was changed to Elâziz and in 1937 to Elazığ. The sanjak of Dersim since 1878 was called Tunçeli (Bronz Hand) starting from 1936. Similarly, Dersim had become a sanjak in 1878.

Elâziz/Elazığ was difficult for the state authority to access as it was in a mountainous region. Hence, the state apparatus' activities in the region also aimed at rendering this "treacherous" region more "legible and accessible." The CHP did not open cultural centers in Dersim because the government had securitized the zone. In contrast, Elâziz's city center was "overwhelmed by the presence of the state."<sup>21</sup>

**Map 10. The Province of Mamuretül-aziz (1900s) (Houshamadyan)**



Elâziz had been governed by a regime of exception since 1936.<sup>22</sup> As mentioned in the first part of this dissertation, the government maintained the Hamidian and, then Unionist, practice of governing regions by raising rebellious movements with a state of exception throughout the General Inspectorates (*Umumi Müfettişlikler*). The General Inspectorates were created within

<sup>21</sup> Zeynep Kezer, "The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey: Spatializing Difference," 510.

<sup>22</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Iskalanmış Barış: Doğu Vilayetlerinde Misyonerlik, Etnik Kimlik ve Devlet 1839-1938*, trans. Atilla Dirim (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 409.

a context of increasing concern for maintaining “law and order” (*asayiş ve nizam*).<sup>23</sup> In the republican era, the first General Inspectorate was created in 1927 to form an administrative mechanism to replace the martial law (*sıkıyönetim*) implemented following the Sheik Said Revolt (1925) and maintained until 1927 in the Eastern provinces.<sup>24</sup> Elâziz/Elazığ was part of the Fourth General Inspectorate established in January 1936. The General Inspector was the military and administrative superior of all the state servants working in the province. He had the right to intervene in legal affairs and ask for the mobilization of the army in case of a threat to security.<sup>25</sup> Between January 1936 and June 1943, the Fourth General Inspector was Lieutenant General Abdullah Alpdoğan. General Alpdoğan was the Interior Ministry’s main interlocutor and oversaw the CHP’s well-functioning cultural organizations in the province. He was also the son-in-law of Nurettin Pasha, known as the “butcher” of the Kurds during the repression of the Koçgiri Rebellion.<sup>26</sup>

The party organization in Elâziz was overall ‘weak.’<sup>27</sup> The party leaned on civil servants to animate its cultural centers on the local level. Still, going to Elâziz and the Eastern provinces as a civil servant was perceived as a “punishment.”<sup>28</sup> The Sivas People’s House organized a reunion following a visit to six Eastern Anatolian provinces, namely Malatya, Sivas, Elazığ, Tunceli (Dersim), and Diyarbakır.<sup>29</sup> The fervent member of the Sivas People’s House, Cemal Gültekin, delivered a speech following a reunion organized in Sivas. Except for Sivas and Malatya, which border some of these provinces, all visited provinces were governed under the regime of exception (General Inspectorates) in 1938. Gültekin reported the speech of the governor of Diyarbakır during the visit:

---

<sup>23</sup> Selçuk Akşin Somel, “Osman Nuri Paşa’nın 17 Temmuz 1885 Tarihli Hicaz Raporu,” *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 18, no. 29 (May 1996): 26.

<sup>24</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Umûmî Müfettişlikler*, 53.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 221-31.

<sup>26</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*, 409.

<sup>27</sup> The party often uses the term “weak” (*zayıf*) to describe the provincial and district organization that lacks active party and People’s House members to animate the cultural centers and take charge of other partisan issues.

<sup>28</sup> Zeynep Kezer, “The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey: Spatializing Difference,” 519.

<sup>29</sup> Dersim became a province with the Tunceli Law of 1935. The same law also changed the name of the province from Dersim to Tunceli. Cemil Koçak, “Tunceli Kanunu,” *Tarih ve Toplum*, August, 1987.

At the end of the feast, the governor of Diyarbakır said: ‘There may have been some of you who were hesitant and worried, thinking that you would be stung by scorpions, poisoned by snakes, or bitten by centipedes on your way here. But now that you have come and seen for yourselves, you understand that all these things are harmful negative propaganda spread by some unfortunate individuals to portray the region negatively.’<sup>30</sup>

Civil servants appointed to Elazığ, like many other Kurdish, Armenian, and post-genocidal provinces, were suspicious about and condescending of the locals. The reference to “civilizing” the uncivilized inhabitants of Dersim was the most explicit.<sup>31</sup> In June 1937, *Tan* published an article about Dersim’s “resistance to civilization” for a century.<sup>32</sup> Zeynep Türkyılmaz analyzed the colonial nature of the violent “civilizing mission” conducted by Sıdıka Avar.<sup>33</sup> Avar was not on the People’s Preachers list. Still, she had a similar social profile and political commitment with many other People’s Preachers. She published her memoirs under *My Mountain Flowers (Dağ Çiçeklerim)*. In her memoirs, she boasted about her pedagogical mission, which mostly concerned orphaned girls in the province. She used to kidnap young Kurdish and Armenian girls for the Boarding School for Girls, “educate” them, clothe them with “civilized” clothing, and transform them into enlightened (*münevver*) women.<sup>34</sup> Avar is known for introducing before and after photos to showcase girls’ transformation into “enlightened” citizens.<sup>35</sup>

In her memoirs, she describes most of her interactions with people from the region with condescension, except for her fellow teachers. Her memoir begins with her arrival at the Elazığ

---

<sup>30</sup> “Ziyafetin sonunda Diyarbakır valisi dedilerki: Buraya gelirken sizleri akrepler sokacak, yılanlar zehirleyecek, çıyanlar ısırarak diye belki içinizde tereddüt ve endişe edenler olmuştur. İşte geldiniz gördünüz, anladınız ki bütün bunlar; Yurdu kötü tanıtmak için bir takım bedbahtların çıkardıkları muzur menfi propagandalardır.” Cemal Gültekin, “Kültür Direktörü C. Gültekinin Halkevinin Öğretmenler şerefine verdiği çay şölenindeki gezi konuşması: Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, Diyarbakır Gezisi,” *Ortayayla*, 1 February, 1938.

<sup>31</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*, 409.

<sup>32</sup> “Bu taleplerde Dersimin bir asırdan beri medeniyete karşı mukavemetinin bütün programı vardı.” “Dersimin İç Yüzü: Sarp Dağlar Arasında Dersimli Nasıl Yaşar?,” *Tan*, 17 June 1937. “Tuncelinde bir taraftan tedip hareketi devam ederken diğer taraftan da imar ve temdin işleri yürütülmektedir.” “Tuncelinde Son Kalan Asi Aşiretler Tenkil Ediliyor.”

<sup>33</sup> Zeynep Türkyılmaz, “Maternal Colonialism and Turkish Woman’s Burden in Dersim: Educating the “Mountain Flowers” of Dersim,” *Journal of Women’s History* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2016 2016).

<sup>34</sup> Sevim Yeşil, “Unfolding Republican Patriarchy: The Case of Young Turkish Women at the Girl’s Vocational Boarding School in Elazığ,” 120; Elif Ekin Akşit, *Kızların Sessizliği: Kız Enstitülerinin Uzun Tarihi* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 206.

<sup>35</sup> Sevim Yeşil, “Unfolding Republican Patriarchy: The Case of Young Turkish Women at the Girl’s Vocational Boarding School in Elazığ,” 137, 80.



train station, where she was to work at a boarding school and carry out her “civilizing mission” to shape the “enlightened women” of republican Turkey. In her narrative, the locals of Elazığ, including the police officer at the train station and the taxi driver, try to deceive her from the moment she arrives. The janitor at the school, described as having a chubby and red face, observes her “without manifesting any meaning on his face” but “with suspicion.”<sup>36</sup> She feels “lonely and anxious” while waiting for someone to welcome her and only starts to feel reassured when she “hears the noise of the heels” of a “friend with a familiar face,” who turns out to be a fellow teacher she had just met.<sup>37</sup>

Because of the region’s unattractiveness for the teachers appointed from other regions, Elâziz/Elazığ was a specific case. In 1931, Elâziz did not send any list of the People’s Preachers. In 1938, when the CHP General Secretary required an updated list, again, no list was sent to the General Secretary. Despite being absent from the People’s Preachers Organization paper trail, a People’s House opened in Elâziz central district in 1934.<sup>38</sup>

Because of the weakness of the party organization in this region, perceived by the state as naturally savage, mountainous, and, as a result, rebellious and uncivilized, the governor of the province, district governors, and the General Inspectorate, the Lieutenant General Abdullah Alpdoğan animated the celebrations in Elâziz. In August-September 1936, Language Day was celebrated with the active participation of eight people. Abdullah Alpdoğan figured among the speakers of this celebration of the central district, with the cultural attaché Şevket Süreyya Ayaç and the middle school teachers Cemile Ayaç and Ziya İlder.<sup>39</sup> Pertek sent a shorter report signed by the vice-district governor, Tevfik Gürer, in which he claimed that he delivered a

---

<sup>36</sup> “Ablak, kırmızı yüzlü bir hademe... Yeni tayin edilen öğretmen olduğumu anlatmaya çalıştım. Yüzünde hiç bir mana ifadenmeden merakını yenecek kadar beni inceledi, sonra şüphe ile kapıyı yüzüme çarptı.” Sıdika Avar, *Dağ Çiçeklerim* (Ankara: Öğretmen Yayınları, 1986), 22.

<sup>37</sup> “Bana uzun gelen dakikalardan sonra içeride koşuşan topuklu ayakkabı sesi...İçimde bir ferahlama, kapı açıldı. Aşına bir arkadaş sevinçle boynuma sarıldı.” Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Zeynep Kezer, “An unraveling landscape: Harput and Mezre during Turkey’s Transition from Empire to Republic,,” in *Cultural Violence and the Destruction of Human Communities*, ed. Fatma Müge Göçek and Fiona Greenland (London: Routledge, 2020).

<sup>39</sup> From Elâziz People’s House to the CHP General Secretary, 7 September 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

speech along with cultural attaché Mehmet Ali Oktay and a teacher based in Mardin, Reşat Ünlü.<sup>40</sup>

A few months earlier, in December 1935, the CHP General Secretary instructed the provincial branches to organize the “Independence and Revolution” lectures. In one of the other provinces in which the party organization was relatively weak, namely Kars and Erzurum, the lectures were organized with a considerable delay in March 1936. The Elâziz one organized the Independence and Revolution lectures with further delay. In February 1936, the party General Secretary informed the General Inspector that the deputy of Kocaeli, Salah Yargı, would come to Elâziz to deliver a lecture and instructed him to “make the necessary preparations” for his arrival.<sup>41</sup> These instructions could not be respected because of the weather conditions around Maden (Elâziz).

Due to the collapses and blizzard, the road is not expected to be opened before ten days. If there are no objections, having the lecture given by someone else in Diyarbakır would be advisable.<sup>42</sup>

Because of infrastructural and meteorological problems, the deputy could not arrive at Elâziz on the planned date. Further telegrams indicated that getting in and out of Elâziz was complicated because of the adverse meteorological conditions.<sup>43</sup> The party General Secretary ordered the deputy to take the “convenient roads” and fulfill their obligations.<sup>44</sup> Ultimately, the Independence and Revolution lectures were organized between 6 May and 7 June 1936, almost seven months after the first circular.

---

<sup>40</sup> From the Secretary of the Pertek District Governor to the CHP General Secretary, 27 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

<sup>41</sup> “Kocaeli Saylavı Salah Yargı Elâziz Halkevindeki konferanslarını vermek üzere 24/2/1936 da Elâziz’de bulunacaktır. Gerekli Hazırlıklarda bulunulması için İlbaşlıktan rica edildiğini bilgi olarak arz ederim.” Ankara, 20 February 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

<sup>42</sup> Telegram signed by the Erzurum deputy Fuat [Sirmen], Date illegible, “Çöküntüler ve tipi sebebiyle yolun emin olmarak on günden evvel açılacağı tahmin edilmiyor. İntizarı memnu yoksa konferansı Diyarbakırda bulunan diğer birine verdirilmesinin muvafık olacağını işar buyurulması.” BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

<sup>43</sup> “Maden ilerisindeki iki günden beri alışamayan büyük yarıma çökmesine rağmen [illegible] Süratle gideceğini ümit ederek hareket etmişim. Madene varılmadan meydana gelen ikinci büyük çöküntü dolayısıyla Elazize döndüm.” Telegram to the CHP General Secretary in Ankara, 24 February [1936], BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

<sup>44</sup> “Şimdiki durumda Diyarbakırın işleyen en düzgün yol hangisi ise oradan gidilerek vazifeyi yapmayı beklerim.” 24 February 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

Moreover, the reports sent from Elâziz were suspiciously vague. They were signed by the General Inspector himself. General Abdullah Alpdoğan sent a letter to the CHP General Secretary stating that “the topics of Independence and Revolution” were told to the people “in a way that the people could understand.”<sup>45</sup> The lecturers were not named, but an approximate number of participants was included in the reports. Çemişgezek and Hozat had around 300 people attending the lecture, Mazgirt and Palu around 200, and Keban around 100. Abdullah Alpdoğan did not include any summary or transcription of the lectures either. All these round numbers, coupled with the lack of information on the lecturers or the content of the lectures, indicate the party’s difficulties in organizing lectures and maintaining cultural activities in Elâziz.

Even when speech transcriptions were included in the reports, they were less sophisticated and more superficial in content. The speech transcriptions of the Language Day were shorter in 1936. Contrary to the other provinces’ speeches, they did not mention the Sun-Language Theory (*Güneş Dil Teorisi*), launched in the same year. Moreover, the paper trail of the Language Day in Elâziz/Elazığ was in denial of the province’s inhabitants. Most speeches in Elâziz and its districts did not mention that most of the local population spoke a language other than Turkish. Only the vice-district governor of Pertek, Tevfik Gürer, told that people were speaking other languages around the country.

The languages spoken in every corner of our country today are different from one another. Our great leader, who foresaw and appreciated long ago that it was time to eliminate this discrepancy, attaches great importance to the language revolution. And it is as clear as day that this importance is very well-placed. In this revolution, which is one of the main pillars of the Turkish revolution, every Turk should fulfill their duty with joy and pride. And there is confidence that they will do so.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> “Son bir ay içinde tedkikat için kazalara gönderilen Umumi Müfettişlik Kültür Müşavirine istiklal ve inkılap konuları üzerinde halkın anlayabileceği bir edebiyatla ve aynı mevzu üzerinde konferanslar verdirilmiş ve konuşmalar yaptırılmıştır. Çok faydalı olduğu şüphesiz bulunan bu konferansların nerelerde ve ne zaman verildiği ve kaç kişi tarafından dinlendiği ekli kağıtta gösterilmiştir. Bu konferanslara devam olunacağını arz eder saygılarımı sunarım.” Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 11 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>46</sup> “Bu gün ülkemizin her köşesinde konuşulan diller başka başkadır. Bu aykırılığı ortadan kaldırmak zamanının geldiği çok önce gören ve takdir eden büyük önderimiz dil inkılabına önem vermektedir. Ve bu önemin pek yerinde olduğu da gün gibi aşikârdır. Türk devriminin başlıcalarından olan bu devrimde her türk üzerine düşen ödevi sevinç ve iftiharla yapmalıdır. Ve yapacağına da inanım vardır.” From the Secretary of the Pertek District Governor to the CHP General Secretary, 27 August 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1167-100-1.

Gürer did not talk about the purge of Arabic and Persian vocabulary from the higher registers of Ottoman-Turkish. Instead, he underlined the language issue vaguely and invited his audience to speak Turkish in an indirect manner. The reports of the Language Day and the Independence and Revolution lectures were brief and vague. For instance, they did not give the same impression as the other provinces in Western Anatolia, where a spectacular festival was documented with poems, photos, and numerous speech transcriptions.<sup>47</sup>

Despite not properly following the General Secretary's orders concerning lectures or ceremonies such as Language Day and Independence and Revolution lectures, Elâziz organized a spectacular lecture series on another issue in June 1936: national defense. The General Inspector, Abdullah Alpdoğan, reported he benefited from the occasion that many teachers arrived in the city to organize a lecture series.

The lectures took place right after the school year ended, when new teachers arrived in Elâziz from other districts of the same province to take an exam to become middle school teachers. Approximately one hundred teachers gathered in Elâziz. The General Inspectorate took advantage of this opportunity by organizing four lectures independently of the orders sent by the CHP General Secretary. These lectures aimed at informing the "army of wisdom" (*irfan ordusu*) on "national defense" (*milli müdafaa*) and "national mobilization" (*milli seferberlik*).<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, it was thought to demonstrate an air warfare game exercise on the city's planning map, learn and practice air attacks, raids, and air information instructions, and provide a general idea about the necessity of knowing the air defense measures at home, at school, on the street, in the cave, in short, everywhere. An example has been carried out with the attached program.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, "Dil Bayramı. Une lecture somatique de la fête politique dans la Turquie du parti unique."

<sup>48</sup> "İlk ve orta okulların denemelerinin birbirini müteakip bitmesi ve Orta okul öğretmenliği denemeleri için civar kazalardan Elazize gelen öğretmenlerle beraber Elazizde yüze yakın öğretmenin toplanmış olmasından istifade edilerek Elaziz Halk Evinde dört toplantı ile İrfan ordusunu milli müdafaa ve milli seferberlik hakkında bilgi verilmesi ve aynı zamanda Şehrin plan haritası üzerinde bir hava harp oyunu tatbikatı gösterilerek hava taarrüzleri, baskınları ve hava haber verme talimatlarının öğrenilip tatbik edilmesi ve evde, mektepte, sokakta, mağarada hasili her tarafta bulunduğu göre havaya karşı korunma tedbirlerinin bilinmesi lüzumu hakkında umumi bir fikir verilmesi düşünülmüş ve örneği ilişik programla yapılmıştır." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>49</sup> "(...) aynı zamanda Şehrin plan haritası üzerinde bir hava harp oyunu tatbikatı gösterilerek hava taarrüzleri, baskınları ve hava haber verme talimatlarının öğrenilip tatbik edilmesi ve evde, mektepte, sokakta, mağarada hasili her tarafta bulunduğu göre havaya karşı korunma tedbirlerinin bilinmesi lüzumu hakkında umumi bir fikir verilmesi düşünülmüş ve örneği ilişik programla yapılmıştır." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

The Dersim Revolt was repressed through aerial bombings of the area in March 1937. The General Inspector's decision to instruct a group of teachers on protecting themselves from aerial bombings suggests that the General Inspector had foreseen the bombings as early as June 1936.

The training to protect the teachers from aerial bombings was practical. On 20 June 1936, a few months before the Language Day and a few days after the Independence and Revolution lectures, General Alpdoğan requested from the Seventh Organization that an air fleet be sent to Elazığ. The air fleet aimed to demonstrate what might happen over the city. The planes dropped fake bombs labeled "gas, explosive, fire, and mustard gas."<sup>50</sup>

These informative lectures were aimed at a limited group. The General Inspector scheduled these lectures outside working hours to ensure that "civil servants of the provinces of Elaziz and Tunceli, the officers of the municipal officials" could participate.<sup>51</sup> He did not mention inviting the rest of the locals to these training sessions. Still, the lectures were held at the local People's House.

The lectures of Elazığ People's House not only informed its audience on "national defense" and "national mobilization" but also about the necessary preparations following a "hypothetical scenario."

In the event of an aerial attack, tasks were assigned based on the following hypothetical scenario to the garrison commander, the mayor, the chief of police, the chief physician of the local hospital, the provincial health and agriculture directors, and the gendarmerie commander, all of whom were present at the meeting and concerned with all aspects of the city's situation.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> "Hava harp oyununun tatbikatı andıracak şekilde canlı olması için bu tatbikatın yapıldığı saat dakikalarda bir Tayyare filosunun Şehir üzerinde bir baskın ve taarrüz gösterişi yapması maksadiyle bir Filonun 20/Haziran/1936 da Elazize gönderilmesi Yedinci Kolordudan rica edilmiş ve aynı zamanda bu Tayyarelerin atacakları ve içine konulmuş olan üzeri Gas, tahrip, Yangın ve İperit kelimeleri yazılı Etiketli bombaların atılması hususu tekrarrüt ettirilmiştir." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>51</sup> "Bu toplantılara dördüncü umumi müfettişlik ve Elaziz ve Tunceli vilayetleri Me'murlariyle Ordu subaylarının ve Elazizdeki bilumum Belediye ve müessesat me'murlarının dahi iştiraklerini te'min etme maksadiyle Konferans zamanları mesai zamanı haricinde intihap edilmiştir." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>52</sup> "Program mucibince Saat 17 de Halk evinde görüşülmeye başlanmış ve Milli Müdafaa ile Milli Seferberliğin ehemmiyeti ve nereden doğduğu ve ne suretle hazırlanması icap edeceği bir çok misallerle he'yeti umumiyeye izah edilmiş ve bundan sonra havadan bir taarruz halinde şehrin her dürlü vaziyeti ile alakadar olan ve toplantıda hazır bulunan garnizon komutanı, Belediye reisi, emniyet müdürü, Memleket hastanesi baş hekim,

According to the “hypothetical scenario,” the government of the Republic of Turkey started “general mobilization” (*umumi seferberlik*) against a “foreign state.” Each civil servant mentioned above was informed of their duties in case of military mobilization. “Schoolteachers, including women,” were informed on the protection measures with repeated questions and answers.<sup>53</sup>

These lectures were different from those usually organized at the People’s Houses. Yet, they were organized there with the same kind of audience. They went beyond teaching ideological pillars like official history and canonized national literature and did not inform the citizens of the ongoing reforms. Instead, they prepared them for a future war. The coming war was understood as a one against a “foreign state,” hence the ‘external enemy’ although Elazığ or Dersim was not concerned about a potential international conflict.

In the interwar era, many observers in Turkey expected the start of a Second World War. Still, these expectations were not voiced before 1938. The reports talked about the training of civil servants in Elazığ and Tunceli for a future war against a foreign country. Still, the training details showed that it was a measure taken to prepare the men and women of state (*erbab-ı devlet*), including low-ranking civil servants, for a future and violent military intervention in the province.

This military intervention included the use of poisonous gasses, including “mustard gas” (*iperit*), prohibited by the Geneva Protocol in 1925, which Turkey had ratified in October 1929. According to the “hypothetical” plan announced at the Elazığ People’s House to the men and

---

Vilayet sıhhiye ve ziraat müdürleri Jandarma komutanına aşağıdaki faraziye esasına göre vazifeler verdirilmiştir.” From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>53</sup> “(Türkiye Cumhuriyeti hükümeti yabancı bir devlete karşı 18/Haziran/1936 günü saat 22 den itibaren Umumi Seferberlik ilan etmiştir ve her tarafta seferberlik faaliyeti başlamıştır.) bu faraziye dayanarak yukarda adları geçen zevatla kendi vazifeleri etrafında uzun uzadıye görüşülmüş ve bu zamanlarda ne gibi hal ve vaziyetler karşısında kalınacağı ve ne gibi eşhas ve malzemeye ihtiyaç hasıl olacağı Bayanlarda dahil olduğu halde bütün öğretmenlere korunma tedbirleri hakkında sualler sorularak cevaplar alınmak suretile tedbirleri öğretilmesi ve öğrenilmesi lüzumu tebarüz ettirilmiştir.” From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

women of state, they would be informed about the exact locations where the bombs would be dropped “on any part of the city.”<sup>54</sup>

Protection measures were taught to selected citizens, primarily civil servants who were mostly from outside the region. However, the drill was inevitably noticeable to the rest of the local population, as airplanes circled the city, dropping fake bombs, and ‘sirens’ known as ‘monster whistles’ (*canavar düdüğü*) alerted the entire town of the imminent attack.<sup>55</sup> The drill was undoubtedly frightening and intimidating. Alpdoğan claimed:

The airplanes did not come directly over the city from the south. Instead, they first appeared suddenly over Elazığ from behind the Bey Yurdu hills to the north, starting their bombardment and creating the impression of a complete surprise attack. Bags imitating various types of bombs carried by the airplanes were dropped in the city’s marketplace and the military garrison.<sup>56</sup>

The drill was, in fact, a rehearsal of what would happen a few months later in Dersim. The marketplaces were to be burned, gasses spread in crowded areas of the city, and irritant bombs dropped on the shelters. It was also anticipated that burned places would be rendered inaccessible to the fire brigades by dropping mustard gas.

Our aviators dropped the bombs not randomly but calculatedly, following the principles of aerial attack and hitting the targets accurately. As a result of this exercise, the needs for Elazığ’s air defense were identified, and the garrison commander, officials, and the public were demonstrated how the protection organization should be prepared, equipped, organized, and operated.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> “20/Haziran/1936 Cumartesi günü saat 9/30 da yine Halk evinde toplanılmış ve görüşülmeye başlanılmıştır. Bu zamanda Garnizon komutanlığının hazırladığı ve alakadarlara verdiği Talimat teki edildi. Ve bu Talimat ile Haber verme hizmeti için Telefon merkezlerine göre şehir yedi mıntıkaya ayrılarak her mıntıkaya lüzumu kadar Polis ve Bekçi tahsis ve Şehrin herhangi bir noktasına düşecek olan bombaların vaktü zamanında haber verilmesi hususu te’min edilmiştir.” From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>55</sup> “Tam saat 9.30 da Elaziz’e üç tayyare gelmiştir, Bu tayyarelerin gelişi daha önce Osmaniye ve Ergani Maden verme postalarından telefonla öğrenildi. Ve şehre gelinceye kadar hareketleri takip edildi. Ve tayyarelerin gelişi canavar düdüğüyle bütün şehre ilan edilerek bu babta her meslek ve sınıf amirlerinin ne hazırlıkta buldukları soruldu.” From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>56</sup> “Tayyareler; cenuptan doğrudan doğruya şehrin üzerine gelmeyip evvela şehrin şimalindeki bey Yurdu sırtları arkasından birden bire Elaziz şehrinin üstünde göründükleri bombardımana başladıkları için tam bir baskın vaziyeti göstermişlerdir.” From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>57</sup> “Tayyarelerin taşıdığı muhtelif cins bombaları taklid eden torbalardan şehrin çarşısına ve askeri garnizona yangın; şehrin kalabalık yerine gaz; ve bu civarda bulunması lazım olan sığınaklara tahriş; korunma ve yangın söndürme teşkilatının faaliyetini durdurmak maksadiyle bunların geçmeleri ve bombardıman edilen yerlere

After informing the audience of the anticipated aerial bombings, the lectures at the Elazığ People's House returned to business as usual. On 22 and 23 June 1936, the program followed with lectures about "Anatolian and Turkish history." The lectures underlined that "Anatolia was under Turkish occupation (*işgal*) since six thousand years" and that there were "no other nations than the Turkish in Anatolia" since the declaration of Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey (1240-1277). From then on, Anatolian populations started speaking Turkish instead of Persian (*Acemce*). But since "Tunceli" (Dersim) and Bingöl were left without schools, people in the mountains of these regions "spoke Persian" and, as a result, were called "Kurds."<sup>58</sup> Both Kurmanji and Kirmanjki spoken in Dersim were from Indo-European language families sharing more with Persian than Turkish, part of the Altaic language group. However, Kirmandjki or Kurmanji was in no way the same as Persian.<sup>59</sup>

However, according to Alpdoğan, these observations about the Kurdishness of the local populations were erroneous. Alpdoğan claimed that if one observes the toponyms of the region, which have constantly changed and been Turkified since the Second Constitutional era, the "Turkish lineage" and grant the Turkishness of these regions will be clear and one may grant their Turkishness.

However, it became evident that this designation and allocation were incorrect. When examining the general migration waves and their directions, if one looks at their family names, village names, and the names of their mountains and pastures, it becomes clear that they all originate from the Turkish lineage and know that they are Turkish. Henceforth, we must explain to them that they are Turkish. In summary, it was explained that all

---

gelmeleri muhtemel yollara iperit atmaları ve bombardıman istihdaf edilen gayeyi temin etmiş olmaları itibariyle tayyarecilerimiz bombaları gelişi güzel değil hesaplı ve hava taarruz kaideleri uygun isabetli bir şekilde yaptıkları görülmüştür. İşte bu çalışma neticesinde Elâziz'in havaya karşı korunması bakımından nelere ihtiyaç bulunduğu Garnizon komutanı memur ve halkın koruma teşkilatının ne surette hazırlanmaları teçhiz, teşkil, hareket etmeleri lazım geldiği meydana çıkarılmış ve alakadarlara fiilen gösterilmiştir." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>58</sup> "22/23 Haziran günleri de program mucibince Anadolu ve Türk tarihi ve Dördüncü Umumi Müfettişlik mıntikası coğrafyası ve imar planı mevzuları üzerinde konuşuldu. Anadolunun altı bin seneden beri Türk millet tarafından işgal edilmekte olduğu tebarüz ettirildi ve Anadolu'da Türkten gayri millet bulunmadığı ve karaman oğlu Mehmet bey tarafından ilân edildiği tarihten itibaren acemce görüşülmüyerek türkçe konuşılmaya başlandığı ve fakat mektepsiz kalan Bingöl ve Tunceli dağlarındaki ve bunlara acem konuşmalarından dolayı kürt denildiği (...)" From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>59</sup> I thank Ali Sarı and Selim Temo for these clarifications. See also Mehemed Malmısaniy, "The Kırmanjki (Zazaki) Dialect of Kurdish Language and the Issues It Faces," in *The Cambridge History of the Kurds*, ed. Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes, and Veli Yadirgi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 669-70; Ergin Öpengin, "The History of Kurdish and the Development of Literary Kurmanji," in *The Cambridge History of the Kurds*, ed. Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes, and Veli Yadirgi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).



Turkish children in Anatolia must demonstrate that we are a tightly knit and united group around the government of Atatürk's republic.<sup>60</sup>

This lecture series, organized by the Fourth General Inspectorate, lasted from 19 to 24 June 1936. The first two days concentrated on military defense issues, while the last two days on "Anatolian and Turkish history" and a presentation on the "construction and development work" initiated by the General Inspectorate.<sup>61</sup> The lecture series was concluded with a speech by the cultural advisor, most probably Şevket Süreyya Aytaç,<sup>62</sup> on the "unity in education within family, school, and army." Alpdoğan's report concluded that the "aim of these activities was to ensure that all civil servants, especially teachers, work in unity with the government's program and follow the same ideas and methods. It was noted that the desired benefit and effect were achieved and that the meeting notes would be presented separately."<sup>63</sup>

This lecture series demonstrated how the roles of the People's Preachers and local People's Houses transitioned into state defense mechanisms, engaging in the ongoing struggle to preserve the Turkish state. In the early republican era, preaching was not merely about ideological dissemination but also about national defense, with People's Houses operating within securitized zones. The term "wisdom army" (*irfan ordusu*) thus reflected the significant political function of these provincial intellectuals. In Dersim, high and low-ranking civil servants underwent military training to protect themselves from imminent exterminatory violence.

---

<sup>60</sup> "(...) ve halbuki bu hitap ve tahsisin doğru olmadığı tebeyyün eylediği gibi umumi muhaceret dalgaları ile istikametleri tetkik olduğu sırada onların aile isimleri köy isimleri dağ ve yaylalarının isimlerine bakılırsa hepsinin türk neslinden geldiğini ve kendilerinin Türk olduklarını bildikleri ve bundan sonra da kendilerine bizim taraflarımızdan Türk olduklarının anlatılması lazım geldiği hülâsa Anadoludaki bütün türk çocuklarının Atatürk cumhuriyeti hükümeti etrafında sım sıkı toplu bir birlik olduğumuzun gösterilmesi lazım geldiği izah edilmiştir." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>61</sup> "Dördüncü Umumi Müfettişlik teşkilatıyla Devletin bu mıntıkada yapmak istediği imar ve kalkınma işleri de tarif ve tefsil olunmuştur." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

<sup>62</sup> Şevket Süreyya Aytaç was the "cultural advisor" in the city in 1936. His wife, Cemile Aytaç was a middle school teacher at the same time. They were most probably among the attendees of this lecture series.

<sup>63</sup> "En sonda aile ve mektep ve orduda terbiye birliği mevzusunda Kültür müşavirinin bir konferansıyla çalışmalarına nihayet verildi. Bu çalışmalardan maksat bütün devlet memurlarının bir şekilde ve bilhassa öğretmenlerin Hükümet programına uygun ve aynı fikir ve yol üzerinde çalışma birliğini temin etmekten ibaret olduğunu ve matlup faide ve tesirin husulde mahsus bulunduğunu ve görüşme notlarının başkaca sunulacağını arz ederim." From Inspector General Abdullah Alpdoğan to the CHP General Secretary, Elâziz, 26 June 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1009-894-2.

Since Elâziz/Elazığ did not provide any lists of People’s Preachers between 1931 and 1938, the following section will investigate the documentation from the People’s Houses in Elazığ. It will explore the intersection of “People’s Education” and mass violence from the perspective of provincial intellectuals.

## 12.2. “Propaganda” and “Gossip” Before the Massacres

---

The state-sponsored mass violence committed against the Dersimis was also propagated through the spoken word. This aspect allows for a combined analysis of provincial intellectuals and one of the darkest episodes of the single-party era. The intersection of verbal propaganda and state actions highlights how the intellectual discourse and rhetoric of the time were used to justify and facilitate mass violence, reflecting the broader implications of “People’s Education” in the context of state-led atrocities.

As mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), “propaganda” and “gossip” (*dedikodu*) were the privileged concepts used by the party leadership to discuss their problem with the spoken word. Chapter 1 also showed that one of the most important and recurrent sources of “negative” (*menfi*) propaganda was the Islamic preachers. From the angle of the Turkish state’s conflict with various Kurdish political movements, there was an intersection between “Islamic preachers,” Sufi “sheikhs,” and the Kurdish issue. The issue was never purely a religious one. The Islamic dignitaries were the symbol figures who obtained the trust of considerable parts of the local population and used their notoriety to influence political movements. Hence, they were feared by the central government not only because of their opposition to the secularizing reforms but also as crowd leaders and trouble mongers.

The Dersim revolt was one of the remarkable cases in which the state correspondence used the terms “propaganda” and “gossip” to discuss the conflict. The Turkish State Archives categorized the following file as “propaganda and provocation against the state in the Tunceli region.”<sup>64</sup> It was a report penned by the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya, dated 6 April 1937, hence during the beginning of the military intervention in Dersim. Kaya used the following terms to discuss what happened in Dersim (Tunceli).

---

<sup>64</sup> “Tunceli bölgesinde Devlet aleyhine propaganda yapılarak halkın kışkırtıldığı” 6 April 1938, BCA MGM 30-10-0/111-743-18.

It is known that they conducted secret and insidious propaganda to alienate the people from the government and create discontent in the country, aiming to disrupt the sincere and good actions of the republican government. For example, those who see the recent village development movements as harmful to their interests and want to continue using the villagers like slaves as in the feudal era (*feodalite devrini*) have been found spreading malicious and poisonous propaganda in Tunceli and the surrounding areas, falsely claiming that there will be a war soon, the government will confiscate villagers' crops, inspect girls before marriage, disarm and deport the people, consolidate isolated villages, force villagers to farm in distant places, and take all forests, leaving the villagers without firewood and fodder for their animals.<sup>65</sup>

Şükrü Kaya also provided the Prime Ministry with a summary of the type of propaganda made in the region and informed him that he took measures to eliminate this propaganda's impact and organize counterpropaganda (*mukabil propaganda*). The organizations in charge of the counterpropaganda were the General Inspectorate (*Umumi Müfettişlik*) and the government of the province of Elazığ.<sup>66</sup> The summary of the "propaganda" provided by the Interior Minister was as follows:

From Nazımiye and Mazgirt:

1. Villages with scattered houses will be consolidated, forcing villagers to walk for hours with farming tools to cultivate distant fields, sow crops, and harvest produce.

From Çemişgezek, Pertek, and Hozat:

2. Lands owned by large landowners, aghas, and sayyids will be confiscated and distributed to the landless people.

From Ovacık:

3. To provide land to the landless, the districts conduct investigations to identify these individuals. The landless are forbidden from applying to the government, and once identified, they will be deported from Tunceli.

In all districts:

---

<sup>65</sup> "halkı hükümetten soğutmak ve memlekette hoşnutsuzluk uyandırmak maksadile gizli ve sinsî propagandalar yaptıkları ve bu suretle Cumhuriyet hükûmetinin samimî ve eyi icraatını sekteye uğratmak hedefini güttükleri mâlumdur. Meselâ son köy kalkınma hareketlerini kendi menfaatleri için zararlı gören ve halâ feodalite devrini yaşatarak köylüyü köle gibi kullanmakta devam etmek isteyen zümre ve şahıslar Tunceli ve mıntıkasında yakında harp olacağı, hükûmetin köylünün mahsulatına el koyacağı, evlenecek kızların muayene edileceği, halkın silahının elinden alınarak sürüleceği münferit köylerin bir araya getirilmek suretile köylünün pek uzak yerlerde ziraat yapmağa mecbur olacağı bütün ormanların hükümetçe alınara köylüye odun ve hayvanlara ot verilmeyeği gibi saf ve masum halkımızı korkutacak ve bu kükümetten soğutacak çok fena ve zehirli propagandalar yaptıkları tesbit edilmiştir." Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, classified then declassified document, 6 April 1937, BCA MGM 30-10-0/111-743-18.

<sup>66</sup> "Tunceli mıntıkasında yapıldığı tespit edilen propagandaların hülasası bağlı olarak takdim olunmuştur. Bu propagandaların yurdun diğer yerlerinde de yapıldığı hakkında Vekâlette malûmat mevcut olduğundan fena propagandaların tesirinin ortadan kaldırılması için müessir tedbir alınması ve mukabil propagandalar yaptırılması Umumî Müfettişliklere ve Valiliklere bildirilmiştir. Bu hususta verilen direktif suretini de bağlı olarak takdim ediyorum." From the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Ministry, 6 April 1937, BCA MGM 30-10-0/111-743-18.

4. Government outposts will be established within the communities, disarming the population and enforcing military conscription, tax laws, and other regulations.

From all districts:

5. After disarming the population, the government will deport and massacre them like the Armenians.

From Hozat and Mazgirt:

6. The government will take over all forests and station guards and deny people access to wood and foliage for their livestock.

From Nazımiye and Hozat:

7. Men and women who wish to marry will be examined, exposing the private parts of the women.

From Ovacık:

8. Couples wishing to marry will be weighed. They will not be permitted to marry if they do not match in weight. Since our beliefs do not allow for the implementation of the seventh and eighth articles, marriages will cease, leading to the extinction of our lineage.

From Hozat:

9. The government will collect the milk from livestock and the produce from fields, keeping only enough for the people's sustenance, and sell the surplus, keeping the profits.

From all districts:

10. The people were misled into believing that the construction and organization of schools, police stations, government buildings, roads, bridges, and other public works and cultural facilities, which in reality were intended for the people's safety, welfare, and civilization, were a cunning move of the government against the people to facilitate a military operation.

From all districts:

11. Since the government will be at war with another state, it will be unable to send troops against us and will withdraw its forces from Tunceli. Therefore, there will be no force left to use against us. Maintain your weapons and your readiness.

From all districts:

12. It is said that Seyyit Rıza, Haydaranlı Kamer, and Ali Şirin have dreams from time to time.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> "Propaganda esasları: §Nazımiye ve Mazgirtten: Evleri dağınmış olan köylerin toplu bir hale konulacağı ve bu yüzden köylülerin uzakta kalacak olan tarlalarını sürmek ekmek ve mahsüllerini toplamak için çiftlik aletleriyle saatlerce yürümek mecburiyetinde bırakılacakları: §Çemişgezek, Pertek ve Hozattan 2- Arazisi çok olan bey, ağa ve seyyitlerin arazisi ellerinden alınarak arazisi olmayan halka dağıtılacağı, §Ovacıktan: 3- Arazisi olmayanlara arazi verebilmek için bunların kimlerden ibaret olduğu hususunda kazalarca yapılan tahkikata, arazisiz halkın hükümete müracaat etmekten menedildikleri ve buna sebep olarak da arazisi olmayan tesbit ediliyor ve bunlar Tunceli dışına sürülecek, §Bütün kazalarda: 4- Hükümet karakolları içimize sokacak, silahlarımızı alacak ve bizi asker alma ve vergi kanunlarıyla diğer kanunları tatbik edecek. § Bütün kazalardan: 5- Hükümet karakolları içimize sokacak, silahlarımızı aldıktan sonra bizi sürececek ve Ermeniler gibi kıracak. §Hozat ve Mazgirtten: 6 - Hükümet tarafından bütün ormanlar alınacak ve içine muhafızlar konularak halka odun ve davarlara yaprak verilmeyecek. § Nazımiye ve Hozattan 7- Evlenecek erkek ve kadınlar muayene edilecek ve bu suretle karılarımızın mahrem yerleri görülecek. § Ovacıktan: 8- Evlenecek çiftler tartılacak. Ve bir ağırlıkta olmayınca evlenmelerine müsaade edilmeyecek ve yedinci ile sekizinci maddelerin tatbikine akidemiz müsait olmadığından evlenme olmayacak ve bu suretle neslimiz kurutulacak. § Hozattan: 9 - Hükümet davarların sütlerini ve tarlaların mahsüllerini kendisi toplayacak ve halkın geçimine yetecek kısmını halka verdikten sonra üst tarafını hükümet satın parasını alacak. § Bütün kazalardan: 10 - Hakikatte halkın emniyeti, refahı ve

The document is particularly interesting in showing that both the local population and the Interior Minister, who was deeply involved in the Armenian Genocide, developed a language to describe the state-sponsored annihilation of specific populations.<sup>68</sup> In 1937, Şükrü Kaya used the term “*kırmak*,” which means “to break” or “to fracture.” This term also connoted “killing,” causing disappearance, reducing, or diminishing the power of someone or something. Because of these connotations, “*kırmak*” was later used in translating the term “genocide” after it was coined by Raphael Lemkin, becoming “*soykırım*” in Turkish.

Most importantly, for our purposes here, Şükrü Kaya’s report illustrated how the anxiety of mass extermination in Dersim was spread through rumors, often stemming from notable local religious and political figures’ prophetic dreams circulating among the local population. These anxieties were multifaceted, encompassing increased state penetration in the region through taxation and military conscription, control of economic resources, forced population movements, control of population growth, and fears of mass murder.

These characteristics matched what Raphael Lemkin conceptualized as “genocide” a few years later. Dirk Moses illustrated that Lemkin had a broader and more “sociological” definition of “genocide,” which was not fully adopted by the Nuremberg Trials after the Holocaust. Moses also examined the terminology Lemkin used to describe his observations during the Holocaust and his earlier references to the Armenian Genocide. There was a notable

---

medeniyete ulaştırılması gayesine matuf olan mektep ve karakol, hükümet binası, yol, köprü vesair nafia ve kültür inşaat ve teşkilatının halk aleyhine ve askeri bir hareketin kolaylıkla yapılmasına müteveccih hükümetin kurnazca bir hareketi olduğu hususunda halkın işgal edildiği, § Bütün kazalardan: 11- Hükümetin başka bir devletle muharebe edeceği için üzerimize asker gönderemeyecektir. Ve Tunceli içindeki kuvvetleri de çekecektir. Ve binaenaleyh aleyhimizde kullanılacak kuvveti kalmayacaktır. Bu hale göre silahlarınızı ve durumunuzu muhafaza ediniz. § Bütün kazalardan: 12- Seyyit Rıza’nın, Haydaranlı Kamerin, Ali Şerin zaman zaman rüya gördükleri.” Şükrü Kaya to the Prime Minister, classified then declassified document, 6 April 1937, BCA MGM 30-10-0-0/111-743-18.

<sup>68</sup> These reports were initially classified and then declassified at an unspecified date. The timing of the declassification is intriguing, given the explicit content of the reports. The Turkish state archives’ decision to declassify these documents can be understood in the context of the denialist stance of republican Turkey concerning state-sponsored mass violence. This document does not discuss the intention of annihilation but rather the popular anxiety of annihilation as expressed through rumors. Since the official denialist discourse often focused on refuting the intention to annihilate when facing genocide claims, this document could be seen as harmless from the state’s viewpoint. This perspective aligns with the state’s efforts to downplay or deny the systematic nature of such acts, rendering the document less threatening to the official narrative.

tension in Lemkin’s writings between the concepts of “destroying” and “crippling” a religious, political, or linguistic group. This nuanced understanding highlights the complexity of Lemkin’s thought and his broader vision of genocide beyond mere physical destruction, encompassing efforts to cripple the social and cultural fabric of a targeted group.<sup>69</sup>

My objective here is not to debate whether the state-sponsored mass violence in Dersim constituted genocide. The essence of Dirk Moses’ analysis of Raphael Lemkin’s writings is that crippling a well-identified group was central to Lemkin’s reflections. Şükrü Kaya’s report highlighted how the local populations of Tunceli province, including all its districts, feared being crippled by the republican state. These fears spread through rumors and spoken word, creating widespread anxiety. In turn, the Interior Ministry was apprehensive about these popular fears regarding state persecution. In the end, Şükrü Kaya ordered the Fourth General Inspector, Abdullah Alpdoğan, and the governor of Tunceli to take all necessary measures to counter the propaganda.

I especially request our general inspectors and governor colleagues to closely monitor these propaganda efforts of the internal and external enemies who cannot accept the actions of the republican government. They should immediately counteract these with effective suggestions (*telkin*), propaganda, and other appropriate means to enlighten the public, especially the villagers. Additionally, it is necessary to take proper measures to eliminate the effects of such harmful propaganda and to ensure that there is no possibility of shaking our people’s morale or weakening their loyalty to the republican government.<sup>70</sup>

Given the murderous repression of the Dersim Revolt, it raises the question of whether terms like “*telkin*” (suggesting, inculcating), “*tenvir*” (enlightening), or “propaganda” were state euphemisms similar to “*tedip*” (educating, disciplining) used in the context of mass violence. If we examine the archives of the People’s Houses and the press, it becomes evident that the situation in Dersim also concerned the enlightened. While the bombs dropped by the

---

<sup>69</sup> A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide,” 23.

<sup>70</sup> “Cümhuriyet hükümetinin icraatını çekemeyen içte ve dıştaki düşmanların bu propagandalarının hassasiyetle takibini ve derhal mukabil ve müessir telkin ve propagandalarla ve münasip görülecek diğer vasıtalarla halkın ve bilhassa köylünün tenvir edilmesini ve eyi tedbirlerle bu gibi fena propagandaların tesirlerinin her halde izalesini ve halkımızın kuvveyi maneviyesinin sarsılmasına ve cümhuriyet hükümetine olan bağlılığının zayıflamasına kat’iyyen imkân verilmemesini Umumi müfettiş ve vali arkadaşlarımızdan bilhassa rica ederim.” Şükrü Kaya to the General Inspector and the Governor of Tunceli, Encrypted telegram, 4 January 1937, BCA MGM 30-10-0/111-743-18.

Turkish aerial forces represented the “bronze hand” (Tunçeli) or the “fist” of the state,<sup>71</sup> the People’s Houses in the region symbolized the soft hand of the state, aiming to influence through cultural and educational means.

### 12.3. Preaching Amid Mass Murder

---

Dersim is an original part of Eastern Anatolia. Until now, it has remained closed to the Turkish *münevver*.<sup>72</sup>

This was the opening line of a newspaper piece signed by Naşit Hakkı Uluğ (1902-1977) in June 1937. Uluğ was the deputy of Kütahya when he penned this article. The article opened by announcing that the Turkish *münevver* did not know Dersim, comparing the region to Tibet, considered a “closed country” (*kapalı memleket*).<sup>73</sup> This region was “rebellious by its history, nature, and traditions.”<sup>74</sup> Uluğ identified the problem with Dersim as the lack of legibility by the state. Other than the state servants and the military, nobody analyzed Dersim even superficially.<sup>75</sup> For Uluğ, knowledge production on the region’s geography, history, religion, and traditions was a way to open it to the *münevver*. Hence, he did so.

Dersim’s geography was complicated. Most of its inhabitants lived under a “tribal regime.”<sup>76</sup> Dersim was the “son of a rebellious history.”<sup>77</sup> It was populated by Turks from the Khorasan region.<sup>78</sup> The region has been under the tremendous influence of the Kızılbaş (Red Head) sect” since the Ottoman times. The “Kızılbaş mountains” already “trembled” under

---

<sup>71</sup> A People’s Preacher of Sivas, Cemal Gültekin referred to the events in Dersim by talking about the “steel claw of the republic” (*cumhuriyetin çelik pençesi*) in 1938. Cemal Gültekin, “Kültür Direktörü C. Gültekinin Halkevinin Öğretmenler şerefine verdiği çay şölenindeki gezi konuşması: Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, Diyarbakır Gezisi,” 20. The bronze hand curiously evolved into an “iron fist” in 2023 Turkey. See: Ferdi Türkten and Ayşe Şensoy Boztepe, “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Teröristler ya Türk adaletine teslim olacak ya da devletimizin demir yumruğuyla yüzleşecek,” *Anadolu Ajansı*, 23 August 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-teroristler-ya-turk-adaletine-teslim-olacak-ya-da-devletimizin-demir-yumruguyla-yuzlesecek/2973778>.

<sup>72</sup> “Dersim Şark Anadolu’sunun orijinal bir parçasıdır. Bugüne kadar Türk münevveri için kapalı kalmıştır.” Naşit Hakkı Uluğ, “Dersim’in İç Yüzü,” *Haber: Akşam Postası*, 18 June 1937.

<sup>73</sup> “Coğrafya kitaplarının “kapalı memleket” dedikleri (Tibet)i bile bir çok keşif ve sefer heyetleri baştan başa keşfetmişlerdir.” Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> “Bu diyar tabiatı, tarihi, göreneğiyle asidir.” Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> “Fakat Dersim devlet memurlarıyla asker kit’alarından başkasının kuşbaşı bir tetkikine bile mevzu olmamıştır.” Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> “Dersimde 47.000 insanın aşiret rejimi içinde yaşadığı görünür.” Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> “Dersim asi bir tarihin oğludur.” Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> “Bugünkü Dersimliler Horasandan gelen Türklerin bu toprağa yayılmasından meydana çıkmışlardır.” Ibid.

Selim I (1511-1514), who committed large-scale massacres against them.<sup>79</sup> Kızılbaş was a polysemic term coined in the sixteenth century the opposition between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. It was first used to describe the supporters of the Shah, the Sh'ites, and then religious communities with unorthodox practices in the region.<sup>80</sup> Through a newspaper article, Uluğ presented Dersim to a larger audience as it was perceived by the state actors. What did the People's Preachers do?

While the massacres continued in Dersim between March 1937 and September 1938, the People's Houses were highly active while seemingly in difficulty. The monthly magazine of Elazığ People's House *Altan* was published in Adana "Turk's Word" (*Türk Sözü*) printing house from March to June 1937 instead of locally. From June to September 1938, the same magazine published four issues all at once in İstanbul by *Ülkü* publishing house, while it was previously edited in a publishing house based in Elazığ. The constant changes in the publishing venue showed that the People's House had difficulties printing its magazine locally during conflicts and massacres.

Against this background, the Elazığ People's House reported organizing weekly lectures in the middle of the conflict every Wednesday between 5 and 6 p.m. from 24 November 1937 to 29 June 1938.<sup>81</sup> On 13 March 1937, the People's House organized a "Literature Night" (*Edebiyat Gecesi*). The cultural advisor, Şevket Süreyya Aytaç, delivered a lecture on the meaning of literature.<sup>82</sup> On 15 April, the People's House dedicated another soirée to a "great Turkish poet," Abdülhak Hamit.<sup>83</sup> Regular members of the Elazığ People's House kept publishing articles in the People's House magazine on the geography of the region, the principles of the revolution, and local history. Most local history pieces have emphasized the region's Turkishness for a very long time, thereby silencing and dissimulating both Kurdish

---

<sup>79</sup> "Osmanoğullarının kurmuş olduğu devlet Dersim'e komşu olduğu zaman buraları müthiş bir kızılbaşlığın tesiri altındaydı. Dersim onbeşinci Milat arasında Osmanlı padişahı Fatih Mehmed'e teslim edildi. Fakat Dersim Osmanlı devletinden bihaber, Osmanlı devleti de Dersime lakayttı. Yavuz Selim Acem şahıyla Çaldıranda çarpışmaya giderken bu Kızılbaş dağlarını titretmeden geçemedi. O günden beri Dersim bizim haritamıza dahildir. Fakat kapısını misilsiz bir inatla içinden kitlemiştir." Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Elise Massicard, *The Alevi in Turkey and Europe : Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity*, 13. Stefan Winter, *A History of the 'Alawis: From Medieval Aleppo to the Turkish Republic* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016), 115.

<sup>81</sup> Sinan Ergen, "Türkiye'de Halkevleri ve Elazığ Örneği" (MA Fırat Üniversitesi, 2007), 116-17.

<sup>82</sup> "Edebiyat Gecesi," *Altan*, 23 April, 1937.

<sup>83</sup> "Hâmid Gecesi Raporu," *Altan*, 19 May, 1937.



and Armenian inhabitants of the area in the past and present.<sup>84</sup> These articles implicitly or explicitly referred to the ongoing conflict and massacre.

The Elazığ People's House, including all its members, were well aware of what was happening during the massacres. The number of high-ranking government officials visiting the city burgeoned from the beginning of the conflict. In March 1937, when the conflict had already started, Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya visited Elazığ People's House.<sup>85</sup> In June 1937, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü revisited the city.<sup>86</sup> Ömer Kemal Ağar worked as a history and geography teacher at the Elazığ Middle School. He was a People's House member and a regular contributor to its magazine. In June 1937, he published an article, "The Winged Turkish Girl" (*Kanatlanan Türk Kızı*), in which he reported his visit to General Alpdoğan's office to see Sabiha Gökçen.

Sabiha Gökçen, the first woman to become a military aviator and the adopted daughter of Mustafa Kemal, was a topic of amazement in the publications of the People's Houses during the Dersim Massacres. She was involved in the bombardments of Dersim.<sup>87</sup> Ağar described her as a "lovely visitor" (*sevimli misafir*) who visited the People's House accompanied by the General Inspector Alpdoğan and the teacher Ağar.<sup>88</sup> Another article on the same issue presented Gökçen as the "symbol of progress" of the country.<sup>89</sup> Gökçen was a genius and a very successful aviator. She was an example for the young girls because she "proved the services that can be done to protect the homeland from the skies."<sup>90</sup>

The figure of Sabiha Gökçen also influenced speeches and articles about women's military involvement. On 3 March 1938, during the Dersim massacre, the middle school Turkish teacher Cemile Aytaç delivered a speech on "Women and Military Service" (*Kadınlık ve*

---

<sup>84</sup> "İrk vaziyeti: Dersimin ilk sakinleri tamamen Türktür. Bunu dere, tepe gibi isimlerden anlamak mümkündür." "Kapanan ve Açılan Tarih Sayfaları," *Altan*, 22 June, 1937; Necip Erdem, "Harput Tarihine bir bakış," *Altan*, 1938.

<sup>85</sup> Ömer Kemal Ağar, "Elâziz Dahiliye Vekilimizi Bağına Bastı," *Altan*, 23 April, 1937.

<sup>86</sup> Ömer Kemal Ağar, "Şereflenen Elaziz," *Altan*, 22 June, 1937.

<sup>87</sup> Ayşe Gül Altınay, *The Myth of the Military-Nation: Military, Gender, and Education in Turkey* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 33-55. Cited by: Metin Yüksel, "Kurds and Kurdish Nationalism in the Interwar Period," in *The Cambridge History of the Kurds* ed. Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes, and Veli Yadırgı (2021), 210.

<sup>88</sup> Ömer Kemal Ağar, "Kanatlanan Türk Kızı," *Altan*, 22 June 1937.

<sup>89</sup> Selâmi Tekin, "Atatürk Kızı Sabiha Gökçen," *Altan*, 22 June, 1937.

<sup>90</sup> "Gökçen, Türk kadınının vatanı göklerde koruması yolunda ne değerli hizmetler görebileceğini isbat eden ilk Türk kadını olmuştur." *Ibid.*

*Askerlik*) at the Elazığ People's House. This speech again advocated for women's military education based on the example of Sabiha Gökçen.<sup>91</sup>

The magazine of the Elazığ People's House, *Altan*, reported live on the developments of the military intervention in Dersim. A long article titled "Closing and Opening Pages of History" detailed the massacre's history, causes, and expected consequences. The article identified the problem with the local population: avoiding taxation and military service. It reproduced the state discourse by qualifying the government's actions as "discipline operations" and "reform attempts." It enumerated these discipline and reform attempts, which ranged from opening schools to deporting community leaders.<sup>92</sup> The article also reproduced a speech delivered by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü during one of his visits to the city.<sup>93</sup>

The People's Houses members observed and participated in the "discipline operation" in Dersim by threatening their audience and taking pictures with the surrendered local leaders. In the photograph below, we see two People's House members, middle school teacher Ömer Kemal and Naimi, who took two local leaders, Kamer and Cebrali Aghas, by their arms and led them to the front of the Atatürk statue.<sup>94</sup> This photo aimed to further humiliate these two

---

<sup>91</sup> "Halkevimizin Konferans Günleri," *Altan*, 1938.

<sup>92</sup> "Tedip hareketleri ve ıslahat teşebbüsleri." "Kapanan ve Açılan Tarih Sayfaları."

<sup>93</sup> The visit should have taken place after 14 June, as İnönü referred to reports he received on 14 June in the speech.

<sup>94</sup> "Kapanan ve Açılan Tarih Sayfaları."

leaders by putting them between two People's House members holding their arms, indicating victory.

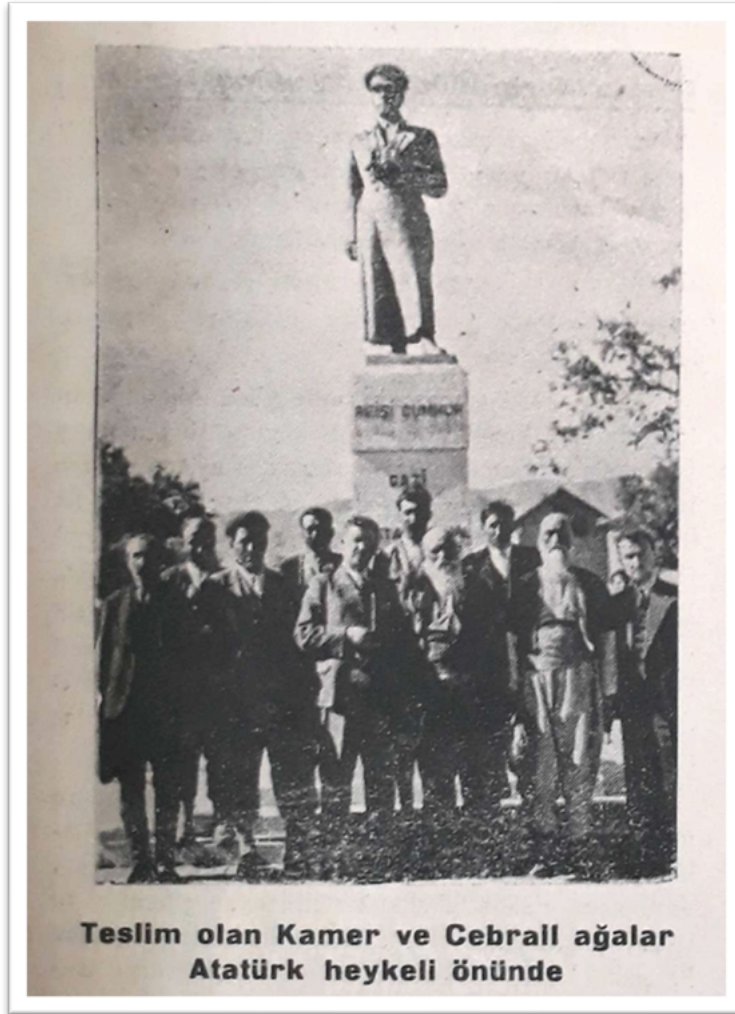


Figure 17. People's House members posing with the captured rebels, *Altan*, 22 June 1937.

The photograph's caption read: "The surrendered Kamer and Cebrali aghas in front of the statue of Atatürk. To the right of the Aghas is Naimî, head of the library and publications committee, and to the left is Ömer Kemal from the publications committee."<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> "Teslim olan Kamer ve Cebrali ağalar Atatürk heykeli önünde. Ağaların sağındaki zat kütüphane ve neşriyat komitesi başkanı Naimî, solundaki Neşriyat komitesinden Ömer Kemaldir." *Ibid.*

Their participation in the massacre also consisted of writing articles to celebrate the repression of the revolt and intimidate the readers further. On the same issue, the teacher who posed with the two aghas, Ömer Kemal, published a threatening article in which the figure of the “first” emerged. The article was titled “The Sun Rises on Tunceli.”

Turkey is a country without classes and privileges. Everyone is subject to the same laws and objectives. Those who commit crimes prohibited by law will face the *firm fist of justice*. Among the individuals living in Turkey, those with backward thoughts are harmful to others. If these individuals attempt to destroy the newly established society, they will confront the disciplinary and security forces of the Republic. The fate of those who look askance at the revolutionary moves undertaken by the Republic Government and disregard them has always been disappointing. In Tunceli, those who oppose the government’s reforms are unfortunate individuals who cannot understand their true interests. The leaders among them, such as the religious leaders and tribal chiefs, failed to realize how far they had moved from the Ottoman era.<sup>96</sup>

Ömer Kemal Ağar reproduced the government discourse on the local population and the social structures in Dersim. His article criticized the inherited privileges of the so-called “tribal chiefs.” It aimed at accounting and further celebrating the ongoing military intervention in the province. Ağar also intimidated his readers further with the “bronze hand” or the “firm fist” of the state with an apparent reference to what is happening in Dersim, targeting religious leaders and tribal chiefs.

The People’s Houses also participated in commemorative events during the massacres. In May 1937, some generals “visited” the People’s House again by benefiting from the opportunity of “preventing the harmful thoughts of some Tunceli-Dersim tribes with thorough and serious measures.”<sup>97</sup> A few days later, the People’s House commemorated the “martyrs of

---

<sup>96</sup> “Türkiye sınıfsız, imtiyazsız bir ülkedir. Hedef ve aynı kanuna tabiidir. Kanunun menettiği suçları yapanlar adaletin sert yumruğu ile karşılaşılır. Türkiye’de yaşayan fertler arasında geri güçünceli olanlar, başkaları için zarar verecek kimselerdir. Bunlar yeni kurulan cemiyeti yıkmayı itihaz ederlerse kendilerini Cumhuriyetin inzibat ve asayiş kuvveti karşılar. § Cumhuriyet Hükümetinin giriştiği inkılap hamlelerine yan bakanların onu hiçe sayanların sonu daima hüsrana olmuştur. § Tuncelide hükümetin giriştiği ıslahata mukabele edenler hakiki menfaatlerini iddia edemeyen bedbahtlardır. Bunların başında bulunan seyyidler, ağalar Osmanlı imparatorluğu devrinden çok uzaklaştığını tahmin basiretini gösterememişlerdir.” Ömer Kemal Ağar, “Tuncelinde Güneş Doğuyor,” *Altan*, 22 June 1937.

<sup>97</sup> “Hükümetin ıslahat hareketlerine karşı koymak isteyen bir kısım Tunceli-Dersim aşiretlerinin yaptıkları kötü düşünceler, alınan esaslı ve ciddi tedbirlerle ilk anlarda önlemiş bulunurken Türk ordusunun çok değerli generalleri bu işten alakalanarak şehrimize şeref vermişlerdir.” “Mayıs ayında nasıl çalıştık?” *Altan*, 22 June 1937.

the airplane” (*tayyare şehitleri*) and organized a soirée for the same martyrs in which numerous teachers in Elazığ delivered speeches and recited poetry.<sup>98</sup>

The poetry recited during these commemorations often referred to the ongoing massacres. A teacher, Muzaffer (a woman), delivered a speech called “Flying Turkish Girl” (*Uçan Türk Kızı*), which referred to Sabiha Gökçen.<sup>99</sup> During Mustafa Kemal’s visit to Erzurum (November 1937), Cemile Aytaç was pushed to recite another poem before the president. She remembered this poem and told her grandchildren about it.<sup>100</sup> Aytaç reported that during the same dinner party organized at the People’s House of Elazığ, Fazıl Ahmet recited another poem titled “I Saw with My Own Eyes” (*Gözümle Gördüm*).<sup>101</sup> The poem was composed earlier and published in *Milliyet* in 1933.<sup>102</sup>

There was a rusty sky next to the top of his gun shelter  
There was a crushed root under his feet  
This body hits the deck like a wounded *zeibek*  
I do not know what he was seeking, what did he find in this sky  
The darkness was ululating while digging up the emptiness  
Flashes of lightning were grieving the nights  
I saw this with my eyes; I won’t believe other words  
I saw with my eyes that a man, like a storm,  
Suddenly, squeezing flashes of lightning in his hands,  
Grabbed a neighing ideal from its mane.  
Storms tooth and nail, maddening armies,  
Ran with screams, asked *una voce*:  
Forbidden, forbidden; return, don’t knee the soil,  
Who do you think you are? You are following the trace of a hurricane,  
He did not even answer; he rode his horse,  
To establish his ideal in the heavens.  
Dark voices of owls, bawling of wolves,  
Cracking voice of houses filled with death.  
Rabid cries tooting the stars,  
Summers setting fire to the soil, freezing winters,  
They pressed upon him: “Where [are you going]? Where?  
[...]  
A shadow-faced army asked him all this,  
He was responding, “Only, only forward.”  
I saw this with my own eyes; I won’t believe another word,  
I saw with my own eyes that a man, like a storm,

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl*, 11-12.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>102</sup> Fazıl Ahmet [Aykaç], “Gözümle Gördüm,” *Milliyet*, 26 March 1933.

Hurled himself from the flood of swamps,  
Slaughtered the hyenas, cleaned this country,  
Then, he stood up and ordered Turk's son:  
Don't recognize another God; worship the country, which is your mother.<sup>103</sup>

The poet was Fazıl Ahmet [Aykaç], an Istanbul-born poet who spent his youth as a high school teacher and columnist in various Unionist newspapers.<sup>104</sup> When the Great War started, he was probably too old to be drafted since the mobilization concerned, first and foremost, those who were born between 1891 and 1893.<sup>105</sup> Fazıl Ahmet became the deputy of Elâziz/Elazığ in 1929. Members of the People's House often recited his poems at various events and celebrations.<sup>106</sup> The same poem was reportedly read by Aykaç himself before the public during the first Linguistic Congress in 1934.

Written from the point of view of an-observer who "saw" the war with "his own eyes," the poem delivered a poignant image of the dedicated soldier "grabbing a neighing ideal from its mane," fearless of the "darkness," "flashes of lightning" and "black voice of the owls."<sup>107</sup> Addressing the Turkish "youth," a social category that embodies, among other things, the future projections of the regime, Aykaç's poem reflected the everlasting nature of the war. Why read this poem in Elâziz/Elaziz in the spring or autumn of 1937 in the middle of the military intervention and the massacres in the city?

The poem likely references the successful episodes of the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence. The hyena serves as a metaphor for betrayal due to the scavenging behavior and cunning nature attributed to this animal. The poem evokes the bravery of soldiers

---

<sup>103</sup> "Mazgalımın üst yanında pas tutan bir gök vardı § Ayağımın altında da bir ezilmiş kök vardı § Yaralı bir zeybek gibi yere yatık bu gövde § Bilmiyorum, ne arardı ne sezerdi ok gökte? § Karanlıklar uluyarak boşlukları eşerdi § Yıldırımlar gecelerin ta bağrını deşerdi § Gördüm bunu gözümle ben, başka söze inanmam § Gördüm bunu gözümle ki bora gibi bir adam § Birdenbire şimşekleri avucunda sıkarak § Geceleri kovuklara, kuyulara tıkarak § Yelesinden yakaladı, kişneyen bir ülküyü (...) Bunu ona soruyordu gölge yüzlü bir ordu § O yalnızca İleriye! İleriye diyordu... § Gördüm bunu gözümle ben başka söze inanmam § Gördüm bunu gözümle bora gibi bir adam § Birdenbire fırlayarak batakların selinden § Birden bira yakaladı timsahları belinden § Boğazladı sırtlanları, temizledi bu yurdu § Sonra kalkıp ayak üstü Türk oğluna buyurdu § Başka tanrı bilmem artık, anan olan yurda tap (...)" ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Kâzım Yetiş, "Aykaç, Fazıl Ahmet," in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1991).

<sup>105</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*, 55.

<sup>106</sup> It was recited in Aydın and Samsun at least. Recited by the school headmaster Bşşaran, Samsun, 1936, BCA CHP 490-01/1170-108-02; Aydın, 1936, BCA CHP 490-01/1166-95-1.

<sup>107</sup> Celebration Reports of Language Day, Aydın, 1934, BCA CHP 490-0-0-1/1166-95-1.

“slaughtering hyenas” for “the ideal”—*ülkü*, the pure-Turkish substitute for Ziya Gökalp’s well-known concept of *mefkûre*. This occurs within the context of a violent counterinsurgency against a population stigmatized as naturally and historically rebellious. The use of such metaphors was a form of participation in the maintenance ‘law and order’ by verbally intimidating dissidents.

Throughout the conflict in Dersim, People’s Preachers and members of People’s Houses continued to discuss the issue similarly. Not only those based in Elazığ, but also from bordering provinces learned about the issue by August 1938 thanks to the trips organized for teachers working in the region.

In August 1938, a convoy of teachers from different provinces within the Fourth Inspectorate and neighboring provinces organized a visit to Sivas. Cemal Gültekin, a member of Sivas People’s House and a People’s Preacher, delivered a speech to welcome the teachers summarizing the details of their visits to Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, and Diyarbakır. *Ortayayla*, the monthly magazine of the Sivas People’s House, published Gültekin’s speech in August 1938. Therefore, teachers’ visits to these four provinces, including Tunceli (formerly Dersim), chronologically corresponded to the Dersim massacres.

Cemal Gültekin, a teacher and People’s Preacher of Sivas, summarized their visit to “Tunceli” in his speech. It encapsulated the state’s military and administrative penetration of the region with development projects, including the construction of schools and bridges. He celebrated the murderous counterinsurgency of the Turkish military and claimed that how he and other teachers listened to the “epic tales of heroism” of Turkish soldiers from the General Inspector himself.<sup>108</sup>

A colonial gaze marked Gültekin’s narrative of their visit. Gültekin described how they traveled to the Pertek district, one of the regions where the rebellion and its suppression were the strongest, how they toured the area’s vineyards and gardens, and how they transformed and examined the local people as objects of knowledge. The locals of Pertek were gentle and

---

<sup>108</sup> “Burada Tunceli Kültür direktörü Tünçeli hakkında bir hasbihal yaptılar. Bu hasbihalden anladık ki Tuncelinde iki sene içinde okulların ve talebenin sayısı iki misline çıkmış, bir çok yollar köprüler yapılmış, 13 okul ve 9 köprü de yapılmak üzeredir. Tünçelinde son hareket dolayısıyla askerlerimizin hamaset destanlarını umumî müfettişlik resmî tebliğinden dinledik.” Cemal Gültekin, “Kültür Direktörü C. Gültekinin Halkevinin Öğretmenler şerefine verdiği çay şölenindeki gezi konuşması: Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, Diyarbakır Gezisi,” 19.

affable (*munis*). The women of the Pertek district were “entirely” Turkish. The proof of this was their names: Gül, Fidan, or Çiçek.<sup>109</sup>

He talked about how they examined maps provided by the General Inspector, Abdullah Alpdoğan, and deduced from the “topography of the region” that all districts had “pure-Turkish” names and, hence, were Turks. Talking about Başvartenik, a Western Armenian toponym’s etymology composed of Baş (the head) and Vartanik (Rosary), claimed that the toponym was, in fact, from “pure-Turkish.”<sup>110</sup> He concluded:

My Friends: The conclusion reached after the investigations in Tunceli is as follows: § This place is entirely a Turkish land. Its inhabitants are Turkish. The spoken language is Turkish. For centuries, in this place where the gendarmerie, tax collectors, and population officers had never entered, the reign of the aghas (local chiefs) had prevailed. When roads, bridges, and schools were built, and the iron fist of the republic began to break the reign of the Aghas, it was very natural for the reactions we read about in the newspapers to occur. Here, the republican administration has also provided the local population with security, prosperity, happiness, well-being, and life.<sup>111</sup>

The issue circled back to the presence of the state. Including the leadership of the CHP, the political ruling class of that period was worried about the state’s inability to reach Dersim. After so many wars and Turkification through massacres, it was unacceptable for the gendarmerie and tax collectors, that is, the hand and foot of the state, not to be able to enter the region. If anyone opposed this, the firm hand, the iron fist of the republic, would come and find you.

The case study of the People’s Preachers during the Dersim Massacres shows the continuity between the mass violence perpetrated against Armenians, Assyrians, and Yezidis during the

---

<sup>109</sup> “Üçüncü gün dördüncü umumî müfettişliğin temin ettiği vasıtalarla Tunceli’nin karakteristik vasıflarını görmek üzere 30 kilometre mesafede bulunan Tunçelinin pertek kazasına gittik. § Bağlar bahçeler içinde bulunan bu çok şirin ve güzel kasabayı, munis halkını gördük.” Baştan başa Türk olan bu kasabada kadınların isimleri Gül, Fidan ve Çiçektir.” Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>110</sup> “Dördüncü umumî müfettiş General Abdullah Alpdoğanın paftaları üzerinde bize verdiği izahate göre: § Tunçelindeki topoğrafik vaziyet, doğudan gelen Türklerin buranın dağlarile karşılaşması dolayısıyla kasaba ve yer isimlerinin çoğunun öz Türkçe olduğunu, Türk eklentisi olan, Ek, ik ve in ile nihayetlendirildiğini bilâhara arap fonetiği dolayısıyla kelimelerin aslının bozulduğunu muhtelif delillerle isbat ettiler. (Başvartenik) adının (Varta) tehlike manasına öz Türkçedir. Divrik, Devrik, Ak’in, Ağın, Çimişgezcek, Pertek, Arapkir gibi.” Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> “Arkadaşlar : Tunçelinde yapılan tetkikler neticesinde varılan fikir şudur: § Burası baştan başa Türk diyarıdır. Ahalisi Türktür. Konuşulan dilde Türkçedir. Asırlarca Jandarmanın tahsildarın nüfus memurunun girmedığı bu yerde ağaların saltanatı hakim olmuş yollar köprüler okullar yapılıncı cumhuriyetin çelik pençesi ağaların saltanatını kırmaya başlayınca gazetelerde okuduğumuz reaksiyonların yapılması gayet tabii idi. İşte Cumhuriyet idaresi buranın ahalisine de emniyet, refah, saadet, esenlik ve hayat vermiştir.” Ibid., 20.



First World War and in the early republican era against the Kurds on the one hand and the differences on the other. The main actors, from the Kurds in Dersim, the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya, and press observers, linked Armenians to Dersimis.<sup>112</sup> The Kurds of Dersim feared sharing the faith of Armenians.<sup>113</sup> Şükrü Kaya feared their fears. Journalists talked about the rumors according to which the leader of the Dersim Revolt was a former member of the Armenian Revolutionary Organization.

Moreover, many references to state-sponsored mass violence, whether it is in the form of deportations, mass murder, control of the population growth, limitation of economic resources against a targeted population, and in a well-defined region, all linked the past and present in implicit and explicit ways. The case of Zihni Orhon, analyzed in the previous chapter, aimed to show how the genocide of the past influences the political discourse of the present. This chapter has shown that it is impossible not to talk about what happened in Dersim or its surroundings when one is in Dersim. The People's Houses members in the Elazığ and Tunceli provinces closely followed the militarized suppression of the Dersim rebellion. They commemorated the deaths of Turkish soldiers and celebrated their enemies' deaths with their speeches and poems. They produced and circulated geographic, ethnographic, linguistic, and topographic knowledge and used their rhetorical skills to intimidate the current and potential enemies. In a way, they fought the never-ending war of the Republic of Turkey.

---

<sup>112</sup> “Ne dereceye kadar doğru olduğu meçhul isede Seyyit Rıza'nın Meşrutiyetten evvel Ermeni komiteleri ile birlikte çalışmış Taşnaksutyun komitesine yazılarak onların gayesine hizmet etmiş olduğunu söyleyenler de vardır.” “Dersim meselesi nedir?,” *Kurun*, 22 June, 1937.

<sup>113</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*, 409; Adnan Çelik and Namık Kemal Dinç, *La malédiction: le génocide des Arméniens dans la mémoire des Kurdes de Diyarbakır*.



## Conclusion

---

After the start of the Second World War, the lectures organized at the People's Houses by the People's Preachers took a different turn. Although the organization's commitment to its cause remained unwavering, it shifted its focus to practical matters linked to a potential entry into the war or occupation by a foreign power. The emphasis on protection against dangers like chemical attacks against soldiers has existed since the First World War. Still, the lectures now focused more on the protection of civilians and the fear of military spies getting through Turkish soil through parachutes.

The archival trace of the preachers and the People's Houses begins to shrink considerably after 1943, in the middle of the Second World War. In November 1945, the President of the Republic İsmet İnönü announced the return to a multi-party regime. This explains the party's disinvestment in the People's Preachers and Houses. The People's Preachers disappeared from the party's correspondence from 1943 onwards. Nevertheless, the General Secretary announced the creation of the "propaganda committees" in March 1950. Two months before the parliamentary elections that led to the end of the single-party regime, the party made a last attempt to revive the power of the spoken word.

The Propaganda Committees, emerging from the party's local branches, had much in common with People's Preachers. Each committee was to consist of three to five people. Those selected should be "feisty, lucid, able to express themselves freely in public, [those] who have won the love and respect of the population, and who can be listened to."<sup>1</sup> The General Secretary planned to send "books, brochures, declarations, slogans, and paintings."<sup>2</sup> In turn, the local sections of the party sent similar lists to the General Secretary with the names and the identities of the selected propagandists.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Komite azalrının girgin, uyanık, halk arasında serbest konuşabilen ve bilhassa halkın sevgisini ve saygısını kazanmış, sözü dinlenir üyelere seçilmesine dikkat edilmelidir." Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 27 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/10-51-14.

<sup>2</sup> "Komitelere propaganda işlerinde nasıl hareket olunacağı hakkındaki talimatı ayrıca bildireceğiz. Mahalli teşkilâta propaganda da faydalanılmak üzere risale, kitap, beyanname, vecize, resim ilh. Malzeme gönderilecektir." Circular from the CHP General Secretary, 27 March 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/10-51-14.

Nevertheless, the Propaganda Committees mainly focused on party politics. Their main goal was to explain the party's program before the elections. The People's Preachers had a much broader role. This included propagating the Republic's values and the Revolution's principles. They were, therefore, agents of the newly founded state and not simply party activists.

The People's Houses officially remained operative until the Democratic Party won the parliamentary elections on 14 May 1950. A law enacted on 8 August 1951 transferred all property given to political parties back to their original owners or the state treasury, effectively ending the activities of the People's Houses.<sup>3</sup> After this law, the People's Houses could no longer serve as the main venues for CHP members.

In this sense, the end of the single-party rule was the end of a party-cum-state communicational and educational apparatus composed of the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses. The possibility of using state property, resources, and workforce was vital for the CHP to maintain these two organizations.

Given the similarity of their objectives and the human resources mobilized by the two organizations, the decision-making process destined for the People's Preachers and the People's Houses was fairly improvised and hasty. Nevertheless, both the People's Preachers and the People's Houses were crucial to the party's operation "in the provinces." They allowed the party General Secretary to oversee the political actions of the civil servants circulating Anatolia through their regular appointments, on the one hand, and co-opt the local power holders on the other.

The party's increased investment in communicational and pedagogic endeavors originated from the fears of "reaction" or "counterrevolution" (*irtica*). The Party leadership framed different types of expression of dissent, ranging from street demonstrations and rumors to

---

<sup>3</sup> "Genel katma ve özel bütçeli dairelerle belediyeler, köyler ve iktisadi devlet teşekkülleri ve müesseseleri tarafından veya umumi menfaatlere hadim derneklerden siyasi partilere bedelsiz terkedilmiş olan gayrimenkul mallar evvelki kayıt sahiplerine iade ve tapu kayıtları bunlar adına resen tashih olunarak ilgililere yazı ile ibraz edilir. İkinci maddenin dışında kalıp da halkevi olarak inşa edilmiş veya inşa edilmekte bulunan veya 1 Mart 1950 tarihine kadar kısmen veya tamamen halkevi olarak kullanılmış veya herhangi bir sosyal maksat veya âmm hizmeti için kullanma gayesiyle inşa edildiği halde bir siyasi parti namına tecil edilmiş bulunduğu il veya ilçe idare kurulları tarafından tesbit edilmiş olan gayrimenkullerin kayıtları Devlet adına resen tashih olunarak ilgililere yazı ile ihbar edilir." "Resmi daire ve müesseselerin siyasi partilere bedelsiz mal devredemeyeceklerine ve bu daire ve müesseselerle münfesi derneklere ait olup siyasi partilere terkedilmiş olan gayrimenkul mallarla bu partiler tarafından genel menfaatler için yaptırılmış olan binaların sahiplerine ve Hazineye iadesine dair kanun," ed. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (11 August 1951, Ankara: Resmî Gazete, 8 August 1951).

political organizations, as a risk of reaction. These concerns focused on the religious domain through the surveillance of Islamic preachers and coffeehouses around mosques. However, the challenges faced by the party in the broader regions of Anatolia, which led to the establishment of alternative gathering spaces (People's Houses) and alternative public speakers (People's Preachers Organization), cannot be solely attributed to Sunni Islam or any other religion practiced in Turkey.

The inspection reports produced by the party, the Interior Ministry, and the Direction of Religious Affairs identified religious gathering places and other venues, such as coffeehouses, as potential areas of concern regarding the impact of the spoken word. These sources revealed that before establishing two organizations, the CHP leadership had taken significant steps to monitor and suppress opposition to its authority by creating the People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses. These documents showed the importance of state secularization but also highlighted its limits. The party leadership feared a reaction from Islamic sources. However, expressions of nationalism diverging from Atatürk's doctrine, competing political movements, and widespread reactions against the state's increased presence through infrastructural projects, population census, and taxation were also sources of anxiety.

There was a continuity between the surveillance of the religious domain with the creation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs – that sent samples of sermons to Islamic preachers and reorganized schools training Islamic preachers in the 1920s – and the foundation of cultural centers that enabled the mobilization of partisan public speakers. The common logic behind the measures of Islamic preachers and the People's Preachers was the emphasis on the spoken word, hence orality. Nevertheless, the People's Preachers cannot be solely understood as alternatives to Islamic preachers. They were also alternatives to expensive and less accessible means of oral communication, such as radio and written communication, because of their limited reach due to low literacy rates. The People's Preachers Organization and the People's Houses were impressive financial investments but allowed to reduce costs through the vast mobilization of civil servants.

Concerning the revolutionary celebrations and other propaganda methods used since the French Revolution, “sacrality transfer” was an interesting and often repeated thesis.<sup>4</sup> The “sacrality transfer” thesis suggests that political education through public lectures and national ceremonies is a truism. Many terms used to discuss political communication and ceremonies, such as orator, preacher, rhetoric, eloquence, lectures, feast, and festival, have religious origins and are related to the sacred. Therefore, most kinds of political education, communication, or liturgy can be viewed as a form of sacrality transfer. However, this perspective does not help us grasp the broad range of issues that prompted the party leadership to mobilize a large number of individuals for political pedagogy at a specific time. At best, it merely reproduces the arguments of modernist historiography, which reduces every single reform or “revolution,” as well as the reactions to them, to a matter of secularization.

Along with the struggle against the rumors and dangerous suggestions circulated by religious dignitaries skilled in words, the People’s Preachers Organization was embedded in a broader, transnational trend since it was created by observing the developments in Soviet Russia and Fascist Italy in the 1920s. Turkish attempts to institutionalize propaganda predated the Nazi ones, which the party-aligned national press later celebrated as insightful policies. The People’s Preachers Organization was not the adaptation of something they observed abroad (read the “West”) and adapted to the Turkish context. It was a genuine attempt to train local spokespeople based on the experience of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the Turkish Hearths, and the Guiding Committees gathered during the armistice era. Still, the party leadership checked the new developments in some neighboring countries concerning popular education, youth organizations, and propaganda.

A more nuanced periodization can analyze the CHP’s single-party rule by identifying the turning point of the Menemen Revolt and the brief existence of the Liberal Party. These events led the party leadership to invest further in education and the persuasion of the masses to complement less inclusive and less peaceful means of government. The People’s Preachers

---

<sup>4</sup> Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire, 1789-1799*. For a critique of this framework, see: Nicolas Mariot, “Qu’est-ce qu’un « enthousiasme civique » ?.” For the uses of the concept in the early republican Turkish case, see Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*.

Organization and the People's Houses were ambitious projects to target and educate adults, thus complementing the indoctrination of future generations of youth at school.

People's Preachers held public speeches on topics ranging from national and literary history to political concepts, women's rights, public health, photography, painting, theater, and military training. The leading policymakers of the early republican educational reforms also played an important role in shaping popular pedagogy. These reforms were presented from the point of view of the founding elite in Turkey, based on studies of youth organizations, adult citizen training, and propaganda measures mainly in Russia, Germany, Italy, and other countries. However, they also traced existing traditions of oratory and rhetoric.

The case study of the People's Preachers and the public lectures held at the People's Houses show the inextricable relationship between pedagogy and rhetoric. People's Preachers as pedagogues of the republic were often teachers in the literal sense of the word. But they were also the traditional storytellers, learned, and erudite people who were to listen to because they were "skilled in words" or "eloquence" (*lógios*).

The oratory skills of the People's Preachers were linked to their social standing. Their pedagogic skills stemmed from education. Some professions, especially those requiring higher education, were required over others. Still, the party's provincial sections co-opted people from lower educational levels, such as landholders, or less desirable types of education, such as Islamic preachers and muftis, to keep up with the necessary numbers from each province. The inclusion of these people resulted from the difficulties faced in encouraging people to spare their free time to work for the party. Throughout the single-party era, many reports pointed to the problems with the reinvigoration of the provincial sections. Members of the local notable families (often landowners) took great responsibility in managing the party's provincial sections and took the stage in the party's name. Religious dignitaries such as Islamic preachers and muftis only appeared on the lists. Their speeches were not in the reports sent back to the party, local press, or the People's House publications.

The largest occupational group within the People's Preachers were teachers and low-ranking civil servants working under the authority of provincial, district governors, and General Inspectors in cases of state of exception. These low-ranking civil servants became "provincial intellectuals" (*taşra münevverleri*) throughout the efforts of the early republican leadership. They embodied the ideal of "enlightenment" (*münevverlik*) put forward by the CHP

General Secretary and the party-aligned opinion writers/deputies/littérateurs by becoming more publicly visible, publishing in the local press, writing novels and short stories for party-led literary competitions, and preaching the republic in the provinces.

For a provincial intellectual, taking the stage in the party's name to spread the regime's values and enlighten common people were crucial for advancing a political career within the single-party regime. Their applications for entering the National Assembly, which retrospectively traced their experience as preachers, show that many former preachers mentioned their lectures and oratory work to have a more important position within the party. Some mentioned those political activities they deemed particularly pertinent, such as membership in the CUP in the last Ottoman years, fighting in the Great War, and, in rare cases, committing what can be considered war crimes to – they claimed – ‘save the motherland.’ These applications showed that the continuity between the CUP and CHP was not only a matter of the social, political, and intellectual networks of those in the Party leadership but also among the ‘underdogs’ working in the provinces without playing a considerable role in the norm-making and decision-making processes.

The benefits of preaching on behalf of the party depended on each individual's starting point, hence the source of social distinction that led the party's provincial administrative boards to select them. Gender, education level, property ownership, and other local ties often resulting from property ownership were the most discernible sources of social distinction for the People's Preachers.

There was a palpable continuity between the co-optation of provincial power holders by the late Ottoman Empire and early republican Turkey in most provinces. However, there was a discontinuity in some. Kurdish provinces marked by increased conflict with the republican state appointed fewer potential local notables.<sup>5</sup> Following Michael Meeker's logic, local notables obtained local administrative posts as political rewards. They also obtained facilitated access to the property usurpation in the aftermath of the destruction of various communities in Anatolia.

---

<sup>5</sup> Landowners, “farmers,” merchants,” and those who were identified as “*eşraf*” by their patronymic surname or locality were counted as potential local notables. See Chapter 7.



The rewards were not automatic. Former alliances, such as proximity with Enver Pasha, might clog the careers of some proud national heroes, such as Hüseyin Talınlı and Fahrettin Erdoğan in Kars. Missed opportunities because of family issues might lock someone who has already had the chance to sit in the national assembly within the walls of the People's Houses (Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş).

Women's increased public visibility and newly obtained political rights impacted the composition of the People's Preachers as the creation of the People's Preachers Organization advanced the political careers of some women. Despite their relatively small percentage within the People's Preachers Organization, female preachers seemed to have higher social mobility that can be more easily linked to their activism for the party in the provinces.

Evaluating the history of the People's Preachers and the lectures held in the People's Houses from a post-genocide and post-war perspective has offered new insights into the historiography of early republican Turkey. It was not surprising to find traces of the genocide and protracted war in the early years of the Republic, nor was it unexpected for these traces to influence the political discourse explaining the reforms of the newly established regime. However, the traces of genocide and ongoing state violence during the Republic's founding years and the two decades of single-party rule were often viewed separately from the state's softer approaches. For instance, studies on Turkish Kurdistan emphasized state violence, while research on regions where the CHP's single-party rule was more accepted focused on cultural nation-building. This dissertation aims to bridge these two aspects of nation-state building.

Examining how the People's Preachers conveyed the republic to the audience reveals that the assumptions of silence about genocide in the early years of the republic, or the belief that genocide was not an issue at all, were mistaken. State-sponsored mass violence influenced everything from the lecture halls and pulpits used by the People's Preachers to their personal life stories. The concept of independence, emphasized by Recep Peker and the Independence and Revolution lectures organized in the People's Houses, cannot be understood without addressing the fight against internal and external enemies. This theme was so pivotal that People's Preachers explained even reforms with little apparent connection to war using war metaphors.

The language of the People's Preachers reflected the destructive violence against some citizens during the early republican period. Kars-based Preacher Zihni Orhon, while discussing

an unrelated topic, spoke of revenge. He could not help threatening the Kurds the moment he mentioned the word “Kurd.” Zihni Orhon’s language bore traces of the destructive violence of the recent past. Orhon read the reforms and innovations of the early republic through the filter of public order and security. Since he was an important agent in state violence under the Ottoman Empire and in the new regime established by the Republic of Turkey, his life story intertwined with state violence can explain the violence and rawness of his discourse.

However, the rest of the People’s Preachers, those much younger than Zihni Orhon, those not high-ranking military cadres, continued the kind of political discourse that contaminated their tongues against the others of the Turkish Republic. The General Inspectorate prepared the members of the Elazığ People’s House for the Dersim massacre, which took place before their very eyes, through public lectures. The People’s House members and the People’s Preachers were protected against the exterminatory violence perpetrated against other civilians. They watched the massacre and commemorated the “martyrs” of the state. They lectured each other on what it meant to defy the state. They posed with captured “rebels” before the bust of Atatürk. Doing all this meant that the provincial intellectuals became part of state violence.

Maurus Reinkowski has historicized the transition from co-optation (*istimalet*) policies to repression (*tedip, tenkil, imha*).<sup>6</sup> On the one hand, this historicization can be interpreted through the prism of People’s Preachers as the disappearance of co-optation and its replacement by repression as the state abandoned strategies for persuasion and co-optation for a specific population after a certain threshold. The field of activity of the People’s Preachers in the early republican period is valuable in showing that appropriation, repression, and, when necessary, persecution and extermination, went hand in hand.

Because of their redundant and probably unattractive nature, the paper trail of the public speeches and lectures delivered during the single-party rule was often neglected despite their overwhelming presence in the party archives. This dissertation aimed to categorize and provide a thematic overview of these lectures. Nevertheless, certain choices had to be made in delimiting speeches and speech excerpts to be studied. Since the main focus of the dissertation was on the intersection between education-persuasion and coercion-physical violence in the

---

<sup>6</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, “The State’s Security and the Subjects’ Prosperity: Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century),” 210.

making of the early republican state, many interesting lectures found in the archives and party publications were left aside. This dissertation only focused on the lectures, celebration, and commemoration speeches on national history, political concepts in relation to national history, such as “independence” and “revolution,” and the sociopolitical categories, such as “enlightened” (*münevver*) and “people” (*halk*). These sources could be the subject of future research into the evolution of women’s rights, the relationship between representation of masculinity and nationalism, literary history, public health, or military education, to name but a few.



## Primary Sources

---

### Archives

---

#### Presidency of the Republic of Turkey – Directorate of State Archives

##### Republican Archives (BCA)

##### Political Parties

Republican People's Party  
(*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*) (490-1-0-0)

1-13-19	3-12-23	13-71-5
1-3-11	3-12-33	132-534-1
1-4-10	3-12-48	132-534-3
10-51-14	3-15-41	132-534-4
1007-886-1	300-1215-2	1415-681-1
1009-894-2	300-1215-3	1170-110-3
1009-895-2	306-1241-4	1170-111-2
1009-896-1	306-1242-3	1175-126-2
1011-901-1	307-1248-2	12-63-1
1013-909-1	312-1274-2	13-71-5
1135-35-2	324-1339-1	132-534-1
1150-37-1	340-1419-1	132-534-3
1163-105-3	340-1420-1	132-534-4

1166-93-1	382-167-2	1415-681-1
1166-93-2	4-19-21	1760-1143-1
1166-94-1	4-21-17	1900-894-2
1166-95-1	4-21-29	198-352-13
1167-100-1	645-136-1	2-7-21
1167-97-1	666-234-1	202-80-5
1167-98-2	725-484-1	221-488-17
1168-104-3	725-884-1	289-1164-2
1169-105-1	845-342-1	293-1180-2
1169-105-2	846-346-4	294-1186-2
1169-105-3	939-644-1	3-11-17
1169-107-2	942-653-1	3-11-19
1170-109-1	996-851-1	3-11-7
1170-109-2	1170-110-3	3-12-2
1170-109-3	1170-111-2	12-63-1
1175-126-2		

**Prime Ministry (*Başbakanlık*)**

General Directorate of Public Affairs

(Muamelat Genel Müdürlüğü) (30-10-0-0)

88-580-6

102-668-9

102-668-7

102-668-13

102-668-10

8-48-9

83-547-20

102-668-6

109-726-16

102-667-10

154-614-16

78-59-2

221-488-17

198-352-13

111-743-18

11-64-10

**Direction of Religious Affairs**

(Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) (51-0-0)

3-17-3

3-15-24

3-15-19

3-18-3

2-7-4

**Department of Resolutions**

(Kararlar Daire Başkanlığı) (30-18-1-1)

13-23-10

13-18-3

14-35-1

15-45-10

14-35-11

66-51-7

**Department of Inter-Ministerial Appointments**

(Bakanlar Arası Tayin Daire Başkanlığı) (31-1-1)

110-1-18

86-15-85

179-33-8

**Immigrants**

(*Muhacirin*) (272-0-0-12)

46-79-9

**Ottoman Archives (BOA)**

**Foreign Ministry**

*Hariciye Nezareti* (HR)

*Londra Sefareti* (SFR.3.)

503.16.

**Ministry of the Interior**

Dahiliye (DH)

Second Bureau (EUM.2.).

8.63.

**Women's Library and Information Center**

*Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı* KEKBMV

Private Archives of Hasene Ilgaz

(*Hasene Ilgaz Özel Arşivi*)

10002-003-182

**Archives of the Turkish Grand National Assembly**

(*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Arşivi*)

Hal Tercümeleri

HT\_1230\_1\_7



HT\_1230\_1\_8

HT\_1175\_1\_9

HT 779\_1\_4

HT\_1394\_1\_8

HT\_1221\_1\_7



## Printed Sources

- [Kansu], Nafi Atuf. *Pedagoji Tarihi*. Muallim Mektebi Kitapları. İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1929.
- . *Türkiye Maarif Tarihi Hakkında Bir Deneme*. Ankara: Muallim Ahmet Halit Kütüphanesi, 1930.
- Aslan, Cengiz, and Engin Deniz Tanır, eds. *İctimâ'iyât Nokta-i Nazarından Terbiye, İsmayıl Hakkı*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2020.
- Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal. *Nutuk*. Ankara: Kaynak, 2015 [1927].
- Aydemir, Şevket Süreyya. *İnkılâp ve Kadro: İnkılâbın İdeolojisi*. Kadro Serisinden:1. Ankara: İstanbul Milliyet Matbaası, 1932.
- Falih Rıfki, [Atay]. *Faşist Roma, Kemalist Tiran ve Kaybolmuş Makidonya*. Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1931.
- . *Yeni Rusya*. Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1931.
- Gökalp, Ziya. *Türkçülüğün Esasları*. Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayınevi, [1921] 2019.
- . *Yeni Hayat*. İstanbul: Evkâf-ı İslâmiye Matba'ası, 1918.
- “Jön Türk İhtilâli ve Kanun-i Esasî hatıra kartpostalı. Courtesy of İsa Akbaş.” Hürriyet- Adalet- Müsavat-Uhuvvet', üzerinde Abdülhamid'in portresi olan Yaşasın Kanun-i Esasi!' ve geleneksel Padişahım çok yaşa.' sloganlarını birleştirmektedir. İstanbul: SALT RESEARCH, 1908. Postal Card.
- Kansu, Metin Atuf, and Işık Kansu, eds. *Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949) Yaşamı ve Yazıları*. Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Yayınları, 2011.
- Mazzini, Giuseppe. *The Duties of Man*. London: Chapman & Hill, 1862.
- Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü. *Genel Nüfus Sayımı 20 İlkteşrin 1935: Recensement général de la population au 20 octobre 1935*. Ankara: Mehmet İhsan Basımevi, 1937.
- Türk Tayyâre Cemiyeti Nizamnâme-i Esâsisi*. Ankara: Ankara Matbaası, [1341], 1925.
- Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Gizli Celse Zabıtları (20 Nisan 1920 - 21 Şubat 1921). Ankara: TBMM Basımevi, 2023.
- Yıldırım, Sema, and Behçet Kemal Zeynel. *TBMM albümü : 1920-2010*. TBMM Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğü Yayınları. 2 ed. 4 vols. Vol. 2, Ankara: TBMM Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğü Bakanlıklar, 2010.

## Legal Rule of Regulation

- “Memurin Kanunu.” *Resmi Ceride*, no. 336 (31 March 1926).
- “Belediye Kanunu.” *Resmî Gazete*, no. 1471 (14 April 1930).

“Resmi daire ve müesseselerin siyasi partilere bedelsiz mal devredemeyeceklerine ve bu daire ve müesseselerle münfesi derneklere ait olup siyasi partilere terkedilmiş olan gayrimenkul mallarla bu partiler tarafından genel menfaatler için yaptırılmış olan binaların sahiplerine ve Hazineye iadesine dair kanun.” *Resmî Gazete*, no. 7882 (8 August 1951).

## Press

*Publications without an author are listed chronologically, while those with an author are listed alphabetically.*

“Osmanlıların sınıf-ı münevveri Piyer Loti hakkında ne düşünüyor?”. *Şehbal*, 1913.

“İmha ve Tenkil Vaziyeti Leyhimize İnkişaf Ediyor.” *Vakit*, 10 July 1930.

“Süvarilerimiz Şakileri Kılıçtan Geçirdiler!..”. *Milliyet*, 10 July 1930.

“Şakiler yer yer imha ediliyor: Eşkıyanın kısmı küllisi ihata edilmiş bir vaziyettedir.” *Cumhuriyet*, 10 July 1930.

“Şark Hududunda Tenkil: Şakilerin ihatası bitmiş gibidir, bir iki güne kadar kat’î netice bekleniyor.” *Akşam* (Istanbul), 10 July 1930.

“Tenkile Devam Ediyoruz: Ağrı Dağı Temizlenmekte Şakiler Dehalet Arzusu Göstermektedirler.” *Vakit*, 10 July, 1930.

“İrtica Hareketi Bir Sene Evvel Başlamıştır.” *Vakit*, 30 December 1930.

“Halk Fırkası Her Tarafta Gençlik Teşkilâtı Yapacak.” *Vakit*, 19 March 1931.

“Konferans Tehir Edildi.” *Son Posta*, 11 December 1932.

“C.H.F. Halk Hatipleri Talimatı: Semt, köy ve mahalle ocaklarımızın da bir iki hatibi olmak lazımdır. Fırka hatipleri için dersler açılacaktır.” *Vakit*, 11 January 1933.

“Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Yetiştirecek: Halk Hatipleri için Bir Talimatname Yapıldı Faaliyete Başlanıyor.” *Son Posta*, 11 January 1933.

“Berlin Mektubu: Almanya’da yeni Propaganda Vekilliği.” *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, 19 June 1933.

“Yeni Alman İdaresi ve Yeni Propagandalar.” *Vakit*, 3 September, 1933.

“Sıhhi ve İçtimai Propaganda.” *Hakimiyeti Milliye*, 29 November 1933.

“İnkılap Dersi.” *Akbaba*, 29 March 1934.

“Bitlis Halkevinde Faaliyet.” *Son Posta*, 30 June 1934.

“Kadınlığın Kutlu Sesi.” *Cumhuriyet* (Istanbul), 8 December 1934.

“Faşizm ve Pedagoji.” *Yeni Adam*, 1936.

“İstiklal ve İnkılap.” *Ulus*, 19 February 1936.

“1935 Yılı Çalışmaları.” *Altan: Elâziz Halkevi*, 23 February, 1936.

- “Medeni Yaşayışta Medeni Gidiş.” *Altan: Elazığ Halkevi Dergisi*, 22 May, 1936.
- “Ağrı Halkevi başkanlığından.” *Cumhuriyet*, 22 July, 1936.
- “Ankaralı gençler yarın İzmir’den ayrılıyorlar...”. *Anadolu* (İzmir), 13 September 1936.
- “Dersimin İç Yüzü: Sarp Dağlar Arasında Dersimli Nasıl Yaşar? .” *Tan*, 17 June 1937.
- “Edebiyat Gecesi.” *Altan*, 23 April, 1937, 16.
- “Hâmid Gecesi Raporu.” *Altan*, 19 May, 1937, 12-13.
- “Tunceli Asileri Can Çekişiyor: Asiler Bir Daha Baş Kaldıramayacak Bir Derecede Tenkil Edilmektedir “. *Ulusal Birlik* (İzmir), 18 June 1937.
- “Dersim Meselesi Nedir?”. *Kurun*, 22 June 1937, 4.
- “Kapanan ve Açılan Tarih Sayfaları.” *Altan*, 22 June, 1937, 6-7.
- “Mayıs Syında Nasıl çalıştık?”. *Altan*, 22 June, 1937.
- “Cumhuriyet Bayramı Programı Hazırlandı: Balıkesir üç gün, üç gece en büyük bayramı neşe ve sevinç içinde kutlayacak.” *Türk Dili*, 27 October 1937.
- “Halkevimizin Konferans Günleri.” *Altan*, 1938.
- “Dersim Tedip Hareketi Son Safhada.” *Ulus*, 30 August 1938.
- “Yurtta Bayram Heyecanla Kutlandı: Cumhuriyet ve yaratıcısı yurdun her yerinde candan alkışlandı.” *Ulus*, 1 November, 1938.
- “Adana Belediye Seçimi Bitti.” *Son Posta* (İstanbul), 8 June 1939.
- “Tuncelinde Son Kalan Asi Aşiretler Tenkil Ediliyor.” *Tan*, 8 July, 1939.
- “Kayıp Aranıyor.” *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1939, 3.
- [Ağaoğlu], Ahmet. “Hareket-i Fikriye: [Münevverlerin Vazifesi].” *İctihad*, 1 Teşrinisâni, 1923, 358-59.
- Ağar, Ömer Kemal. “Elâziz Dahiliye Vekilimizi Bağrına Bastı.” *Altan*, 23 April, 1937, 9-10.
- . “Kanatlanan Türk Kızı.” *Altan*, 22 June, 1937, 1-2.
- . “Şereflenen Elaziz.” *Altan*, 22 June, 1937, 1.
- . “Tuncelinde Güneş Doğuyor.” *Altan*, 22 June, 1937, 1-2.
- [Aka], Aka Gündüz. “Sayı ile Kendimize Gelelim.” *Cumhuriyet*, 7 February 1931, 3.
- Akçuraoğlu, Yusuf. “Asrî Türk Devleti ve Münevverlere Düşen Vazife.” *Türk Yurdu* 17-3, no. 174-13 (October 1925 [Teşrinievvel 1341]).
- [Ataş], Musa “Milli Heyecan.” *Hakkın Sesi* (Bursa), 3 September 1934.
- [Aydemir], Şevket Süreyya. “Yarı Münevverler Kulübü.” *Kadro*, 1932, 40.
- [Aykaç], Fazıl Ahmet. “Gözümle Gördüm.” *Milliyet*, 26 March 1933.
- Ali, Mehmed. “La Terreur.” *La république enchaînée*, 15 February 1931.
- Asaf, Burhan. “Bizdeki Azınlıklar.” *Kadro*, March, 1933, 52.

- Baban, Cihad. "Doğuda Cezrî Bir Kültür Seferberliği Lazımdır." *Doğu* (Erzurum), 30 November 1937, 1,5. [Baltacıoğlu], İsmail Hakkı. *Terbiye-i Avam*. Türk Ocağı konferansları. Dersaadet [İstanbul]: İkdam Matbaası, 1914.
- Baltacıoğlu, İsmail Hakkı. "Balıkesir Halkevinde." *Yeni Adam*, 14 February, 1935.
- . "Hatip Nasıl Olursunuz?" *Yeni Adam*, 19 December, 1935.
- . "Trajedi Aktörü mü Hatip mi?" *Yeni Adam*, 17 Kanunsâni, 1935.
- . "Halk Üniversitesi Toplu Tedris Üzerine Ders." *Yeni Adam*, 14 February, 1935.
- . "Münevverden Gelen Mukavemet." *Yeni Adam*, 29 February, 1940.
- Baydar, N. . "Halkevinin Yeni Halk Hatibi." *Ulus*, 2 January 1938.
- Bekman, Münir Müeyyet. "Türk Edebiyatının Türk İnkılabı Üzerinde Hiçbir Tesir ve Etkisi Yoktur." *Açık Söz* (Istanbul), 12 June 1936.
- C.A. "Modern Türk Devleti ve Münevverlere Düşen Ödevler." *Altan*, 22 November, 1936.
- Erdem, Necip. "Harput Tarihine bir bakış." *Altan*, 1938, 8-11.
- [Fergan], Eşref Edib. "Fransızlık Türk Münevverlerinin Ta İliklerine Kadar İşlemiştir." *Sebilü'r-Reşad*, March 4 1336, 1920.
- . "Millet Birleşiyor da Münevverler Neden İttihad Edemiyor?" *Sebilü'r-Reşad*, 22 May, 1919 [1335], 240.
- Fikret, Halil. "Münevverler ve İctimai İnkılabımız." *Hayat*, August 16, 1928, 226-27.
- Gültekin, Cemal. "Halkevlerinin 6ıncı yıldönümünde Halkevinde kitapsaray ve yayın şubesi başkanı, Kültür Direktörü Cemal Gültekin tarafından verilen söylev." *Ortayayla*, 1 February, 1938, 1-4.
- Gür, Tevfik "Bana Ne Deme, ve Darılma." *Altan*, 1937, 2-6.
- Hanımteyze. "Münevverler tahsilsiz kızlarla evlenirler mi?" *Son Posta*, 8 May 1931, 5.
- [Hunç], Hayriye Melek. "İslâm Kadını." *Türk Yurdu*, 15 Ağustos, 1918 [1334].
- [Kansu], Nafi Atuf. *Fenn-i Terbiye ve Tarih*. İstanbul: İktisad Matbaası, 1928.
- . "Rusya Maarifi Hakkında Rapor." *Maarif Vekaleti Mecmuası*, 1 September, 1926.
- [Kuzucuoğlu],Tahsin. "Güççülük." *Türk Yurdu*, 15-28 May, 1914 [1330], 308-9.
- Münir, Hikmet. "Kültür Yolunda: Bir Konferansçı Ordusu Yaratalım!" *Kurun*, 11 February 1936.
- [Ozanoğlu], Yahya Saim. "Münevverlik Hakkındaki Ankete Cevap: Asıl ve Topal Zekaya Dair." *Milli Mecmua*, 13 December [13 Kanunuevvel], 1923 [1339], 49-51.
- Tekin, Selâmi. "Atatürk Kızı Sabiha Gökçen." *Altan*, 22 June, 1937, 4-5.
- Tör, Vedat Nedim. "İşte Bir Roman: Yaban." *Kadro*, April, 1933.
- [Tunç], Mustafa Şekip. "Münevver Mefhumu?" *Milli Mecmua*, 1 November [1 Teşrinisâni], 1923 [1339] 4-6.

- . “Tam Manası ile Münevver.” *Milli Mecmua*, 1 December [1 Kanunuevvel], 1923 [1339], 35-37.
- Uluğ, Naşit Hakkı. “Dersim’in İç Yüzü.” *Haber: Akşam Postası*, 18 June, 1937.
- Ünal, Kemal. “Halkevleri’nin Çalışmasında Bâzı Yeni Esaslar.” *Ülkü*, 1940.
- [Yüzüncü], Reşat Feyzi. “Münevver Kime Denir?” *Uyanış: Servet-i Fünûn*, 14 July, 1931.
- Zobu, Vasfi Rıza. “Kaf dağının arkası....” *Son Posta*, 23 July, 1938.

### Published Conferences

*Publications without an author are listed chronologically, while those with an author are listed alphabetically.*

- Şaşra Vatandaşlarımıza Hediye-yi Hürriyet*. [Dersaadet] İstanbul: Maşba ‘a-yı Kütüphaney-i Cihan, [1324] 1908.
- Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, October, 1940.
- Konuşmalar: Broşür 2*. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, July, 1941.
- Konuşmalar: Broşür 3*. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, October, 1942.
- Baltacıođlu, İsmail Hakkı. “Biz Türkler Nereden Geliyoruz Nereye Gidiyoruz Biz Neyiz.” In *Konuşmalar: Broşür 1*, 25-29. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevi Neşriyatı, 1940.
- Gültekin, Cemal. “Kültür Direktörü C. Gültekinin Halkevinin Öğretmenler şerefine verdiği çay şölenindeki gezi konuşması: Malatya, Elazığ, Tunceli, Diyarbakır Gezisi.” *Ortayayla*, 1 February, 1938, 17-22.
- Kansu, Nafi. “Halkevleri Hakkında Bir Konuşma.” In *Konuşmalar: Broşür III*. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, 1942.
- Kansu, Nafi Atuf. “Halk Terbiyesine Dair.” In *Konuşmalar: Broşür 2*, 9-15. Ankara: C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, 1940.
- [Koşay], Hamit Zübeyr. *Halk Terbiyesi: Ankara’da Ocak binasında verilen konferanstır*. Ankara: Köy Hocası Matbaası, 1931.
- Lütfi Fikri Bey. *Selanik’te Bir Konferans: Bizde Fark-i Siyasiye; Hal-i Hazır*. İstanbul: Matbaa-yi Ahmet İhsan, [1326] 1910.
- Oruz, İffet Halim. *Arkadaşlar!* İstanbul: Selâmet Basımevi, 1936.
- [Peker], Recep. “Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Programın İzahı için Recep Bey’in Konferansı.” 1931.
- Peker, Recep. *İnkılab Dersleri Notları*. Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1935.
- Peters, Wilhelm *Sosyal Bakımdan Ruhî İnkışaf*. Konferanslar. Edited by Ankara Halkevi. Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayını, 1938.
- Sevin, Nurettin. *Pedagojik Temsiller*. Konferanslar. Edited by Ankara Halkevi. Ankara: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Yayını, 30 May, 1938.

Tunçođlu, Cevat Kazım. *İstiklal ve İnkılap*. Samsun: Güneş Basımevi, 1937.

### Party Publications

*C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*. İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931.

*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatıpları Teşkilatı Talimatı*. İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931.

*C.H.F. Halkevleri Talimatnamesi*. Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1932.

*1935 CHP Program Taslađı*. T.B.M.M. Kütüphanesi, Ankara, 1935.

*The Republican Party of the People Program: Accepted by the Forth Grand Congress of the Party*.

T.B.M.M. Kütüphanesi, Ankara, 1935.

*Gaziantep Halkevi Broşürü*. Halk Fırkası Matbaası, 1935.

*Halkevleri 1932-1935: 103 Halkevi Geçen Yıllarda Nasıl Çalıştı*. 1935.

*Cumhuriyet'in İlanı Yıl Dönümünde İstifade Edilecek Halk Kürsüleri Talimatı*. Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1937.

*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 1942.

Çağlar, Behçet Kemal. *Les maisons du peuple du P.R.P., parti républicain du peuple*. Edited by Şükrü Kaya and Nafi Atuf Kansu. Ankara: Ulus, 1936.

### Publications of the People's Preachers

Akyol, Mürşide Ülker. *Bayrađımın Kitabı*. Adana: Güney Basımevi, 1952.

Bekman, Münir Müeyyet, and Feridun Fazıl Tülbentçi. *İkinci Cihan Harbi kronolojisi. 1940 sonuna kadar*. Ankara: Başvekâlet Basın ve Yayın Umum Müdürlüğü, 1943.

Özay, Mümtaz. *Zehirli Gaz ve Hava Hücumlarından Korunma Çareleri*. İstanbul: Halk Basımevi, 1935.

Vural, Hüsnü. *Muharebe Gazları ve Korunma Çareleri*. İstanbul: Cezaevi Matbaası, 1936.

### Novels

Kadri, Yakup. *Yaban*. İstanbul: Muallim Ahmet Halit Kütüphanesi, 1932.

Karaosmanođlu, Yakup Kadri. *Yaban*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2023.

———. *Yaban*. Edited by Atilla Özkırımlı. İstanbul: İletişim, 1990.

Sertel, Sabiha. *Roman Gibi*. İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1987.





## Bibliography

---

- Abdullah, Fevziye. “Muallim Naci İle Rezaizade Ekrem Arasındaki Münakaşalar ve Bu Münakaşaların Sebep Olduğu Edebi Hadiseler.” *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 10 (December 2010): 159-200.
- Abir, Nihan. “Çalıküşu’nun Hikayesi.” Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, 2012.
- Adak, Hülya. ““Ötekileştiremediğimiz kendimizin keşfi” 20. Yüzyıl Otobiyografik Anlatıları ve Ermeni tehciri.” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* Spring, no. 5 (2007).
- . “Suffragettes of the Empire, Daughters of the Republic: Women Auto/biographers Narrate National History (1918-1935).” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 36 (2007): 27-51.
- Adak, Sevgi. “Anti-veiling Campaigns and Local Elites in Turkey of the 1930s: A View from the Periphery.” In *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in the Muslim World. Gender Modernism and the Politics of Dress*, edited by Stephanie Cronin. London: Routledge, 2014.
- Ahıska, Meltem. *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2010.
- Ahmad, Feroz. “Ottoman Perceptions of the Capitulations 1800-1914.” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2000): 1-20.
- Akçam, Taner. *A Shameful Act: Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.
- . “The Spirit of the Law: Following the Traces of Genocide in the Law of Abandoned Property.” *International Criminal Law Review* 14, no. 2 (2014): 377-95.
- Akçam, Taner. *The Young Turks’ Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*. Human Rights and Crimes Against Humanity. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Akçam, Taner, and Vahak N. Dadrian. *Judgment at Istanbul: The Armenian Genocide Trials*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2011.
- Akın, Yiğit. “Reconsidering State, Party, and Society in Early Republican Turkey: Politics of Petitioning.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 3 (2007): 435-57.
- Akın, Yiğit. *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans’ Great War and the Devastation of an Empire*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018.
- Aksakal, Mustafa. *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Akşit, Elif Ekin. *Kızların Sessizliği: Kız Enstitülerinin Uzun Tarihi İstanbul: İletişim*, 2005.
- Altınay, Ayşe Gül. *The Myth of the Military-Nation: Military, Gender, and Education in Turkey*. New York: Palgrave, 2004.

- Altınay, Ayşe Gül, Arlene Avakian, and Fethiye Çetin. “‘The Space Between Us’ Feminist Conversations on Genocide, Survival and Gender.’” In *Critical Approaches to Genocide: History, Politics, and Aesthetics of 1915*, edited by Hülya Adak, Fatma Müge Göçek and Ronald Grigor Suny. London, New York: Routledge, 2024.
- Altınay, Ayşe Gül, and Fethiye Çetin. *Torunlar*, Beyoğlu, İstanbul: Metis, 2009.
- Ambroise, Bruno. “Une conception non scolastique de l’efficacité linguistique. Bourdieu lecteur d’Austin.” In *Pierre Bourdieu*, 65-88. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009.
- Amossé, Thomas. “La nomenclature socio-professionnelle : une histoire revisitée.” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 68e année, no. 4 (2013): 1039-75.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, 2006.
- Angenot, Marc. “Le discours social: problématique d’ensemble.” *Cahiers de recherche sociologique* 2, no. 1 (1984): 19-44.
- Arai, Masami. *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*. Social, Economic, and Political Studies of the Middle East. Leiden, New York: E.J. Brill, 1992.
- Arıkan, Mustafa, and Ahmet Deniz. “Türk Ocaklarının Kapatılışı, Borçları ve Emlâkinin Tasfiyesi.” *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 15 (December 2004): 401-32.
- Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Translated by George Alexander Kennedy. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Arslan, Nebahat, and Süleyman Tekir. “Cenub-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti’nden, TBMM’ye Fahrettin Erdoğan,” *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 6 (2010): 1-25.
- Aslan, Betül. “Milli Mücadele Döneminde Halkı Aydınlatma ve Propaganda Faaliyetleri Yürüten Önemli Bir Komisyon: “İrşad Encümeni.” *Atatürk Dergisi* 4, no. 2 (2004).
- Ayhan, Serap. “İsmayil Hakkı Baltacıoğlu ve Halk Eğitimi ile İlgili Görüşleri.” *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi* 23, no. 1 (1990): 285-306.
- Aymes, Marc. “La tâche de l’interprète, 1934-2023: Histoire linguistique pour petits et grands.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. Upcoming (2024).
- . “Many a Standard at a Time: The Ottomans’ Leverage with Imperial Studies,” *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 8, no. 1 (01 Jun. 2013 2013): 26-43.
- . “The Voice-Over of Administration: Reading Ottoman Archives at the Risk of Ill-literacy,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 6 (2007).

- Aymes, Marc, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard. *L'art de l'État en Turquie: arrangements de l'action publique de la fin de l'Empire ottoman à nos jours*. Meydan. Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2013.
- . *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Aytürk, İlker. “Bir Defa Daha Post-post-Kemalizm: Eleştiriler, Cevaplar, Düşünceler.” *Birikim*, Haziran-Temmuz, 2020, 101-20.
- . “Post-post Kemalizm: Yeni Bir Paradigmayı Beklerken.” *Birikim* 319 (2015): 34-48.
- . “Turkish Linguists against the West: The Origins of Linguistic Nationalism in Atatürk’s Turkey.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004): 1-25.
- Balcı, Emine. “Hukukun Öncü Kadınları: Türkiye’de Kadınların Hukuk Mesleğine Girişi Üzerine Bir İnceleme.” *Fe Dergi* 11, no. 1 (May 2019): 34-47.
- Baldauf, Ingeborg. “Jadidism in Central Asia within Reformism and Modernism in the Muslim World.” *Die Welt des Islams* 41, no. 1 (2001): 72-88.
- Balistreri, Alexander E. “A Provisional Republic in the Southwest Caucasus: Discourses of Self-Determination on the Ottoman-Caucasian Frontier, 1918-19.” In *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century : Societies, Identities and Politics*, edited by Ali Sipahi, Dzovinar Derderian and Yasar Tolga Cora. I.B. Tauris & Company, 2016.
- Bantigny, Ludivine, Quentin Deluermoz, Boris Gobille, Laurent Jeanpierre, and Eugénia Palieraki. “Subjectivités.” In *Une histoire globale des révolutions, 1775-1848*. Paris: La Découverte, 2023.
- Bargel, Lucie. “Socialisation politique.” In *Dictionnaire. Genre et science politique*, 468-80. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2013.
- . “Socialisation politique.” In *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux*, edited by Olivier Fillieule, 553-58. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2020.
- Barlas, U. *Gaziantep Basın Tarihi 100. yıl*. Genel Dağıtım, 1972.
- Basaranlar, Burak. “Pragmatic Coexistence: Local Responses to the State Intrusion in Dersim during the Early Republican Period of Turkey (1938–1950).” *Middle Eastern Studies* 58, no. 6 (2022): 931-49.
- Bayart, Jean-François. *L'énergie de l'État : pour une sociologie historique et comparée du politique*. Paris: La Découverte, 2022.
- Bayraktar, Seyhan. “The Grammar of Denial: State, Society, and Turkish-Armenian Relations.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 4 (2015): 801-06.

- . “Remembering the Armenian Genocide in Contemporary Turkey.” *Témoigner. Entre histoire et mémoire*, no. 120 (2015): 66-75.
- Bayraktar, Uğur Bahadır. “(Social) Darwinism for Families.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 16 (2013).
- Becan, Elif. “Une familière étrangeté: L’accueil des immigrants musulmans des Balkans en Turquie (1923-1964).” Ph.D., Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2021.
- Benda, Julien. *La trahison des clercs*. Classiques des sciences sociales. Chicoutimi: J.-M. Tremblay, 2006.
- Berkes, Niyazi. *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1964.
- Beşikçi, İsmail. *Tunceli Kanunu (1935) ve Dersim Jenosidi*. Istanbul: Yurt, 1992.
- Beşikçi, Mehmet. *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War: Between Voluntarism and Resistance*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Biess, Frank, and Robert G. Moeller, eds. *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*. New York, Oxford: Bergahn, 2010.
- Bilgin, Mehmet. *Doğu Karadenizde Bir Derebeyi Ailesi: Sarializâdeleler (Sarallar)*. Trabzon: Serander, 2006.
- Biner, Zerrin Ozlem. “Acts of Defacement, Memories of Loss: Ghostly Effects of the Armenian Crisis in Mardin, Southeastern Turkey.” *History and Memory* 22, no. 2 (2010): 68-94.
- Bloxham, Donald. “The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916: Cumulative Radicalization and the Development of a Destruction Policy.” *Past & Present*, no. 181 (2003): 141-91.
- Bora, Tanıl ed. *Taşraya Bakmak*. Istanbul: İletişim, 2005.
- Boumaza, Magali. “Ce que faire mémoire veut dire.” In *Faire mémoire: regards croisés sur les mobilisations mémorielles (France, Allemagne, Ukraine, Turquie, Europe)*, edited by Magali Boumaza. Paris: L’Harmattan, 2018.
- Bouquet, Olivier. *Les pachas du sultan: Essai sur les agents supérieurs de l’État ottoman (1839-1909)*. Paris, Louvain: Peeters, 2007.
- . “Onomasticon Ottomanicum : identification administrative et désignation sociale dans l’État ottoman du xix<sup>e</sup> siècle.” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 127, July (2010): 213-35.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. “Champ du pouvoir et division du travail de domination. Texte manuscrit inédit ayant servi de support de cours au Collège de France, 1985-1986.” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 190, no. 5 (2011): 126-39.
- . “L’illusion biographique.” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 62, no. 1 (1986): 69-72.

- . “Le capital social.” *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 31 (1980): 2-3.
- . “Le langage autorisé. Note sur les conditions sociales de l’efficacité du discours rituel.” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 1, 5, no. 6 (1975): 183.
- . “Le mort saisit le vif: les relations entre l’histoire réifiée et l’histoire incorporée.” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 32, no. 1 (1980): 3-14.
- . *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford University Press, 1990.
- . “Structures, Habitus, Practices.” In *The Logic of Practice*, 52-65: Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Bourdieu, Pierre, and Luc Boltanski. “La production de l’idéologie dominante.” *Actes de Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 2, 2, no. 3 (1976): 3-73.
- Bozarslan, Hamit. *L’histoire de la Turquie: de l’empire à nos jours*. Paris: Tallandier, 2013.
- . “Le madhisme en Turquie : L’« incident de Menemen » en 1930.” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, no. 91-94 (2000): 297-320.
- Bozarslan, Hamit, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian. “Chapitre 4. Les acteurs du génocide.” In *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens*, 227-51. Paris: Tallandier, 2022.
- , eds. *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens: 1915 à nos jours*. Paris: Tallandier, 2015.
- . “Introduction.” In *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens*, 11-43. Paris: Tallandier, 2022.
- Bozdoğan, Eyüp Nurettin. “Bir Biyografi Denemesi: Gazeteci ve Siyasetçi Kimliğiyle Ali İhsan Göğüş.” MA, İstanbul University, 2011.
- Bozdoğan, Sibel “From ‘Cubic Houses’ to Suburban Villas: Residential Architecture and the Elites in Turkey.” In *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins. Oxford: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Brockett, Gavin D. *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2011.
- . “Revisiting the Turkish Revolution, 1923-1938: Secular Reform and Religious “Reaction”.” *History Compass* 4, no. 6 (1 November 2006): 1060-72.
- Bromber, Katrin, Katharina Lange, Heike Liebau, and Anorthe Wetzel, eds. *The Long End of the First World War: Ruptures, Continuities and Memories*. Frankfurt, New York: Campus Verlag, 2018.
- Brown, Keith. *Loyal unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Bruinessen, Martin van. *Agha, Shaikh, and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan*. London ; Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Zed Books, 1992.

- . “Genocide in Kurdistan? The Suppression of the Dersim Rebellion in Turkey (1937-38) and the Chemical War Against the Iraqi Kurds.” In *Genocide : Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*, edited by George J. Andreopoulos. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.
- . “Genocide of the Kurds.” In *The Widening Circle of Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review*, edited by Israel W. Charny. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Burbank, Jane, and Frederick Cooper. *Empires in World History : Power and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Burrill, Kathleen R. F. “A Nineteenth-Century Master of Turkish Literature: Notes on Rezaizade Mahmut Ekrem (1847-1914) and His Literature Course.” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3, no. 4 (1979): 124-37.
- Büssow, Johann. *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem 1872-1908*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2011.
- Çelebi Gürkan, Ülkü. “Modernin İzini Sürmek: Yok Olan Bir Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlık Örneği Olarak Isparta Halkevi Binası.” *İdealkent* 13, no. 35 (2022): 97-137.
- Çelik, Adnan, and Namık Kemal Dinç. *La malédiction: le génocide des Arméniens dans la mémoire des Kurdes de Diyarbakır*. Translated by Ali Terzioğlu and Jocelyne Burkmann. Paris: L’Harmattan, 2021.
- Cerovic, Masha. “Une Anatolie russe: appropriation, sédentarisation, colonisation de la frontière russo-ottomane après 1877.” *Esperience de l’espace, espace de l’expérience dans les sociétés (post-)ottomanes*, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 13 February 2024.
- Çetin, Fethiye. *Le livre de ma grande-mère. Suivi de: Les fontaines de Havav*. Translated by Marguerite Demird. Paris: Paranthèses, 2006.
- Çetinkaya, Doğan. *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2021.
- Charle, Christophe. “5. La prosopographie ou biographie collective. Bilan et perspectives.” In *Homo Historicus*, 94-108. Paris: Armand Colin, 2013.
- . *Birth of the Intellectuals : 1880-1900*. Translated by David Fernbach and G. M. Goshgarian. Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity, 2015.
- . “Intellectuels, Bildungsbürgertum et professions au XIXème siècle.” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 106, no. 1 (1995): 85-95.
- . *La naissance des “intellectuels”, 1880-1900. Le sens commun*. Paris: Minuit, 1990.
- Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin, and Patrice Soler. *L’invention de l’orateur / Cicéron, Quintilien, Saint Augustin ; textes choisis, traduits du latin et présentés par Patrice Soler*. Paris: Gallimard, 2021.

- Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*. Translated by Michael Howard, Peter Paret and Bernard Brodie. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Clayer, Nathalie. "Religion et champ éditorial dans la Turquie républicaine." *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 33 (2021).
- . "The Time of Freedom, the Time of Struggle for Power: The Young Turk Revolution in the Albanian Provinces." In *The Young Turk Revolution and the Ottoman Empire. The aftermath of 1908*, edited by François Georgeon and Noémi Lévy-Aksu, 113-52. London: I.B. Tauris, 2017.
- . "Un laiklik imposé ou négocié? L'administration de l'enseignement de l'islam dans la Turquie du parti unique." In *L'art de l'État en Turquie*, edited by Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse and Élise Massicard, 103-25. Paris: Karthala, 2013.
- Comby, Jean-Baptiste, and Julie Pagis. "Introduction. Politiques de catégorisation du monde social." *Politiques de communication* 10, no. 1 (2018): 5-26.
- Conze, Werner, Jürgen Kocka, Reinhart Koselleck, and Mario Rainer Lepsius. *Bildungsbürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert*. Vol. 38: Klett-Cotta, 1985.
- Corbin, Alain. *Les conférences de Morterolles, hiver 1895-1896 : à l'écoute d'un monde disparu*. Paris: Flammarion, 2011.
- Çorlu, Axel B. "Anarchists and Anarchism in the Ottoman Empire, 1850-1917." Chap. Crime, Violence and Social Control In *History From Below- A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert*, 553-83. Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016.
- Dadrian, Vahakn N. "The Documentation of the World War I Armenian Massacres in the Proceedings of the Turkish Military Tribunal." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 4 (1991): 549-76.
- Dakhli, Leyla. *Une génération d'intellectuels arabes. Syrie et Liban (1908-1940)*. Paris: Karthala, 2009.
- Demir, Sertif, Suat Akgül, and Mesut Güvenbaş, eds. *Kuvayimilliyeye Komutani Tekelioğlu Sinan Bey'in Günlüğü*. Ankara: ATASE Daire Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2012.
- Demiriz, Sara-Marie. *Vom Osmanen zum Türken: Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier- und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*. Baden-Baden: Ergon Verlag, 2015.
- Denord, François. "Classe(s) dominante(s)." In *Dictionnaire international Bourdieu*, edited by Gisèle Sapiro, François Denord, Julien Duval, Mathieu Hauchecorne, Johan Heilbron, Franck Poupeau and Hélène Seiler, 963. Paris: CNRS éditions, 2020.
- Der Matossian, Bedross. *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014.



- Deringil, Selim. ““Your Religion is Worn and Outdated”.” *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, no. 12 (2019): 33-65.
- Dikici, Ali. “Early Republican Reforms from the Perspective of Elite vs. the People with Particular Reference to Alphabet and Language Reforms.” MA, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1996.
- Does, Antonia. “3. Securitization Theory.” In *The Construction of the Maras*. Genève: Graduate Institute Publications, 2013.
- Dorransoro, Gilles, and Benjamin Gourisse. “Une clé de lecture du politique en Turquie : les rapports État-Partis.” *Politix* 107, no. 3 (2014): 195-218.
- Dündar, Fuat. *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question (1878-1918)*. Routledge, 2010.
- . “When did the First World War End for Turkey?”. *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 141 (2017): 209-06.
- Dupont, Anne-Laure. “What is a Kātib ‘āmm? The Status of Men of Letters and the Conception of Language According to Jurjī Zaydān.” *Middle Eastern Literatures* 13, no. 2 (2010): 171-81.
- Duval, Nathalie. “Le self-help transposé en milieu français : l’École des Roches et ses élèves (1899-2009).” *Histoire, économie & société* 28e année, no. 4 (2009): 69-84.
- Efe, İsmail. “Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Sinop’ta Güvenlik ve Lojistik Faaliyetleri.” *Karadeniz Araştırmaları* XV, no. 60 (2018): 54-70.
- Ekmekcioglu, Lerna. *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016.
- El Shakry, Omnia. *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- . “Rethinking Arab Intellectual History: Epistemology, Historicism, Secularism.” *Modern Intellectual History* 18, no. 2 (2021): 547-72.
- Emrence, Cem. “Turkey in Economic Crisis (1927-1930): A Panoramic Vision.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 4 (2003): 67-80.
- Ergen, Sinan. “Türkiye’de Halkevleri ve Elazığ Örneği.” MA, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2007.
- Erhat, Azra. *Osmanlı Münevverinden Türk Aydınına*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2023 [2002].
- Erol, Sibel. “The Image of the Intellectual in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu’s Works.” *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 16, no. 1 (1992): 1-19.
- Ersanli, Büşra. “The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography.” In *Chapter Three The Ottoman Empire in the Historiography of the Kemalist Era: a Theory of Fatal Decline*, edited by Fikret Adanir and Suraiya Faroqhi, 115-54. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

- Ertugrul, Zeynep. “L’histoire littéraire en train de se faire. La littérature comme thématique dans les Fêtes de la langue (1934-1948).” MA, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2019.
- Ertugrul, Zeynep, and Emmanuel Szurek. “Le meurtre et la langue: Dire le génocide dans la Turquie des années 1930.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (Upcoming 2024).
- Ertürk Asar, Esin. “Poor Enlighteners: Pedagogy, Politics and Elementary School Teachers in the Early Republican Era.” Ph.D., Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2022.
- Farge, Arlette. *Dire et mal dire, l’opinion publique au XVIIIe siècle*. Seuil: Paris, 1982.
- Faroqhi, Suraiya. *Women in the Ottoman Empire: A Social and Political History*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2023.
- Fincan, Erkan. “Heyet-i Nasîha’dan İrşat Heyetlerine: Millî Mücadele’de Halkı İkna Çalışmaları.” MA, Milli Savunma Üniversitesi, 2020.
- Fogu, Claudio. *The Historic Imaginary : Politics of History in Fascist Italy*. Toronto Italian Studies. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2003.
- Fortna, Benjamin C. *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- . “The Ottoman Empire and After: From a State of “Nations” to “Nation-states”.” In *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey : Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, edited by Benjamin C. Fortna, Stefanos Katsikas, Dimitris Kamouzis and Paraskevas Konortas. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Gaxie, Daniel. “Economie des partis et rétributions du militantisme.” *Revue française de science politique* 71, no. 1 (1977): 123-54.
- Georgeon, François. *Aux origines du nationalisme turc: Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935)*. Paris: Editions ADFP, 1980.
- . “La formation des élites à la fin de l’empire ottoman: le cas de Galatasaray.” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* Année 1994, no. 72 (1994): 15-25.
- . *Le mois le plus long. Ramadan à Istanbul de l’Empire ottoman à la Turquie contemporaine*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2017.
- . “Les foyers turcs à l’époque kémaliste.” *Turcica* XVI (1982).
- . “Les Jeunes Turcs étaient-ils jeunes? Sur le phénomène des générations, de l’Empire ottoman à la République turque.” In *Enfance et jeunesse dans le monde musulman*, edited by François Georgeon and Klaus Kreiser, 147-75. Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2007.

- Gingeras, Ryan. *Fall of the Sultanate: The Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922. The Greater War*. Edited by Robert Gerwarth. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- . *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Ginio, Eyal. *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and their Aftermath*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- . *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Gökay, Bülent. “The Turkish communist party: the fate of the founders.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 2 (1993): 220-35.
- Göle, Nilüfer. *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996.
- Gözel Durmaz, Oya. “The Distribution of the Armenian Abandoned Properties in an Ottoman Locality: Kayseri (1915–18).” *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 5 (2015): 838-53.
- Griffin, Roger. *The Nature of Fascism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 1991.
- Gülen, Ahmet. “1930 İstanbul Belediye Seçimleri.” *Journal of Atatürk Research Center* XXXIX, no. 107 (2023): 177-210.
- Gürbilek, Nurdan. “Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel.” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 2/3 (2003): 599-628.
- Gurbuzel, Sümevra A. . “Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan: Preachers and the Rise of a Political Public Sphere in Early Modern Istanbul (1600-1675).” Ph.D., Harvard University, 2016.
- Gürpınar, Doğan. “The Manufacturing of Denial: The Making of the Turkish ‘Official Thesis’ on the Armenian Genocide between 1974 and 1990.” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 18, no. 3 (2016): 217-40.
- . “The Reinvention of Kemalism: Between Elitism, Anti-Elitism and Anti-Intellectualism.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 3 (2013): 454-76.
- . *Türkiye’de Aydın’ın Kısa Tarihi*. İstanbul: Nesil, 2013.
- Hacıibrahimoğlu Çakan, Işıl. *Konuşunuz Konuşturunuz: Tek Parti Döneminde Propagandanın Etkin Silahı: Söz*. İstanbul: Otopsi, 2004.
- Hafez, Melis. *Inventing Laziness: The Culture of Productivity in Late Ottoman Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Halldén, Philip. “What Is Arab Islamic Rhetoric? Rethinking the History of Muslim Oratory Art and Homiletics.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (2005): 19-38.

- Halo, Thea. "The Genocide of the Ottoman Greeks 1913-1923: Myths and Facts." In *Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks, 1913-1923*, edited by George Shirinian, 300-23. New York: Berghahn, 2017.
- Hamzah, Dyalah. "Introduction: The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood." In *The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood*, edited by Dyalah Hamzah, 1-20. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Hassenteufel, Patrick. "Chapitre 8 - Les acteurs intermédiaires des politiques publiques." In *Sociologie politique : l'action publique*, 213-42. Paris: Armand Colin, 2011.
- Hatip Dinçyürek, Sena. "Reading a Bureaucratic Career Backwards: How Did Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha Become the Inspector-General of Rumelia?". *Middle Eastern Studies* 53, no. 3 (5 May 2017): 386-405.
- Hikmet, Nazim. "The Legend of the National Militia." In *Modernism: The Creation of Nation-States*, translated by Ahmet Ersoy. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010.
- Hinton, Alexander Laban. "The Dark Side of Modernity: Toward an Anthropology of Genocide." In *Annihilating Difference : The Anthropology of Genocide*, edited by Alexander Laban Hinton. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Hofmann, Tessa. "Transnationale Ideologien und Strategien im Zusammenhang mit dem Genozid von Dersim." *Der nicht anerkannte Genozid: Dersim 1937-1938*, Online, 19 November 2021 2021.
- Hourani, Albert. "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables." In *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, edited by William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1967.
- Hovannisian, Richard G. "Armenia and the Caucasus in the Genesis of the Soviet-Turkish Entente." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 2 (1973): 129-47.
- . *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1967.
- Juhem, Philippe. "Effets de génération." In *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux*, 210-17. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2020.
- Kahraman, Ahmet. *Kürt İsyanları : Tedip ve Tenkil*. Kürt tarihi ve kültürü dizisi. Beyoğlu, İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2003.
- Kaiser, Hilmar. "Financing the Ruling Party and Its Militants in Wartime: The Armenian Genocide and the Kemah Massacres of 1915." *Études arméniennes contemporaines*, no. 12 (2019): 7-31.

- Kaplan, Sam. *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in Post-1980 Turkey*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Karaömerlioğlu, M. Asım. *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta: Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Köycü Söylem*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2006.
- . “The People’s Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998): 67-91.
- Karpat, Kemal H. “The Impact of the People’s Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951.” *Die Welt des Islams* 15, no. 1/4 (1974): 69-84.
- Kayalı, Hasan. *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Kaynar, Erdal. “The Almighty Power of the Written Word: Political Conceptions of the Press at the Turn of the Twentieth Century.” Chap. Presse et intellectuels au temps d’Abdülhamid et après In *Penser, agir et vivre dans l’Empire ottoman et en Turquie: Études réunies pour François Georgeon*, edited by Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar. Turcica, 151-71. Paris, Louvain, Walpole: Peeters, 2013.
- . *L’héroïsme de la vie moderne: Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930) en son temps*. Collection Turcica vol. 26. Paris: Peeters, 2021.
- Kévorkian, Raymond H. “L’extermination des Arméniens par le régime jeune-turc (1915-1916).” *Mass Violence & Resistance* (2010).
- . *Parachever un génocide: Mustafa Kemal et l’élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 2023.
- . *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*. London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011.
- Kezer, Zeynep. *Building Modern Turkey : State, Space, and Ideology in the Early Republic*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015.
- . “The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey: Spatializing Difference.” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73, no. 4 (2014): 507-27.
- . “The Projections of a Roof: An Ottoman Armenian Family Residence in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Turkey.” *Platfrom*, 23 November, 2024. <https://www.platformspace.net/home/the-projections-of-a-roof-an-ottoman-armenian-family-residence-in-nineteenth-century-eastern-turkey>.
- . “An unraveling landscape: Harput and Mezre during Turkey’s Transition from Empire to Republic,.” In *Cultural Violence and the Destruction of Human Communities*, edited by Fatma Müge Göçek and Fiona Greenland. London: Routledge, 2020.

- Khoury, Philip. "The Urban Notables Paradigm Revisited." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* (1990): 215-30.
- Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham. *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914*. The California World History Library. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- Kieser, Hans-Lukas. *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938*. Zürich: Chronos, 2000.
- . "Europe's Seminal Proto-Fascist? Historically Approaching Ziya Gökalp, Mentor of Turkish Nationalism." *Die Welt des Islams* 61, no. 4 (29 Apr. 2021 2021): 1-37.
- . *İskalanmış Barış: Doğu Vilayetlerinde Misyonerlik, Etnik Kimlik ve Devlet 1839-1938*. Translated by Atilla Dirim. Istanbul: İletişim, 2005.
- . "Muslim Heterodoxy and Protestant Utopia: The Interactions between the Alevis and Missionaries in Ottoman Anatolia." In *A Quest for Belonging: Anatolia Beyond Empire and Nation (19th-21st Centuries)*, 115-33. Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010.
- . "The Ottoman Road to Total War (1913-1915)." In *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*, edited by Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem and Maurus Reinkowski. London - New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015.
- . *Talaat Pasha : Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018.
- Kieser, Hans-Lukas, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds. *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide*. London - New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015.
- Kırımızıaltın, Suphan. "Gender, Education and Modernization : Women School Teachers in the Late Ottoman Empire." Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin, 2012.
- Kırlı, Cengiz. "Coffeehouses: Public Opinion in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire." In *Public Islam and the Common Good*, edited by Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004.
- Klein, Janet. *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.
- Koç, Yener. "'Taxing' the Tribes in the Ottoman Empire: The case of the Tribes of Mutki (1839-1908)." In *Histories of Tax Evasion, Avoidance and Resistance*, edited by Korina Schönhärl, Gisela Hürlimann and Dorothea Rohde, 84-99. London: Routledge, 2023.
- Koçak, Cemil. "Tunceli Kanunu." *Tarih ve Toplum*, August, 1987, 7-8.

- . *Türkiye’de Milli Şef Dönemi*. Vol. II, İstanbul: İletişim, 1996.
- . *Umûmî Müfettişlikler: 1927 - 1952*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2003, 2003.
- Koçak, Orhan. ““Westernisation against the West”: Cultural Politics in the Early Turkish Republic.” In *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins. St Antony’s Series, 305-22. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010.
- Kolland, Daniel. “Making and Universalizing New Time: A History of the Late Ottoman-Turkish Magazine *Servet-i Fünûn* (1891-1914).” Ph.D., Freie Universität Berlin, 2021.
- Koroğlu, Erol. *Türk Edebiyatı ve Birinci Dünya Savaşı (1914-1918)*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2016.
- Koselleck, Reinhart. “Representation, Event, and Structure.” Translated by Keith Tribe. In *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, 105-14. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Kurt, Ümit. “Antep’in Gayri Resmî Tarihi.” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 284 (Ağustos 2017): 50-57.
- . *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province*. London, New York: Harvard University Press, 2021.
- . “The Plunder of Wealth through Abandoned Properties Laws in the Armenian Genocide.” *Genocide Studies International* 10, no. 1 (2016): 37-51.
- . “Proactive Local Perpetrators: Mehmet Yasin (Sani Kutluğ) and Ahmed Faik (Erner).” In *End of the Ottomans : The Genocide of 1915 and the Politics of Turkish Nationalism*, edited by Hans-Lukas Kieser, Margaret Lavinia Anderson, Seyhan Bayraktar and Thomas Schmutz, 265-86. London: I.B. Tauris, 2019.
- Kurt, Ümit. *“Türk’ün Büyük, Biçare ırkı” : Türk Yurdu’nda Milliyetçiliğin Esasları, (1911-1916)*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2012.
- Kurzman, Charles, and Lynn Owens. “The Sociology of Intellectuals.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28, no. 1 (2002): 63-90.
- Kuyaş, Ahmet. “La guerre des constitutions. La vraie nature de l’insurrection du 13 avril 1909 à İstanbul.” In *Mouvements révolutionnaires et droit constitutionnel*, edited by Lina Megahed and Nicolas Pauthe, 231-50: Institut francophone pour la Justice et la Démocratie, 2023.
- . “On “Post-Kemalism” or How to Stop Worrying about Politics and Love History.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 35 (2022).
- Lamprou, Alexandros. “Between the Central State and Local Society. The People’s Houses Institution and the Domestication of the Reform in Turkey (1932-1951).” Ph.D. Thesis, Universiteit Leiden, 2009.
- . “Local Negotiation of Change: Historiography of Modern Turkey and the Study of Provincial Anatolian Towns.” *SİYASAL: Journal of Political Sciences*, no. 32 (2023): 117-31.

- . “Local Politics and State-Society Relations: State Officials, Local Elites, and Political Networks in Provincial Urban Centres in the 1930s and 1940s in Turkey.” *Turkish Historical Review* 10, no. 02-03 (2020): 252.
- . *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey: The ‘People’s Houses’, the State and the Citizen*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2015.
- Le Bon, Gustave. *Psychologie des foules*. Paris: Édition Félix Alcan, 1905.
- Lemercier, Claire, and Emmanuel Picard. “Quelle approche prosopographique?”. In *Les uns et les autres. Biographies et prosopographies en histoire des sciences*, edited by Laurent Rollet and Philippe Nabonnaud. Nancy: Presses universitaires de Nancy, 2011.
- Lemercier, Claire, Claire Zalc, and Arthur Goldhammer. *Quantitative Methods in the Humanities: An Introduction*. University of Virginia Press, 2019.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- . *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Lewis, Geoffrey L. *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Lieberman, Benjamin. “‘Ethnic Cleansing’ vs Genocide.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, edited by A. Dirk Moses and Donald Bloxham, 42-61. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Lukes, Steven. “Political Ritual and Social Integration.” *Sociology* 9, no. 2 (1975): 289-308.
- Maksudyan, Nazan. “Agents or Pawns?: Nationalism and Ottoman Children during the Great War.” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 1 (2016): 139-64.
- . “‘This Is a Man’s World?’: On Fathers and Architects.” *Journal of Genocide Research* 21, no. 4 (2019): 540-44.
- Malešević, Siniša. “Organised Violence and Modernity.” In *The Sociology of War and Violence*, 118-45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Malmîsanij, Mehemed. “The Kırmanjki (Zazaki) Dialect of Kurdish Language and the Issues It Faces.” In *The Cambridge History of the Kurds*, edited by Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes and Veli Yadirgi, 663-84. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Mardin, Şerif. “Center-Periphery Relations: A Key To Turkish Politics?”. *Daedalus* 102, 1, no. Winter (1973): 169-90.
- Mardin, Şerif. *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey : the Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.
- Mariot, Nicolas. “Qu’est-ce qu’un « enthousiasme civique » ? Sur l’historiographie des fêtes politiques en France après 1789.” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 63e année, no. 1 (2008): 113-39.



- Marx, Karl. *ad Feuerbach [Theses on Feuerbach]: German Text with Facing-Page English Translation*. Edited by Carlos Beñdana-Pedroza. Bonn, 2019.
- Massicard, Élise. *The Alevis in Turkey and Europe : Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity*. Oxford: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012.
- . “The Incomplete Civil Servant? The Figure of the Neighbourhood Headman (Muhtar).” In *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century*, edited by Élise Massicard, Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse and Élise Massicard, 256-90. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- . “The Repression of the Koçgiri Rebellion, 1920-1921.” In *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, 28 September 2009.
- . “Seyyit Rıza.” *Mass Violence & Résistance* (28 September 2009).
- Mazıcı, Nurşen. “Öncesi ve Sonrasıyla 1933 Üniversite Reformu.” *Birikim*, August 1995, 1995.
- Meeker, Michael. *A Nation of Empire : The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Melvin-Koushki, Matthew. “Better than Sufi Sex: Ibn Turka on the Superiority of Lettrism to etter than Sufi Sex: Ibn Turka on the Superiority of Lettrism to Sufism as Model of Occult Islamic Humanism.” *La Rosa di Paracelso*, no. 2 (2020): 53-80.
- . “Taḥqīq vs. Taqlīd in the Renaissances of Western Early Modernity.” *Philological Encounters*, no. 3 (2018): 193-249.
- Merriman, John M. *A History of Modern Europe : From the Renaissance to the Present*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.
- Meşeci Giorgetti, Filiz. “New School of Mustafa Satı Bey in Istanbul (1915).” *Paedagogica Historica* 50, no. 1-2 (2014): 42-58.
- Metinsoy, Murat. “Everyday Resistance to Unveiling and Flexible Secularism in Early Republican Turkey.” In *Anti-Veiling Campains in the Muslim World. Gender Modernism and the Politics of Dress*, edited by Stephanie Cronin. London: Routledge, 2014.
- . “Fragile Hegemony, Flexible Authoritarianism, and Governing From Below: Politicians’ Reports in Early Republican Turkey.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 699-719.
- . *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- Migdal, Joel S. *State in Society : Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

- Morack, Ellinor. *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017.
- Moses, A. Dirk. "Permanent Security." In *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression*. Human Rights in History, 241-392. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- . *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the Language of Transgression*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- . "Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide." In *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, edited by A. Dirk Moses and Donald Bloxham, 19-42. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Mosse, George Lachmann. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Mudde, Cas. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004).
- Muschalek, Marie. *Violence as Usual: Policing and the Colonial State in German Southwest Africa*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. "Oral Transmission and the Book in the Islamic Education: The Spoken and the Written Word." *Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (1992): 1-14.
- Navaro, Yael. "The Aftermath of Mass Violence: A Negative Methodology." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49, no. 1 (2020): 161-73.
- Navaro-Yashin, Yael, Zerrin Özlem Biner, Alice von Bieberstein, and Seda Altuğ, eds. *Reverberations: Violence Across Time and Space*: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021.
- Nereid, Camilla T. "Kemalism on the Catwalk: The Turkish Hat Law of 1925." *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 3 (2011): 707-28.
- Öktem, Kerem. "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponyms in Republican Turkey." *European Journal of Turkish studies*, no. 7 (2008).
- Olsaretti, Alessandro. "Beyond Class: The Many Facets of Gramsci's Theory of Intellectuals." *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 4 (2014): 363-81.
- Olson, Robert. "The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism." *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no. 1 (2000): 67-94.
- Öpengin, Ergin. "The History of Kurdish and the Development of Literary Kurmanji." In *The Cambridge History of the Kurds*, edited by Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes and Veli Yadirgi, 603-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

- Ortaylı, İlber. “Çarlık Rusyası Yönetiminde Kars.” *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 9 (1978).
- Owen, Roger, and Şevket Pamuk. *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Özatalay, Cem. “Purge, Exile, and Resistance: Rethinking the Conflict of the Faculties through the Case of Academics for Peace in Turkey.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* Numéro en lutte, no. 30 (2020).
- Özdemir, Nuray. “Milli Mücadele Dönemi Mitinglerinde Türk Kadını.” *Belgi Dergisi*, no. 21 (January 2021): 1-22.
- Özdemirci, İlber. *Fört Şapkalı Şih: Cumhuriyet Sekülerleşmesi ve Taşra*. İstanbul: İletişim, 2022.
- Ozouf, Mona. *La fête révolutionnaire, 1789-1799*. Bibliothèque des histoires. Paris: Gallimard, 1976.
- Öztan, Ramazan, and Alp Yenen. *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.
- Öztürk, Serdar. “Karagöz Co-Opted: Turkish Shadow Theatre of the Early Republic (1923-1945).” *Asian Theatre Journal* 23, no. 2 (2006): 292-313.
- . “The Struggle over Turkish Village Coffeehouses (1923–45).” *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, 3 (2008): 435-354.
- Pamuk, Şevket. “Economic Change in Twentieth-Century Turkey: Is the Glass More than Half Full?”. 266-300: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Parla, Taha. *The Social and Political Thought of Ziya Gökalp, 1876-1924*. Leiden: Brill, 1985.
- . *Türk Siyasi Kültürünün Resmî Kaynakları: Kemalist Tek-Parti İdeolojisi ve CHP'nin Altı Ok'u*, İstanbul: İletişim, 1995.
- Pennetier, Claude, and Bernard Pudal. “Questionnement biographique communiste en France (1931-1974).” In *Autobiographies, autocritiques, aveux dans le monde communiste*, edited by Claude Pennetier and Bernard Pudal. Paris: Belin, 2002.
- Perrier, Guillaume, and Laure Marchand. *Turkey and the Armenian Ghost: On the Trail of the Genocide*. Translated by Debbie Blythe. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015.
- Peruccio, Kara A. ““Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman”: Suat Derviş, Nezihe Muhiddin, and Age in Turkey, 1923–35.” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 10, no. 1 (2023): 15-36.
- Pınar, Mehmet. “II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Patrikhanenin Gölgesinde Sıra Dışı Bir Milletvekili Kozmidi Pandalaki Efendi (1908-1912).” *İçtimaiyat* 7, no. 2 (November 2023): 572-92.
- Provence, Michael. *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

- Quataert, Donald. "The Massacres of Ottoman Armenians and the Writing of Ottoman History." Review of *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, Donald Bloxham. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, no. 2 (2006): 249-59.
- Rappas, Alexis. *Cyprus in the 1930s: British Colonial Rule and the Roots of the Cyprus Conflict*. Bloomsbury, 2020.
- Reinkowski, Maurus. "The Imperial Idea and Realpolitik – Reform Policy and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire." In *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen, 453-71. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2011.
- . "The State's Security and the Subjects' Prosperity: Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century)." In *Legitimizing the Order : the Ottoman Rhetoric of State Power*, edited by Maurus Reinkowski and Hakan Karateke, 195-212. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Ridgeon, Lloyd V. J., 'Umar ibn Muḥammad Suhrawardī, 'Abd al-'Azīm Qarīb, and Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī. *Jawanmardi : A Sufi Code of Honour*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.
- Rogan, Eugene. *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*. New York: Basic Books, 2015.
- Rozin, Philippe. "Le concept de culturalisme dans les sciences anthropologiques : de Tylor à Lowie." *Le Philosophoire* 27, no. 2 (2006): 151-76.
- Rubinelli, Sara. "Logos and Pathos in Aristotle's Rhetoric. A Journey into the Role of Emotions in Rational Persuasion in Rhetoric." *Revue internationale de philosophie* 286, no. 4 (2018): 361-74.
- Ryan, James D. "The Republic of Others: Opponents of Kemalism in Turkey's Single Party Era, 1919-1950." Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2017 (10683539).
- Şahin, Kaya. "Staging an Empire: An Ottoman Circumcision Ceremony as Cultural Performance." *The American Historical Review* 123, no. 2 (2018): 463-92.
- Salzmann, Ariel. "The Education of an Ottomanist: Donald Quataert and the Narrative Arc of Ottoman Historiography, 1985-2011." In *History From Below: A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert*, edited by Selim Karahasanoglu and Deniz Cenk Demir. Istanbul: Bilgi Universitesi Yayınları, 2016.
- Sapiro, Gisèle. "Modèles d'intervention politique des intellectuels. Le cas français." *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 176-177, no. 1 (2009): 8-31.
- Sarmis, Dilek. "Ottoman and Turkish Psychologies (1860-1930). A laboratory for academic divisions." *Revue d'histoire des sciences humaines*, no. 34 (2019): 35-66.

- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy “The Genocidal Continuum: Peace-Time Crimes.” In *Power and the Self*, edited by Jeannette Marie Mageo, 29-47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Schlaepfer, Aline. “Between Ruler and Rogue: Sayiid Talib al-Naqip and the British in Early Twentieth-century Basra.” In *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, edited by Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen, 235-60. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.
- Shaw, Martin. “Sociology and Genocide.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, edited by Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses, 142-62. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Shissler, A. Holly. ““If You Ask Me”: Sabiha Sertel’s Advice Column, Gender Equity, and Social Engineering in the Early Turkish Republic.” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 3, no. 2 (2007): 1-30.
- . “Womanhood Is Not For Sale: Sabiha Zekeriya Sertel Against Prostitution and For Women’s Employment.” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 4, no. 3 (2008): 12-30.
- . *Between Two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the New Turkey*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2002.
- Sigalas, Nikos. “La première guerre mondiale et la genèse de la question pontique : une histoire connectée de la violence en Anatolie au début du XXe siècle.” Ph.D., Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2023.
- Sigalas, Nikos, and Alexandre Toumarkine. “Demographic Engineering, Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing. Dominant paradigms for the Study of Violence Exerted on Minorities in Turkey and the Balkans.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008).
- . “Ingénierie démographique, génocide, nettoyage ethnique. Les paradigmes dominants pour l’étude de la violence sur les populations minoritaires en Turquie et dans les Balkans.” *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008).
- Şimşek, Sefa. *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi: Halkevleri, 1932-1951*. İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002.
- Six-Hohenbalken, Maria. “The 72nd Firman of the Yezidis: A “Hidden Genocide” during World War I?” *Genocide Studies International* 13, no. 1 (2019): 52-76.
- Sohrabi, Nader. *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Somel, Selçuk Akşin. “Osman Nuri Paşa’nın 17 Temmuz 1885 Tarihli Hicaz Raporu.” *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 18, no. 29 (May 1996): 1-38.
- Stone, Marla. “Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 2 (1993): 215-43.

- Stone, Marla, and Giuliana Chamedes. "Naming the Enemy: Anti-Communism in Transnational Perspective." *Journal of Contemporary History* 53, no. 1 (2018): 4-11.
- Strauss, Johann. "Diglossie dans le domaine ottoman. Évolution et péripéties d'une situation linguistique." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 75-76 (1995): 221-55.
- Suciyan, Talin. *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2016.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor. *"They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- Szurek, Emmanuel. "Autodafé à Istanbul. La première crise négationniste de la Turquie nationaliste (1935)." *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, no. 105 (2022): 77-114.
- . "Ce que le génocide des Arméniens a fait aux juifs de Turquie." Les juifs et les autres minorités dans l'islam méditerranéen, XIXe-XXIe siècles, Musée d'art et d'histoire du judaïsme, 10 June 2021.
- . "Dil Bayramı. Une lecture somatique de la fête politique dans la Turquie du parti unique." Chap. Héritages In *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman et en Turquie. Etudes réunies pour François Georgeon*, edited by Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar, 497-525. Paris, Louvain, Walpole: Peeters, 2013.
- . "Gouverner par les mots: une histoire linguistique de la Turquie nationaliste." Ph.D., EHESS, 2013.
- . "In Pursuit of Post-Kemalism." *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 35 (2022).
- . "'Yan, Of, Ef, Viç, İç, İs, Dis, Pulos ...': the Surname Reform, the 'Non-Muslims,' and the Politics of Uncertainty in Post-genocidal Turkey." In *Arabic and its Alternatives. Religious minorities and their Languages in the Emerging Nation States of the Middle East (1920-1950)*, edited by Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Karène Sanchez Summerer and Tijmen Baarda, 77: Brill, 2020.
- Tasalp, Duygu. *Cent ans de négation: les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l'Unionisme à l'Islamisme*. Paris: Karthala, 2024.
- Terzioğlu, Derin. "The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation." *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 84-100.
- . "Sunna-minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State: The Nasihatname of Hasan Addresses to Murad IV." *Archivum Ottomanicum* 27 (2010): 241-312.
- Tezcan, Baki. *The Second Ottoman Empire : Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

- Thibon, Jean-Jacques. “Adab et éducation spirituelle (tarbiya) chez les maîtres de Nīshāpūr aux iiiie/ixe et ive/xe siècles.” In *Ethics and Spirituality in Islam: Sufi Adab*, edited by Francesco Chiabotti, Eve Feuillebois-Pierunek, Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen, Luca Patrizi and Jean-Jacques Thibon, 102-30. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
- Thiesse, Anne-Marie. *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècle*. Paris: Seuil, 2001.
- Tilly, Charles. “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime.” In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmayer and Theda Skocpol, 169-91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Topal, Alp Eren. “Against Influence: Ziya Gökalp in Context and Tradition.” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 28, no. 3 (2017): 283-310.
- . “Order as a Chronotope of Ottoman Political Writing.” *Contemporary Levant* (2020): 1-9.
- Toprak, Zafer. *Bir Yurttaş Yaratmak: Muâsır Bir Medeniyet İçin Seferberlik Bilgileri, 1923-1950*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 1998.
- . *Türkiye’de Popülizm 1908-1923*. İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2014.
- Toumarkine, Alexander. “Hayriye Melek (Hunç), A Circassian Ottoman Writer Between Feminism and Nationalism.” Chap. Dilemmas of Nationalism: Debating Modernity, Identity, and Women’s Agency In *A Social History of the Late Ottoman Women: New Perspectives*, edited by Duygu Köksal and Anastasia Falierou, 317-39. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Tunçay, Mete. *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi’nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*. Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1981, 1999.
- Tuncer, Seral. “II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Bir İdari Refrom: 1913 İdare-i Umumiye-i Vilâyât Kanun-ı Muvakkatı I.” II. Türk Hukuk Tarihi Kongresi, İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sadri Maksudi Arsal Hukuk Tarihi Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2016.
- Turan, İlker. “Continuity and Change in Turkish Bureaucracy.” In *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, edited by Jacob M. Landau. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984.
- Türesay, Özgür. “Censure et production culturelle. Le champ éditorial ottoman à l’époque hamidienne (1876-1908).” [In fr]. *Études Balkaniques-Cahiers Pierre Belon*, no. 16 (2009): 239-54.
- . *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l’Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps*. Peeters Publishers, 2023.
- . “Etre intellectuel à la fin de l’Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps.” Ph.D., INALCO, 2008.
- . “L’empire ottoman sous le prisme des études post-coloniales: à propos d’un tournant historiographique récent.” *Revue d’histoire moderne & contemporaine* 2, 60, no. 2 (2013): 127-45.

- Türker, Hasan. “İlanından Önce Cumhuriyet Tartışmaları.” *Toplumsal Tarih*, 1998, 4-13.
- Türköz, Meltem. *Naming and Nation-Building in Turkey: The 1934 Surname Law*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
- Türkyılmaz, Zeynep. ““A Community Entrapped between Kurdishness and Turkisness”: Rethinking Republic’s Dersim Anxiety.” *Turkologentag*, Vienna, 21 September 2023.
- Türkyılmaz, Zeynep. “Maternal Colonialism and Turkish Woman’s Burden in Dersim: Educating the “Mountain Flowers” of Dersim.” *Journal of Women’s History* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2016 2016): 162-86.
- Turnaoğlu, Banu. “The Positivist Universalism and Republicanism of the Young Turks.” *Modern Intellectual History* 14, no. 3 (2017): 777-805.
- Ülker, Erol. “Empires and Nation-Building: Russification and Turkification Compared.” MA, Central European University, 2004.
- Ulugana, Sedat. *Ağrı Kürt Direnişi ve Zilan Katliamı (1926-1931)*. İstanbul: Pêri Yayınları, 2010.
- Üngör, Uğur Ümit, and Mehmet Polatel. *Confiscation and Destruction : the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*. London, New York: Continuum, 2011.
- Üngör, Ümit Uğur. *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- . “Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950.” Ph.D., University of Amsterdam, 2009.
- Üstel, Füsun. *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*. İstanbul: İletişim, 1997.
- . “Makbul Vatandaş”ın Peşinde : II. Meşrutiyet’ten Bugüne Türkiye’de Vatandaş Eğitimi. İstanbul: İletişim, 2004.
- Uyar, Mesut. “İhtiyat Zabıt Namzedi Olmak..” *Çanakkale 1915*, June, 2013, 22-27.
- Uzun, Hakan. “Bir Propaganda Aracı Olarak Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı.” *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, 11 (2010): 85-111.
- Venturi, Franco, Isaiah Berlin, and Francis Haskell. *Roots of Revolution*. London: Phoenix Press, 2001.
- Veyne, Paul. *Le pain et le cirque*. Paris: Seuil, 1976.
- von Bieberstein, Alice. “Placing the Armenian Genocide within Kurdish Studies: Methodological and Analytical Reflections from the Position of Ethnography.” *Études kurdes*, Paris, EHESS, 4 April 2023 2023.
- . “Treasure/Fetish/Gift: Hunting for ‘Armenian Gold’ in Post-genocide Turkish Kurdistan.” *Subjectivity* 10, no. 2 (2017): 170-89.
- Wahnich, Sophie. “La patrie en danger, rumeur et loi.” *Hypothèses* 4, no. 1 (2001): 293-302.



- Welch, David. *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*. London, New York: Routledge, 1993.
- White, Morton. "Reflections on Anti-Intellectualism." *Daedalus* 91, no. 3 (1962): 457-68.
- Winter, Stefan. *A History of the 'Alawis: From Medieval Aleppo to the Turkish Republic*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Woodhead, Christine. "The Ottoman Art of Word-Painting: Rhyme and Reason in Seventeenth-Century Turkish Literary Letters." *The Seventeenth Century* 38, no. 5 (3 September 2023): 885-903.
- Yamak, Sanem. "Meşrutiyetin Bayramı: 10 Temmuz İd-i Millisi." *İstanbul Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 38 (March 2008).
- Yavuz, F. Betül. "Orality in the Tekke and the Circulation of "High" and "Low" Cultures of Sufism in Seventeenth-Century İstanbul." *History of Religions* 62, no. 1 (2022): 49-72.
- Yavuz, Hakan. "A Topography of Positions in the Turkish-Armenian Debate." Chap. Armenian-Kurdish and Ottoman-Russian Relations In *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, edited by Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad, 541-69. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015.
- Yaycıoğlu, Ali. *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016.
- . "Provincial Power-holders and the Empire in the Late Ottoman World: Conflict or Partnership?" In *The Ottoman World*, edited by Christine Woodhead, 436-52. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Yeğen, Mesut. "State Violence in 'Kurdistan'," in *Collective and State Violence in Turkey*, edited by Stephan Astourian and Raymond Kévorkian (New York, Oxford: Bergahn, 2020), 303-347.
- Yenen, Alp. "İttihatçılığın Laneti: İmparatorluk'tan Cumhuriyet'e Geçiş Döneminin Tarihyazımında Bazı Meseleler." *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 164 (2023): 72-96.
- . "The "Young Turk Zeitgeist" in the Middle Eastern Uprisings in the Aftermath of World War I." In *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, edited by Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmed, 1181-217. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015.
- Yeşil, Sevim. "Unfolding Republican Patriarchy: The Case of Young Turkish Women at the Girl's Vocational Boarding School in Elazığ." Master of Science, Middle East Technical University, 2003.
- Yıldırım, Tuğba. *Kürt Sorunu ve Devlet : Tedip ve Tenkil Politikaları, (1925-1947)*. Eminönü, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2011.
- Yıldırım, Yüksel. *Kıbrıs'tan Urfa'ya Ratip Akdeniz (1911-1985) – Bir Öğretmenin Hikâyesi*. İstanbul: Nobel Bilimsel, 2023.
- Yılmaz, Hale. *Becoming Turkish : Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013.

- Yosmaoğlu, İpek. “The Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, and the Great Powers on the Road to Müritzsteg.” In *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908*, 0: Cornell University Press, 2013.
- Yüksel, Metin. “Kurds and Kurdish Nationalism in the Interwar Period.” Chap. Part II - Regional Political Developments and the Kurds in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries In *The Cambridge History of the Kurds* edited by Hamit Bozarslan, Cengiz Gunes and Veli Yadırgı, 205-28, 2021.
- Zahra, Tara. “Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis.” *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010): 93-119.
- Zalc, Claire. “Prosopographie, quel outil pour comparer ?”. In *Dictionnaire historique de la comparaison*, edited by Nicolas Delalande, Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, Pierre Singaravélou and M Vincent, 57-60. Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2020.
- Zihniöglu, Yaprak. *Kadınsız İnkılap: Nezihe Muhiddin, Kadınlar Halk Fırkası, Kadın Birliđi*. Istanbul: Metis, 2003.
- Zürcher, Erik Jan. “Renewal and Silence: Post-war Unionist and Kemalist Rhetoric on the Armenian Genocide.” In *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey*, 195-209. London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010.
- . “Afterword.” In *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires*, edited by Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen, 383-89: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.
- . “The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844-1914.” *International Review of Social History* 43, no. 3 (1998): 437-49.
- . *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party 1924-1925*. Leiden: Brill, 2022.
- . *Turkey: A Modern History*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997.
- . *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926*. Leiden: Brill, 2023.
- . “The Unionist Presence in the Asiatic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1912.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 59, no. 4 (2023): 561-70.
- . “The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism.” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 1999, no. 137 (1999): 81-92.
- . *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk’s Turkey*. London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010.

- . *The Unionist Factor : The Rôle of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*. Leiden: Brill, 1984.
- . “Institution Building in the Kemalist Republic: The Role of the People’s Party.” In *Men of order: authoritarian modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, edited by Touraj Atabaki and Erik Jan Zürcher. London: Tauris, 2004.
- . “The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?”. *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 33 (2021).

### Memoirs

- Ağaoğlu, Ahmet. *Serbest Fırka Hatıraları*. Istanbul: İletişim, [1949], 1994.
- Avar, Sıdıka. *Dağ Çiçeklerim*. Ankara: Öğretmen Yayınları, 1986.
- Aytaç, Cemile. *Yürüyoruz: 95. Yıl*. Istanbul: Kap, 1996.
- Erdoğan, Fahrettin. *Türk Elinde Hatıralarım*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınlar Dairesi Başkanlığı, 1998.
- Ilgaz, Hasene. *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım*. [Things that I have Read, Saw, and Written]. 1991.
- . *Unutulmayan Yıllar*. Istanbul: Babıâli Aziz Uçtay Matbaası, 1970.

### Encyclopedias

- Abdirashidov, Zaynabidin. “Gasprinski, İsmail.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three Online*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Stewart, Brill, 2015.
- Albayrak, Sadık. “Eşref Edip Fergan.” In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/esref-edip-fergan>.
- “Nafi Atuf Kansu (1890-1949).” Atatürk Ansiklopedisi, accessed 3 May 2024, <https://ataturkansiklopedisi.gov.tr/bilgi/nafi-atuf-kansu-1890-1949/>.
- Boratav, P.N. “Maddāh.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman, Brill, 2012.
- Calder, N., and Hooker. “Sharī‘a.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Charaudeau, Patrick, and Dominique Maingueneau, eds. *Dictionnaire de l’analyse de discours*. Paris: Seuil, 2002.
- Cook, David, B. “Dajjāl.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Brill, 2012.
- Erarslan, Cezmi. “Hamidiye Alayları.” In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 462-64. Ankara, 1997.
- Kieser, Hans-Lukas. “Dersim Massacre, 1937-1938.” In *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, 2011.
- Kırımlı, Hakan. “Gaspıralı, İsmâil Bey.” In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, TDV İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1996.

Martirosyan, Tigran. “Shakir, Bahaeddin.” In *1914-1918-online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, edited by Daniel Ute, Gatrellö Peter, Oliver Janz Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer and Bill Nasson. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 17 January 2022 2022.

Mittwoch, E. “‘Īd al-Fiṭr.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

Atatürk Ansiklopedisi.

Özman, Aylın. “İsmā’īl Ḥaqqī Baltadjioğlu.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman, Brill, 2012.

Pellat, Ch. “Ḳāṣṣ.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman, Brill, 2012.

Tosun, Fatih, and Necdet Aysal. “Muallim Cemal Gültekin (1893-1953).” In *Atatürk Ansiklopedisi*, 2022.

Tritton, A. S. “Adhab al-Kabr.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. Encyclopaedia of Islam, I:186b: Brill.

Ursinus, M. . “Reaya.” In *Dictionnaire de l’Empire ottoman*, edited by François Georgeon, Nicolas Vatin, Gilles Veinstein and Elisabetta Borromeo. Paris: Fayard, 2015.

Weir, T.H., and A. Zysow. “Şadaqa.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman, Brill, 2012.

Yetiş, Kâzım. “Aykaç,Fazıl Ahmet.” In *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 254. Ankara: TDV İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1991.

Zysow, A. “Zakât.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, edited by P. Bearman, Brill, 2012.

### Dictionaries

Ahmet Vefik Paşa, *Lehçe-yi Osmanî*. İstanbul: Tab’hane-yi Amire, 1876 [1293].

Fraschery, Şemseddin Sami. *Kamus-ı Türki*. İstanbul, 1901.

Fraschery, Şemseddin Sami. *Resimli Kamus-i Fransevi : Fransızca’dan Türkçe’ye Lûgat-ı Kitabı = Dictionnaire français-turc : illustré de 3000 gravures*. Constantinople: Mihran, 1905.

Galandcızâde, Hakkı Tevfik. *Türkisches-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Leipzig: Otto Holzer’s Nachfolger, 1917.

Garner’s Modern English Dictionary. Oxford University Press, 2022.

[Kestelli], Raif Necdet. *Yeni Resimli Türkçe Kamus*. İstanbul: Ahmed Kâmil Matbaası, 1927.

Mehmed Salahi, *Kamus-ı Osmani*. İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1895 [1313].

Muallim Naci. *Lûgat-ı Naci*. İstanbul: Asır Matbaası, 1906.

Nişanyan, Sevan. *Türkiye Yer Adları Sözlüğü - Index Anatolicus*.

*Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford University Press, 2023.

Redhouse, James W. *Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman - English Dictionary*. Istanbul: Sev, 2000 [1890].  
———. *A Turkish and English Lexicon: Shewing in English the Significations of the Turkish Terms*. Constantinople: A. H. Boyajian, 1890 [1302].  
“Türk Dil Kurumu Güncel Sözlük.” Türk Dil Kurumu, 2023, <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>.

### Web Resources

Arşiv, TRT. ““Bir kadın milletvekili olarak pek çok sosyal işlerle beraber hayatımı renklendirmeye muvaffak oldum.”Erken dönem kadın milletvekillerimiz arasında yer alan Hasene Ilgaz‘ın, o döneme ait anlatımına kulak veriyoruz. (1986).” Facebook, 8 March, 2024.

“Atatürk dönemi hakimlerinden Meliha Toros öldü.” *Hürriyet* (Istanbul), 26 April 2003. <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ataturk-donemi-h-kimlerinden-meliha-toros-oldu-142721>.

Aytaç, Aydın, “My Life and Profession,” *aydinaytac.com*, <https://aydinaytac.com/en/my-life-and-profession/>.

“Sinop.” Black Sea Project Port Cities, accessed 10 December 2023, <https://cities.blacksea.gr/en/sinop/2-1-2/>.

“‘Centre’ for Turkish Archaeology is Ready: The Turkish Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Institute is opening its doors on 25 October 2023 in Gaziantep.” Delegation of the European Union to Türkiye, Updated 25 October 2023, 2023, accessed 13 January 2024, [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/t%C3%BCrkiye/centre-turkish-archaeology-ready-turkish-archaeology-and-cultural-heritage-institute-opening-its\\_en?s=230](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/t%C3%BCrkiye/centre-turkish-archaeology-ready-turkish-archaeology-and-cultural-heritage-institute-opening-its_en?s=230).

Edip, Halide. “Sultanahmet Mitingi.” Ankara: TRT Arşiv, 1919. Youtube Video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECH8H-rtIXU&t=3s>.

“Şehitler Abidesinin İnşası ve Şehitlerimizin Naaşlarının taşınması.” *Panorama25Aralık*, 2021, accessed 20 March 2024, 2024, <https://panorama25aralik.com/sehitlerabidesi/tr/>.

“Reconstructing Armenian Village Life Manoog Dzeron and Alevor: Unique Authors of the ‘Houshamadyan’ Genre.” Houshamadyan, 2014, accessed 11 July 2023, <https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottomanempire/vilayetdiyarbekir/palu/miscellaneous-articles.html>.

“Tarihçe.” Saral Ailesi, accessed 5 May 2022, <https://www.saralalesi.com/tarihce/>.

Türkten, Ferdi, and Ayşe Şensoy Boztepe. “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Teröristler ya Türk adaletine teslim olacak ya da devletimizin demir yumruğuyla yüzleşecek.” *Anadolu Ajansı*, 23 August 2023. <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-teroristler-ya-turk-adaletine-teslim-olacak-ya-da-devletimizin-demir-yumruguyla-yuzlesecek/2973778>.

“The Women’s Library and Information Centre Foundation.” Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı, accessed 1 June 2024, <https://kadineserleri.org/aabout-us/>.

Yavuz, Hakan “Self-Hating Turks and the Genocide Debate.” *Daily Sabah*, 7 February 2019. <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2019/02/07/self-hating-turks-and-the-genocide-debate>.

### Eşref Edib, “Fransızlık Türk Münevverlerinin Ta İliklerine Kadar İşlemiştir,” *Sebilü’r-Reşād*, 1920.

Karşı gazetelerden biri Fransız lisanına karşı Türklerin düşman bulduklarını yazması üzerine ‘İkdām gazetesini her hıuşuşca şayān-ı dikkat olan bir baş maḳāle ile cevap verdiler. Bu ḥaḳıḳatın böyle açık bir lisanla ortaya konmasını biz pek mühim pek fa’ideli ‘add itdiğimiz cihetle şimdilik yalnız ‘aynen naḳl ile iktifā ederiz:

Bugünkü konuda şarkta yaşayan hiçbir millet Türkler derecesinde Fransız harşı temsil etmiş ve Fransızca lisanı Türkler kadar öğrenmiş olmak iddi’asında bulunmaz: İstanbul’da hangi Rum veya hangi Ermeni mektebi vardır ki orada ‘ilm ve fennin yalnız Fransızca olarak tadrīs edilsün? Acaba şarkta hangi mü’essese, Galatasaray Sultanisi derecesinde ta iligine kadar Fransızdır? Türkler, hele münevver Türkler ve memleketin bütün yüksek tabakası Fransızca’yı ikinci bir ana lisānı olarak ḳabül etmiş olmak şöyle dursun, bilā-istişnā hepsi Fransızca düşünüyorlar ve fikrī ‘ilmī mübahasede bütün mücerred kelimeleri Fransızca söylerler. Son zamanlarda Türkler arasında bu Fransızca muḥabbeti o kadar mübaḳalalı şekiller almıştır ki ‘adeta yaşayışımızda bile yeni yeni ‘aca’ib bir takım i’tiyadlar tevellüd etmiştir. Türk gençlerinin ekserisi evlenecekleri zaman her şeyden evvel alacakları kızın Fransızca bilüb bilmediğini sorar.

Bu lisanı vukūf ‘adeta terbiyenin bir mi’yarı gibi telaḳḳı olunur. Bi’tab’ mezkūr maḳālenin muḥarriri bu sözümlü pek mübaḳalalı bulacaktır. Faḳat ma-te’essūf, ḥaḳıḳat-ı ḥāl bu mesele aḳlaşılamayacak kadar Fransızcanın lehinedir. Millī ve dinī ‘anānelerini unutacak kadar Fransızlaşmıştır; o kadar ki, ḥarb esnāsında ve Ālman ḫarafdarlığıyla o kadar müttehem olan bir ḳabine re’isinin bile baḳzı ictimā’ī mes’ele dā’ir te’lif ettiği bir kitābın metni Fransızca idi. Hiç hatırımızdan çıkmaz, Çanaḳḳale ḫarbinin en āteşin günlerinden biri idi, bir aḳşam Türk Ocaḳında! Evet, evet Türk Ocaḳında!- bir edebī musāmere vardı. O musāmerede birkaç ḳonferans soñra, Fransızca inşādı pek kuvvetli şā’irlerimizden biri ‘umumuñ işrārı üzerine bize Viktor Hugo’nun «Waterloo» manzūmesini okudu ve o kadar çoşuklu ālḳışlandı ki birkaç def’ā tekrara mecbur oldu. ‘Karşı gazetesinin dünyadan bi-haber ser-muḥarriri, eyi bilmelidir ki bize her iftirāda bulunuyorlar, bize her naḳışa ‘atıf edilir; faḳat Türklerin Fransız lisānına ve Fransız ḫarşına düşman olduğunu iddi’ā etmek gülünç ve zavallı bir buhtandır. Şarkta Fransızcanın ve Fransız medeniyetinin yegāne istikşāf ḳāvli biziz. Bir ‘aşırda beridir, bad-hevā işden siyasī ve iḳtisādī hiç bir fā’ide beklemeksizin Fransa ḫesabına çalışdı. Az daha bu yolda kendi mevcūdiyetini unutacaktı ve göreceği mükāfat da ‘āḳibet belki yine bu olacaktı.

### Ahmed [Aḡaoḳlu], “Ḥareket-i Fikriye,” *İçtima*, 1 Teşrinisānī 1923.

Geçen nüshada va’d etmişdik Aḡaoḳlu Ahmed Bey’in pek şayān-ı nazar olan ve; 2 Eylül 1923 tarihli (Vatan) gazetesinde münderic maḳalesinin ve (münevverlerin vazifesi) ḥaḳḳında şu müfid fıḳraları ḳāri’lerimiz için ifrāz ediyoruz:

Edebiyāt sahasındaki elli altmış senelik tekāmülümüz, müsikideki cereyanlar, ‘ilim, fenn, felsefede cereyanlar, siyasī, ‘ilmī, ictimā’ī temayüller hülāşā bir zümre-yi münevverenin ma’nevī aḳlaşmalarını teşkil iden bütün ‘avāmilde, Türk münevverlerinin şarkdan ḳat’ī şüretde yüz çevirerek ḡarbe doḡru teveccüh itdikleri bu gün inkār olunmaz bir vaḳ’adır! Māddī cihetlere meselā devlet teşkilātında, ticāret, zirā’at, iḳtisād uşüllerinde – yüne tercih itdiğimiz, emnūzec ittikhāz eylediğimiz numūneleri şarkta deḡil, ḡarbde arıyoruz. İnkārı ḡayr-ı ḳābil olan bütün bu ḥaḳıḳatlar Türk münevver zümresinin ḡarb tarafdarı olduğunda şübhe bırakmayor.

Binā’en-‘aleyh ḡarblılaşmak lüzumunu telḳin etmek vazifesi de bu zümreye ‘āidirdir. § Burada demin ḳayd itdiğimiz ikinci noḳtaya temās ediyoruz. Ya’ni teşādūf olunacak ve olunması da pek ḫabī’ī bulunan ma’nālar ile mücadele etmek! § Her yerde olduğu gibi bizde de halk her şey’i olduğu gibi muḫafazaya mütemāyildir. Kitleler, sūkūnī hareketleri tercih ederler, i’tiyād ettikleri şeyleri deḡiştirmekden tevahḫuş ederler. Ekseriyetle gidilecek yolu ta’yin ve taḳdirden ‘ācizdirler. Bütün halklara, bütün izdihāmlara ḫaş ve

müşterek olan bu hâletden istifâde itmeye muheyyâ olan bir takım insanlar da bulunabilir. Bunlar tarihin ifâde itdiği ders ve ma'nâyı aňlamayarak şamimiyetle mevcûdî muhafazaya tarafdâr olur ve yapılan deęişikliklere karşı çıkarlar veyâhud huşûşî menfa'atlerinin şâ'ikî ile ğaraz ve 'inâdla teceddüde karşı mücâdele ederler.

İşte kanâ'at ve fikirlerine şâdik münevver bir zümrenin vazifesi bunlarla mücâdeleden kaçınmamak, memleket ve milleti için nakî ve elzem gördüğü tariķî irâ'e etmekden çekinmeyüb haķikatleri olduęu gibi söylemekden 'ibâret olmalıdır!

İ'tirâf ederim: mücâdele çetin ve aęırdır. Mücâdele sahası gayr-ı müsâ'id olduęu gibi kullanılan silahlar da müsâvî deęildir. Soķak mun 'atîfina uyararak soķaęı memnûn etmek o kadar kolaydır ki herhangi bir müceddidi hareketsiz ve muta'aşşib kitlelerin nazarında kâfirlikle, dinsizlikle, millet ve devlet hâinlięi ile ithâm etmek 'âdetâ açık kapıyı zorlamak kâbilinden bir kâhramanlıķtır. Hele biraz da 'avâmm nezdinde şöhrat, nâm ve şıt hevesi olursa bu kâhramanlıķ pek câzib olur. Herkesce mâ'lumdur ki ğarbın kendisinde gördüğü bu günkü tekâmüldün her hatîmesi kandan mürekkeb bir ırmâķ üzerinden atlamışdır.

Vaķtile (Savarnaola) [\*] lar arķalarına toplamış oldukları vahşî muta'aşşib katolik sürüleri ile evlere hücum ederek buldukları âsar-ı nefîseyi kitâbları meydanlarda 'avâmmın âlķışları arasında yakıyor ve şâhibelerini de parçalatıyorlardı. Bundan soñra gelen Ignatius Loyola da te'sîs itdiği Cizvit tariķinin mu'âveneti ile biñlerce insânların cânlarını yakdı, hanûmânlarını söndürdü. Bunlar aňlayamıyor, taķdîr edemiyorlardı ki yakdıkları kitâblar, parçaladıkları eserler Avrupanın bu günkü haşmet ve 'âzâmetini te'mîn edecekdi. Faķat bunu taķdîr eden (Bruno) lar âlevler içinde bile (Galileo) gibi «hareket eden arzdir, güneş deęildir» diye baęıracak kader-i kuvvetli seciyeleri ile beşeriyeti vahşet ve dehşetten kurtardılar.

Şimdi bunun mes'ele Türk münevver zümresinin ibrâz edeceęi şalâbet-i ahlâķiye ile metânet-i seciyeye vâbestedir. Bu zümrenin bütün ef'âl ve harekâtı ğarblileşmek tarafdarı olduęunu isbât etmektedir. Millet ve memleket için halaş çaresini ğarbî temsilde görüyor, bu kanâ'tini, fikrini halka telķîh ve telķininde sâbit-ķadem olacak mıdır? Bu vazifesini bilâ-pervâ ve herhangi bir ma'niye karşı ifâ eyleyecek midir?

Bütün mes'ele bundadır! Hükümet, devlet, teşkilât ve techizâtını mu'âsırlaştırmakla ne kadar mükellef ise, Türk münevver zümresi de aynı derecede bu teşkilâta cihanda rûh ve can verecek esasları, fikirleri müdâfa'a eylemekle mükellefdir!

Binâ'en-'aleyh haķikî ğarblileşmeęi Türk münevver zümresinden biliyoruz.

[\*] (Savonarola= sehven diri diri gömülmüşdü. İki çocuk mezarlıkta gezerken işitdikleri inilti üzerine aęaçdan bir şalîbi kâzma gibi kullanarak onu tahliş etmişlerdi. Mezardan çıkan (Savonarola) ile maķdis-i şalîbi kâzma gibi kullandıklarından dolayı çocukları diri diri yakdırdı. Bu faci'â (Victor Hugo) nun bir manzum piyesinin mevzû'unu teşķil eder.



«Münevver» kelimesinin muhtelif isimlere sıfatlık etmekden yorularak müstaķil bir isim hâli alması kaç sene oldu bilmiyorum, bunu kelimenin tarih-i zuhur ve teħavvülatıyla uğraşan lisâniyatçılar tahkik etsin. Hepimizin bildiği bir şey varsa bu kelimenin bir sınıf insanlara ‘âlem olmasının pek yeni olduğudur. Dil ile ‘ilmin yekvücüd olduğu zamanlarda münevverlere «‘ulemâ» ve bunların çömezlerine «şofta» denilirdi. Mu‘allim Nâci’ye bakılırsa müderrisliğin fevkinde bir nev’i rütbe-yi ‘ilmiyyeye de «mollâ» denilirdi. Meselâ Mevlana’dan bahş edildiği zaman «Mollâ-yı Rûm» denilmesi gibi. Rûmcadan alınmış olan «Efendi» ta‘biri de buna yakın bir ma‘nâ ifade etmektedir. Bu ta‘birlere nispetle «münevver» lerle «güzideler» kelimeleri ‘acabâ hangi ihtiyâcin ifadesindeler?

‘âlimle efendi ve münevver arasında ne farklar mahsus olduğuna bu ânat-ı mâ‘aniyi ifâde için âyrı âyrı kelimeler ârandı? ‘acabâ bu ta‘birlârin zühûrunda İslam, Bizans ve ğarb medeniyetlerinin te‘sirleri var mıdır? Ben bunların hepsiyle meşğul olmayacağım. Yalnız münevver ta‘birinin Fransızca «Intellectuel», ve «güzide» ta‘birinin «Elite» muķabili oldukları ma‘lumdur. Binaenaleyh bu kelimelerin medlûllerini öğrenmek ğarbin ve bilhassa hayat-ı fikriyesinden en ziyâde müte‘essir olduğumuz Fransızların bunlar hakkındaki telâkķilerini bilmeye vâbestedir. Fransızcada «münevver» lafzından evvel «mütefekkir» «Penseur» kelimesi musta‘meldir. Bu taħavvül neden? Ma‘lumdur ki kelimeler de kulları kulları âşınıyor ve ilk kıymetlerini tedricen ğayb ederek ihtiyarlıyorlar. Yeni nesillerin moda değiştirir gibi bazı kelimeleri değiştirdikleri muħakkak ise de bunda ‘âmil yalnız bıkmak veya moda çıkarmak olmayub yeni ihtiyaçların zühûrudur. Bu ihtiyaçlar karşısında artık eski ta‘birlere yeni maķsadı ifâdeye kaftı olmuyor ve başka ta‘birlere âranıyor. Beşeriyet terakķi etdikçe zekânın ehemmiyeti artıyor. Eski zamanlara nispetle zamanımız daha çok dâhî yetiştiriyorsa vasaṫi zekâları inkişâf ettirmekte daha çok ve daha mü‘essir vesâ‘it ve sermayeye mâlik bulunuyor. Fazla olarak zekânın ‘âmili ve mahsus neticeler istihsâl etmesi ve bu neticelerin günden güne artması bugünkü şınâ‘i ve iktisâdî Avrupayı bu melekemizle daha çok ‘alâkadâr ediyor. İşte bu ‘alâkayı en vazıh bir şûretde ifâde edecek kelime intellectuel olur.

Felsefi bir renk taşıyan mütefekkir kelimesinde ise «‘intellektü‘el» dan kaşd edilen ma‘nâ yoktur. Çünkü mütefekkir nefsinı ta‘mik ve kendini mevzû‘ ittiħaz eden hâkim kimselere deniyor. «Intellectuel» de ise insânî şeyleri ta‘mik ile bunlardan ders-i hükümet çıkaran mütefekkiriden ziyâde ‘ilmî teceddüd istiħalelerini uğratak keşfiyat ve müsâ‘id bulunan bir insan ma‘nâsı mündemiçdir.

Görülüyor ki «‘intellektü‘el» ın saħa-i fa‘aliyeti daha geniş ve vaziyeti daha canlıdır. Şimdi bu telâkķiye göre «Intellectuel» muķabeli olarak kullandığımız «münevver» ta‘biri aşında mefħumu ne dereceye kadar ifâde ediyor? «Güzide» nin muķabili olarak kullandığımız «Elite» ta‘biri de «Intellectuel» ler arasında temâyüz etmiş bulunurlar deniyor.

Şu kısacık mütâla‘a gösteriyor ki ğarbden nakil edeceğimiz en ufaķ bir şey, hatta bir kelime bile ta‘mik edilmeden alınınca hiçbir ma‘nâ ifade etmeyen boş bir tercüme oluyor.

Mes‘ele bu kadarla da bitmez. Bir insanın şu arz ettiğim tarzda münevver olabilmesi nasıl bir hazırlık ile mümkündür? Sulṫânilerle Dâru‘l-funûn münevverler ve güzideleri yetiştirecek mü‘esseselerdir, diyoruz. Faķat münevverlerle güzidelerin yetişmesi neye mutevaķķıdır mes‘elesini henüz halletmiş değiliz.

Elli almış sene evveline gelinceye kadar Fransızlarca bir adamın münevver olabilmesinin ilk şartı Yunan-ı kadim ve Româ medeniyetlerinin şâheserleriyle kendi milletlerinin büyük klasiklerini metn-i aşlilerinden tedris ve mutâle‘a etmektir. Münevverliğin esasını teşkil eden bu taħsile «insâniyyat Humanité» yapmak denilirdi. Kiliselerde ihzâr ve Dâru‘l-funûnlarda ikmâl olunurdu. Beşeriyetin en hür ve büyük mütefekkirleri ile genç yaşda te‘mîn edilen bu yakın temâs onların rûhunda sâdelik, ihâta, vuzûh, âhenk, yüksek ve ibtikârî tefekkür, ‘âlicenab ve aşil tehessüsler, hiss-i vazife, fedâkarlık, şecâ‘at, kahramanlık ve ilâ-ahirihi gibi haşâ‘il-i rûhiyeyi kökleşdiriyor; ve rûhlarının ilk elastikiyeti bu dehâlarla yoğrulduktan sonra artık suffî ve bayağı fikirlere, dedikodulara ‘âmiyâne eserlere tenzîl etmek pek güçleşiyor. Bu terbiye-yi esâsiye ile yetişen bir nesil tam ma‘nâsile rehber ve mürşid olacak vir olgunluk kazanıyor. Fi‘l-vâkî bütün dâhiler de kendi milletlerinin felsefe, din, ahlak bedi‘ilerinden te‘sirler almakla beraber ayrıca bir huşuşiyyet ve ‘ulviyyet vardır ki: bu cihetin bütün insâniyâti ‘alâkadâr etmemesi mümkün değildir. Nitekim Sokrat,

Eflâṭun, Āristo, Dante, Corneille, Moliere, Decartes gibi ‘āzimin herhangi bir mütefekkeri cezb etmeleri maḥalli huşuşıyetlerinden mā‘ada bir de beşerî hiss ve ḥaḳıkatleri en iyi eḥsas ve ifāde etmelerindedir. Fransızlar Yunan-ı kâdim ve Romā şaheserlerini aşılardan mütāle‘a ve kendi lisānlarına tercüme ederlerken yalnız en hür bir māzî-ı tefekkürler ilşak peydā etmiş ve yetişmiş dehālardan istifāde bulunmuş olmalıdırlar aynı zamanda kendi dehālarının, yāni tarz-ı tefekkürlerinin huşuşıyetini keşfettiler ki şu ‘urlu bir milliyetçilik için bundan daha esaslı bir kazanç olamaz. Bütün bu ma‘lûm muḳaddimāt bugünkü nesle münevverlik ḥaḳkında yeni baştan bir tefekkür ve terbi‘ zemini hazırlamak için hatırlatılmıştır. İşte bir takım su‘aller ki ḥayat-ı fikriyemizle çok ‘alākadār: Türk tarihî medeniyetinden münevverlik ‘acabā kaç telakkiye uğradı? Bu telakkiilere karşı hangi esaslar dā‘iresinde hazırlıklar yapıldı ve bu hazırlıkları hangi mü‘esseseler te‘mîn etdi? ‘Arab ve ‘Acem şaheserleri ne kıymettediler? Dehāları arasındaki farklar nelerdir? Türkler bu dehālardan neleri ḳabul neleri red etdiler? Türk tarz ve sū-i teffekkürü bugün ne haldedir? Meziyet ve kuşurları nelerdir? Şark dehāsi ile ğarb dehāsi esāsen ayrı şeyler midir? Ayrı ise bu ayrılığın huşuşıyet ve kıymet-i medenisi nedir? Millî Mecmu‘a bu mes‘elelere cevāb vermeye şalahiyetdār müteḥassıslara mürāca‘at eder ve muṭāle‘alarını alırsa çok kıymetli bir hizmet-i ‘ilmiyyede bulunmuş olacaktır. Bu mes‘eleler ḥaḳkında ‘umūmî fikirler elde edilebilirse henüz renksiz ve esassız olan lise taḥsilimizle Dāru’l-funūnumuz şu ‘urlu bir istikāmet alacak ve hedeflerini bileceklerdir.

Lisānlar efām vasıtaları olduğuna göre milletlerin tarz-ı idrāk ve telakkiilerini en güzel tanıttacak bu lisānlarda yazılmış şāh-eserlerdir. Bunları lisānımıza tercüme ederken medeniyete hizmet etmiş milletlerin zekālarındaki tenevvū‘ ve tarz-ı fa‘aliyeti de göreceğiz. Tercümelerde aşlına şādık ḳalmak için şarf ettiğimiz bütün ğayretlere rağmen neticede şadākatsizlik bulacağız. Her millet lisānını kendi dehā ve zekāsına göre yoğurduğundan başka milletlerin dehāsını ‘āyinen ifāde edemez. Bu sebepten ḥarfıyyen tercüme çok kere şekilsiz ve ma‘nāsız bir tercümedir. Mümkün mertebe me‘āline yaklaşmak için ya mübālağaya veyā za‘if ifādeye uğraşmak muḥakkaktır. İşte bi‘l-tercrübe elde edilecek bu neficeler Türk mefküresinin ‘Arab ve ‘Acem, Latin, Yunan, Fransız, İngiliz, Ālman mefkürelerinden hangi cihetlerde ayrıldığını vāzah şüretde meydāna çıkaracaktır. Fazla olarak bu mesā‘i-i kâdim tarz-ı tefekkür arasındaki tekāmül de gösterecektir. Şu hâlde şāh-eserlerin tercümesi zāhiren bir lisānın kelimeleri yerine diğerk lisānın kelimelerini ikāme etmek gibi basit bir ‘ameliyye görünür. Hālbuki ḥaḳıkatde fikrini muhtelif tarzlarda tezāhür etdiren zekā-yı beşerin bir tedkiḳ ve mütāle‘ası yapılacaktır. Coğrafi, siyāsî, dinî ayrılıklara rağmen dehālar arasında bir ittisāl-ı devāmiyyet Continuité vardır. Bir milletin esāslı intibāhı münevverlerinin devāmiyyete āgāh olmalarına vābestedir. Bu ‘itibārla te‘lif ve tercüme hey‘etlerinin ve ale‘l-‘umūm mütercimlerinin vazî‘fe ve mes‘uliyetleri pek büyüktür. Şaheserler dururken ābur cubur yazıları nakletmek ma‘nevî bir şekāvetdir. Yeni nesil bu noktada artık muteyakkız ve şu ‘urlu olmalıdır. Ciddî ve yüksek şeylerden ziyāde ‘ādiliklerle ḳalmamız hep bu şu ‘ürsuzluğun neficeleridir.

Orta taḥsilimizde terbiye-yi insāniye ve ma‘neviyyeye nerelerden ve nasıl āldığımızı düşünürsek kendimize acımamak ḳābil değildir. Esāsa hazırlığımız olmamak dolāyısıyla kendi şāh-eserlerimizi de taḥlil ve taşnif etmediğimiz için bunlardan gençleri ne şüretle istifāde ettireceğimizi bilemiyoruz. İçimizde ecnebî lisānlar vāşitasile kendilerini bulanlar pek āz olduğu için ancak şahıslarına hādım olabilmüşlerdir. Arz ettiğim tarzda bir intibah olmadıkça ve bu intibāh liseler ve Daru’l-funūnlar vāşitasile bir zümre-yi münevvere vücūda getirmediğimiz, ḳalkınmamıza ihtimāl yokdur. Bugünkü bocalanmalarımız hep esāssızlık ve istikāmetsizliğimizdendir. Kâdim şaheserlerle ulfet peydā etmeden mu‘āşırlaşmamız iddi‘ası gevezeliktir.

Gençler ‘ale‘l- ‘āde eserlerden ānlayamaz diyenler dāhileri bilmeyenlerdir. Ḥaḳıḳî şāh-eserler ‘umūmiyyetle en sāde ve en veciz tefekkürlerdir. Kendilerinden mütefekker olanlar dururken hazmsız ters, ḳarışik kafaların çürük sakızları çiğnenmez.

Kendimizi bulmak demek kâdim milletlerle mu‘āşır milletlerden ve hattā kendi klasiklerimizden nasıl bir düşünüşle ve nasıl bir taḥassüsle āyrıldığımızı bilmek demektir. Artık milliyetin yalnız propağanda ve medhiyesi devri ḳapanmalıdır. Milliyet daha çok zekā ve ‘ilmin terakkiisinden doğan bir intibahın ilk merhalesidir. Bu devrin şihḥat ve medeniyele inkişāfı huşuşi fikir ve mütāle‘a huşuşi taḥassüs ve huşuşi irādelerden ‘umūmî fikir ve taḥassüs ve irādelere yükselmeğe mutavaḳkıfıdır. ‘umūmî fikirlere çıkmak da ancak esāslı bir hars ve ‘irfāna mutavaḳkıfıdır. ‘Aksi taḳdirde münevverlerimiz Āybābanın soğuk ve cansız muhattabı gibi olur.

Muştafa Şekîb [Tunç], "Tam ma'nāsile Münevver," *Millî Mecmû'a*, 1 December [1 Kânunuevvel], 1923[1339]

Mecmû'anın birinci nüshasındaki «münevverlik mefhumu» ñu okuyan bir iki genç ile görüştüğden sonra münevverlik hakkındaki tahtilin kâfi derecede vuzuñ ile añaşılmamış olduğunu gördüm. Zekî, bilğîç ve işgüzarlarla münevverler arasındaki farkın nerede ve hangi haysiyyetle olduğunu tâ'yinde bu gençler müreterrid idiler. Nazar-ı diğkat ve mülañaza-yı münevverlik mevzû'na celb için yazılan o mañale henüz bir muñaddime olmak itibarile mañsada-ı te'mine kâfi gelemezdi. Binâ-en-'aleyh burada mes'eleyi daha açık tahtil ve taşnif edeceğim; ya'ni tam ma'anāsile münevver olablarıñ hâlet-i ruhiyelerini taşnif etdikten sonra bunlarıñ münevver zan edilmesi melhûz olan insanlardan naşil ayrıldıklarını göstermeğe çalışacağım. Münevverleriñ mevki'î bu şüretle ta'yin etdikten sonra artıñ hiçbir tereddüd kalmaz zan ediyorum.

Münevverleri 'ale'l-umûm insanlardan ayıran şıfat-ı kâşife zekâlarıñ çeviğliğı veya fevkal'adeligi olmadığı gibi bir insanın çok zekî, çok bilğîç veya büyük bir fa'âl olması da münevver olmasına bir sebep teşkil etmez. Zekânın tabi'î ve 'umûmî vazifesi her insanda aynıdır: añval ve icâbete intibak etmek. Esâs i'tibarile münevveriñ zekâsı da bu zekâdan başka bir şey değildir. Münevveri zekîden ayıran zekânın cinsi olmayıb bir nevi' haysiyyeti, ğâyesi, ve kendisine maşuş heyecân ve ihtiraşdır. Münevverden başkaları için zekânın bizatihi hiç bir haysiyyet-i kıymeti yokdur. Bunlar zekâyı zekâ olarak sevmedikleri gibi zekâda kendisine maşuş bir nâmus da taşvir etmezler. Binâ'en-'aleyh zekâlarıñ tarz-ı isti'mâli yalnız huşuş ahlak ve terbiyelerine: 'âkide, arzu ve i'tiyad gibi temâyüllerine tabi'îdir. Halbuki münevveriñ zekâsında 'ilm terbiyesile hañikât endişesi ve hañâ korkusu hâkimdir. Onun nazarında dimağ yalnız âlet değil 'aynı zamanda ğâyedir. Zekâyâ hizmet ettirmek münevveriñ başlıca şıfat-ı fârikasıdır. Hayat-ı zihniyenin tekâmülüne hizmet etmekle münevver en büyük ve eñ esâslı bir iş yapıđına kâni'dir. Bu kanâ'at ondaki ihtiraşın sâbit bir heyecânıdır. İşte münevverdeki hasebiyeliğın 'aşıl ma'nâsı da budur. Münevver hayatını böyle fa'aliyet-i dimağıyeye imkân veren bir vasıta olduğu için sever. Bu münevverlerde tecellî eder. Fransa ihtilâl-i kebîriniñ kurbanlarından olan genç şa'ir André Chenier belediyenin çöp arabasile siyâsetgâha görürülürken: «Öleceğime yanmıyorum: fañat bu başta söylenecek daha çok şeyler vardı.» demişdi. İşte hayattan katî' ümîd etmiş bir münevveriñ en şamimî heyecanı!.. Demek ki münevverlik 'Arab âtı gibi zekânın bir 'ırk-ı mümtâzını temsil ediyor hañikât-ı muñabbeti ve hañâ korkusunu kendilerine tabiat-ı sâniye yapmış olan münevverler bu i'tibârla eñ bî-ñaraf insanlardan 'add olunurlar. Yalnız zekî olanlar da teşâdüf olunan kurnazlık veya dirâyet gibi kabiliyyetler yerine münevverde uşul, prensip, tecrübe ve istidlâl gibi esaslı ve geniş ve firâset hâkimdir.

Münevveri 'alî ila talâk zekîden ayırdıktan sonra münevveriñ ihtilâlcilerle 'an'anciler ve halk arasındaki huşüsiyyetini göstermek lâzımdır. Buñlar yapılmadan koca münevverin mevki', vazife ve ehemmiyeti tevziñ edilmez. Binâ'en-'aleyh münevverleriñ hâlet-i ruhiyyesini ihtilâlcî, 'an'anci ve halk hâlet-i ruhiyyeleriyle muñâyese etmek lâzımdır.

Münevverler ne ihtilâlcî, ne de 'an'ancilerdir. Buñlardan hangisini tercih ederseniz diye şorsanız alacağınız cevâb: tebessümdür. Çünkü münevvere 'ilâve edilecek başka herhangi bir 'unvân olan ma'nâ ve mâhiyeti bozar.

'an'anelerin insanları şulhperver yaşatan sâkin muñtiple zarüret ve meşrû'iyetlerini her münevver tañdir eder. Hattâ bunlarda ecdâd ve atalarını hatırlatan, yaşatan birçok kıymetleri mesâ'î ve yadigârlar olduğunu düşünerek heyet-i 'umûmiyyesinde dindârâne bir heyecân ile karşılanacak bir şâ'r ve câzibe de bulur. O anlar ki eñ iyi kabiliyyet ve dehâlarıñı bu eşerlerde yaşatdıklarına mütesellî olarak terk-i hayat eylemişlerdir. Bunuñla beraber kelimenin tam ma'nâsile hiçbir vakit 'an'anci olamazlar. Bu mirâşın mülkiyetiñin kendilerine ne kadar kuvvet ve sa'adet verdiğini teslim ve tañdir etdikten sonra mâziniñ gözü

bağlı bir esiri olmakda hiç bir sebep ve zevk bulamazlar. Aşıl vazîfeleri mirasın sağlam, doğru, canlı, tabiât ve 'akla mu'tâbîk olanlarını seçmek olduğunu bilirler.

'an'ancilerin mâziden kalma şeylerde gördükleri tekinlerin veya esrâr 'akidelerine ehemmiyet vermeyen münevverlere ihtilâlcilerin tedhîş ve tahvifleri de te'siri yoktur. Tecessüs ve teceddüd-ü millîlerini mevcûdî tahrîbden başka bir netîce vermeyeceği tevehhümile meflûc 'ana'necilerin da'imâ şulh ve sukûn tavsiye eden ve zâyı ve işâretleri karşısında münevverler sa'hdâ kalmayub a'mâka ve nüfûz ve karanlıkları silmek şüretile açık ve serbest fikirleri zîyâsı altında yaşamayı gösterirler. Geçmiş zamanların şolmuş çiçeklerindeki hazin ve mûnis râyihaları teneffüs ederken ye'ni zamanların da başka renk ve râyihalarda çiçekler yetiştirebileceğini bilir, ve başlıca arzularını bunların yetişmesine vakf ederler. Çünkü insanın mümtaziyyet ve haşşa-yı esâsiyesinin fa'âl ve yaratıcı bir kudret olduğunu bilirler.

Yalnız teceddüdlere de 'an'anelere yaptıkları gibi diğkkatli ve bi-ıaraf bir tedkîkten geçirirler. İhtilâlcilerin telaş ve 'aşabiyetlerine, 'an'ancilerin tereddüd ve tevehhüslerine lafazânların boş kelimelerine sürüklenmezler. Değişiklik için değişiklik, fa'idesiz cemâlî coşgunluk cebr ve şiddetle yıkub da ye'nden yapan mülahazası tahrîbkârlık münevveri dâ'imâ ürkütür. Hiçbir şey yapmak cesâretinde olmayan 'an'ancilerle her şeyi çabucağ değıştirmek hamasî içinde olan ihtilâlcilerin arasında hiçbir karar veremeyerek bu iki mu'akis cereyân arasında mütereddid kalan halk halet-I ruhiyesi 'akl-ı selîmile ortada durub beklemekden başka bir şey yapamaz. İşte münevverlere eñ çok ihtiyâc duyulan zamanlar bu mu'akis cereyânların çarpışdığı devirlerdir ki Türkler kaç senedir bu cendere arasında kıvrınıyor. Halkın 'akl-ı selîmi mu'akis iki kuvvetin arasında kafaların vazîyyetine tabi'î bir terâzi dili olmakdan fazla bir şey yapamaz.

*Islamic Preachers' Responsibilities, BCA DIB 51-0-0/3-15-9,18 January 1925*

---

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti  
Umur-ı Şeriye ve Evkaf Vekâleti  
Memuriyet ve Sicil Müdüriyeti  
Bolu- yolu müftülüğine

Daireniz dahilinde vâ'izin faslından ma'âş alan efendilerin cevâmide va'z itmeleri ve mevzû'ların, dinî, millî, içtimâ'î, ahlâkî, şınâ'î, ticârî, zirâ'î âyet ve eḥâdişden tadvikât ve tettebbuât-i lazîme de bulunarak bu sahalarda Müslümanları tenvîre itinâ etmeleri ve bu yolda ibzâl-i himmet ve ibraz-ı kudret idemeyecekler varsa derhâl isimlerinin bildirilmesi ve va'âz esnâsında halkın anlayabileceği açık bir lisân ile beyânatda bulunarak mustalah söz söylemekden kaç'ıyyen tevâkkî ve âyet ve eḥâdisin tercümelerinde gayet sade bir üslûba ri'âyet itmeleri ve Receb-i Şerifin bedâyetinden sene gâyesine kadar bir ay zarfında hangi cevâmide ve ne mevzû üzerine icrâ-i nuşûl-i pend itdiklerine dair tarafınızdan her ay muntazaman vuku'ât cetvelinin irsâlî ve bu ta'mîm ahkâmına kaç'ıyyen diğķat itmeleri lüzûmunun kendilerine müessir bir surette tebliğ tamimen beyan olunur efendim.

18 Kanunısâni 341  
Diyânet İşleri Reisi

Daḥiliye Vekāleti  
Emniyet-i ‘Umūmī Müdiriyet-i ‘Umūmiyesi  
Baş Vekālet-i Celiyeye

Nisānın ilk haftası zarfında kabristanda bir mezar içerüsünde birisinin feryād etmekde olduğunu müdde-i ‘umūmī ve bir ṭabib ile kabristana gidilerek mezar içinde bir şahsın oturmakta (Ben berhayatım ne için beni defn etdiler, beni ateşlerde yakıyorlar.) zesine (Āna ve bābālar evladlarına şāhib olmuyorlar, kadınlar çıplāk geziyor, saçlarını kesiyor, manṭo giyiyorlar, bunun için beni yakıyorlar) dediğine dā‘ir şehir dahilinde bir şāyi‘a devrān etdiyi istihbār kılınmış ve yapılan taḥkīkātın mezkūr şāyi‘anın Mersin’in Maḥmudiye maḥallesinde muḳīme Lazkıyeli Ahmed Bedevī maṭluḳası Mahmud kızı Faṭıma, Şalih Safi kızı ve İbrahim oḅlu, Ali Çehu zevcesi Semra, Mahmud kerimesi ve Hamal Mustafa zevcesi Ayşe Bahre, Kalaycı Bilal zevcesi Ḳatibe hanımlar tarafından tedbīr ve işā‘a edildiği anlaşılaraq bu babdaki evrāk-ı taḥkīkiye ile müdde-i ‘umūmīliğe tevdi‘ edildiği vilāyetinden bildirilmiş ‘arz-ı ma‘lūmāt ederim efendim.

Daḥiliye Vekili  
Şükrü Kaya  
1928/5/2

### *Zihni Orhon, İstiklal ve İnkılap, Erzurum, 13 March 1936*

---

490.0.0/1.1011.901.1

C.H.Partisi Başkanı Zihni Orhonun “İnkılap ve İstiklâl” konuları hakkında Erzurumda verdikleri birinci konferansları.

Saygı değer yurttaşlarım,

Hepinizi saygı ve sevgi ile selamlarken sizinle birkaç dakika karşı karşıya bulunmak şerefini bana veren Parti Genel Sekreterliğine teşekkür eder doğduğum bu yurda olan hasretlerimni ve bağlılığım sunarım.

Söyleyeceğim sözler hepinizin bildiği şeylerdir. Fakat iyi şeylerin tekrarı faydeli olduğu için biraz dinlemenizi rica ederim.

İnkılâp üzerine konuşacağım. İnkılap demek, değiştirmek değişmek, lüzumluyu almak, faydasız, zararlıyı atmak demektir.

Hepiniz bilirsiniz ki Osmanlı imparatorluğu kurulduğu zamanlarda ovaların genişliği, denizlerin fırtınası, dağların sarılığı kendisini durduramıyordu. Sola sağa, doğuya, batıya ilerliyordu. O zamanlar kanunlara riayet ediyorlardı, Avrupada henüz inkılâplar olmamıştı. Sonraları İngilterede, Fransada inkılâplar ihtilaller oldu. Beşerin tabii hakları alındı.

Osmanlı imparatorluğu bu inkılâplara yabancı kaldı, Osmanlı tarihlerinde çok tekrarlanan bir cümle vardır. (Sir makdui dersaadete isal kılındı. Emvali müsadere olundu) cümlesi eyalet beyleri ve valiler, kumandanlar hakkındadır. Bunlar böyle olunca halkı düşününüz eyalet beyleri, valiler istedikleri gibi asıp kesiyorlardı. Ankarya, cerime alup yürüyordu. Bir zamanlar olduki hükümeti merkeziye darulsuada ağası habeshli gani ve ser karin sudanlı cevher ağaların elinde kaldı. Böyle bir diyardan hayır umulur mu?

Avrupada tüccar kuvveti ortaya çıktı. Dünya değişti. Tarakkiyat başladı. Osmanlı imparatorluğunun tabii bulunan Bulgarlar, Sırlar, Macarlar ve saire Avrupa terakkiyatına ayak uydurmaya başladılar. İmparatorlukta ki islâm üsurlar uykuda devam ettiler. Nizam, kanun bozuldu. Yalnız askerî kısım kendi kuruluşunu muhafaza edebilmişti. Son vakitlerde bu da bozuldu ve memleket çökmeğe mahkum oldu.

Bütün yükler Türklere yüklendi. Arap, Arnavut askere gelmedi. Aşiret alayları teşekkül ederek Kürtlere imtiyazlar verildi. Medreselerde okuyanlar ve İstanbul halkı askerlikten affedildi. Hristiyanlar sene 72 kuruş gibi ufak bir vergi vermek suretiyle askerliğe gelmiyorlardı. Fakat nüfusça, servetçe, maarifçe ilerledikçe ilerliyorlardı. Türk unsurları bütün yükleri çekiyor ve bitiyordu.

Lakin tarihlerde musavatsızlık o hala geldiki Harbiye mektebinde okuyan kaymakam ve miralaylar bulunuyordu. Yeni doğan çocuklara bile çavuşluk rütbesi tevcih olunuyordu. Böyle idare olunur mu? Böyle bir idareden hayır beklenir mi?

Beşeriyetin hakkı tabiisi olan hürriyet, müsavat, ve adaleti kimse vermez bu hak alınır. Beşer hakkı tabiisinni bilirse saraylar ve onların tabii menfaatları bulunan din müesseseleri bedava geçinemezler, safahatlarını, zevklerini süremezler. Avrupada böyle olduğu gibi Osmanlılıkta da böyle idi. Hem memleketi idare edenler dünyadan haberi olmayan cahil adamlardı. Beşerin hakkını kendiliklerinden vermedikleri gibi Avrupayı görüp dünyayı anlamasınlar diye Avrupaya seyahatı şiddetle men etmişidiler. Tarihte bazı istisnalar vardır. Rusların büyük Petrosu bazı teceddütler yaptı Afğan kralı Amanullah memleketinde bir şeyler yapmak istedi. Fakat muvaffak olamadı.

Osmanlılarda da bazı kımıldayışlar olmuştur. Genç Osman bir şeyler yapmak istedi. Boğuldu. Kendisini boğduran kayın babası bulunan bir şeyhülislamdır.

Ruşuk taranı şefleri bulunan Alemdar Mustafa Paşa ile İstanbul’a geldiler. Bu kımıldayıştta üçüncü Selimin katliyle ve Alemdarın kendisini şehit etmesiyle netice buldu.

Bir de tanzimatı hayriye denilen gülhane fermanı vardır ki güya memlekette islâhat yapılacaktı. Bundan da bir faide elde edilememiştir. Abdülazizin halini müteakip meşrutiyet idare ilân edildi. 93 savaşının

ilânında meşrutiyeti boğmak fikri de var idi denilse hata olmaz. Harbin başlamasıyla meşrutiyette kaldırıldı. Memleket daha ziyade harabiye sürüklendi. Her türlü fenalık ileriledi.

Muhterem arkadaşlar, yatan bir insan sıhhatta olsa nihayet sıhhatı bozulur, etleri çürür ve ölür. Ayakta duranın kuvveti kesilerek düşer, yürüyen yol alır. (12)93 den 324e kadar memleket inledi, durdu. Türk zelil ve hakir oldu. Nihayet imparatorluğun taksimi için Reval mülakatı vaki oldu. Memlekette yer yer isyanlar başladı. Meşrutiyet idare ilân edildi.

Bu inkılâpta Erzurumlular, sizin de mühim rollarınız vardır. Burada iki üç sene kadar inkılâp için ihtilâller yapmıştır. Bu inkılâp kitaplarında yazılan şekilde tatbik edildi. Memlekete uygun bir şekilde tatbiki düşünülemedi. Memleketten harice kaçmış olan Ermeniler, bulgarlar ve saire memlekete dönerken memleketi bomba ve silahla doldurdular.

Matbuat hürriyeti de yine kötü kullanıldı. Bomba, silâh, hançer gazeteleri ortalığı anarşiye verdiler. Osmanlı meclisi mebusanında Boşolar, Kozmediler, Talip Paşalar meclis kürsüsünden Türke küfürler savuracak kadar ileri gittiler.

Yemende, Arnavutlukta, Havranda ihtilaller oldu. Balkan harbi oldu. Çok acı mağlubiyetler meydana geldi. Cihan savaşına girdik. Bu savaşa girmeli mi, girmemeli idik. Bu ayrı bir mevzudur. Girmemek imkânı yok idi. Girdik ve çok fedakârlık ettik, çok kan döktük ve nihayet yere serildik.

İstiklâl mücadelelerine başladık. Bununla beraber inkılabı da başladık. İnkılâbı ya millet yapar. Yahut yukarıdan verilir. Bizim inkılâbımızı millet yapmıştır. Yani siz ve biz yaptık inkılâp hepimizin malımızdır. Seçtiğimiz sayımlar kanun yapmışlardır. Hükümet onu icra etmiştir.

Şimdi sırasıyla inkılâplarımızı konuşalım.

Evvela saltanatla hilafeti ayırdık. Saltanat kokmuş ve çürümüşü. Osmanlı hanedanının içerisinde bir kaçı müstesna olmak üzere diğerleri koça nişan takan, sakala inci dizen lâle, samır devri yaşatan insanlardı. Bu saltanata lüzum yoktu sonra hilafette ilga edildi. Türklere zarar veren müesseseleri atarken elbette bu müessese de atılacaktı. Hilafet ne idi? Bunu arz edeyim.

Hazreti peygamberden sonra yerine gelmiş bir kaç zatı müteakip hilafet emevilere, Abbaslara intikal ediyor. İslamiyette bunun yeri yoktur, bu isbat edilmişti Yavuz Selim Musuru zapt etti. Orada bulunan ve hangi nesilden geldiği belli olmayan mütevekkil Alallah isminde birisinden bazı emanetleri ve halife unvanını aldı. Ondan sonra bu üncvandan Türklerin çekmediği belalar kalmadı. Anadolu evladı Arabistanın, Yemenin asayiş uğurunda kanını, arabı doyurmak için malını verdi. Bu hal yüzlerce sene devam etti.

Cihan savaşına başlarken halife Reşat cihat ilân etti. Güya dünyadaki müslimanlar bu cihada iştirat edeceklerdi. Kaç müsliman geldi? Bilakis peygamberin torunları düşmanlarla birleşerek Türkü arkasından vurdular. İşte hilafet münheldir. Bize lüzumu yoktur. Evvelce hilafet unvanı için rekabete düşenler onu alsınlar inkılâptan birisi de tekke ve medreselerin ilgasıdır. Bunuda iyi ettik. Bu sınıflar o kadar cahil idilerki gözleriyle gördükleri yeri dünya ve komşularını da yer yüzünde bulunan hükümetler zannediyorlardı. Buralar asker kaçaklarıyla dolmuşudu. Tekkeler miskinane halini almışdı. Benim çağımda bulunan Erzurumlular bilirler ki 319 veya 320 de Bitlis ve Beyazıt taraflarından bazı sivri külahlıları hükümet getirip başka taraflara sürdü. Bunlar şeyhlerine karşı dört elli yürüyerek uluyorlardı. İnsanda bu kadar zillet ve hakareti kabul eder mi? Hangi dinde vardır. Ben çalışayım. Sen tekkende ye. Şeyhe nezirler gelsin bu milletin çektiği yetişir. Vergisini vermekte güçlük çeken zavallı halk birde bu küruha nezir diye cerime mi verecekti.

Harf inkılâbı da yapıldı. Arap harfleri 35 dir. Her harf üç dürlü birleşir. 1005 türlü şekil çıkar. Bunları bellemek elbet güçtür. Ananadan ayrılmak gücüne gitmesin. Üç dört senede bir mektup yazmak öğrenilemiyordu. Bu günkü harfler 28dir. Az zamanda okuyup yazmak kabil oluyor. Çocuklarımız pek âlâ seri bir surette okuyup yazıyorlar. Zaten inkılâpların daha ziyade gelecek nesle şumulu ve faidesi vardır. Buda pek âla olmuştur.

İnkılâpların birisi de milliyetçiliktir. Halk Partisinin oklarından birisinin işaret ettiği mana milliyetçiliktir. İmparatorluk devrinde memleketin öz evladı bulunan Türkler hakir, ve zelil idiler. Buna mukabil bir sürü kavmi necip var idi.



Biz milliyetçiliği bütün Türkleri camiamızda toplamağa kast edecek kadar milliyetçiliği uzatmıyoruz. Biz bu hülyadan çok uzağız onlar bizim kan kardeşimiz oldukları için onların felaketlerinden elbette mütesir olur. İyi bir halda bulunmalarından zevk duyarız. Onlarla olan münasebetimiz bu kadardır ve bu münasebetimiz manevidir. Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin sınırları içerisinde bulunan ve yürekleri bizim gibi çarpan, kafaları bizim gibi işleyen her fert Türktür. Hele yanlışlıkla kendilerini Kürt sayan ve halbuki dağılı Türklerden başka bir şey olmayan Kürtler de Türktürler. Bu Yurdun bir karış toprağı bile artık ayrılmak kabul etmeyen kutsal bir yurttur. Başka bir surette düşünenlerin kafası parçalanır bu böyledir.

Yapılan inkılapların birisi de cumhuriyettir. Dünyada çok hükümet şekli vardır. Bunun en olgun şekil cumhuriyettir. Cumhuriyet halkın kendisini idare etmesi demektir. Bizde böyledir? Evet böyledir. Saylavlar seçiyoruz. Bu saylavlar Ankarada B.M. Meclisinde toplanıyorlar. Saylavlar içerisinde birisini cumur başkanı seçiyorlar. Cumur başkanı saylavlar içerisinde birisini hükümeti teşkile memur ediyorlar. Başbakan yine saylavlar içerisinde icra vekillerini seçiyor. Saylavlar meclisinde hükümetin programını okuyor. İtimat reyini alınca hükümet teşekkül ediyor. İşte görölüyorki Cumhuriyet hükümeti, halkın kendi Hükümetidir. Hukuk ulemasının yazdığı kitaplardaki Cumhuriyet şekline benzemiyorsak Atatürkün dediğı gibi kendimize benziyoruz. Onlarda muhtelif fırkalar var diye bizde Cumhuriyet şekline muhalif partileri asla kabul edemeyiz. Hatta Cumhuriyet şekline muğayir hükümet şekillerinin münakaşa bile etmeyiz. Cihanın bu keymekeş zamanlarında kendi kendimize benzediğimiz bize çok faidelidir.

İnkılâplardan birisi de kadına siyasi hak vermektir. Arkadaşlar dünyanın yarısı erkek, yarısı kadındır. Dünya işleri o kadar ehemmiyet peyda etti, o kadar büyüdü ki kadınları işe karışmayan memleketlerde çok noksanlık olur.

Her işin başı Yurt müdafaasıdır. Kadına hak verilme idi, yurt müdafaasında yarı kuvvetimiz kayıp olurdu. Büyük savaşta, İstiklâl mücadelesinde Türk kadını erzak ve cephaneye taşıdı. İstiklâlin kazanılmasında onun büyük hissesi vardır. Kadında Allahın kuludur. Oda gezecek, hava ve güneş alacak, tabiyetten oda istifade edecektir. Bu inkılâpta yerindedir ve lüzumludur.

Şapka inkılabı yapıldı. Asyadan geldiğimiz zaman başımızda fes yoktu fesi Giritlilerden aldık. Her iş Yurt müdafaasıyla ölçülür. Güneşe karşı tutularak silah atıldığı zaman nişan alınmaz. Güneşe karşı bir siperlik lazımdır. Yazın seyahata çıktığımız zamanlar başımıza güneş siperi denilen bir şey geçirmez mi idik, işte şapka bu işlerin hepisini görüyor ve medeni bir kisvedir. Bir çuha veya şayak parçasının sami dininden çıkardığına kapılacak kadar imanda şüpheli isen öyle dinden zaten hayır yoktur.

Yurttaş şapkanı doğru gey gün görmez zığvayı, sana epeyce masraf mucip olan şalı çıkar, elbise yalnız sıcağın, soğuktan korunmak için değildir biraz da zevki okşayan bir şeydir. Şaldan, şayaktan olsun pantol yaptır.

İnkılâbı başlıyalı on dört senedir. Bu müddet zarfında yapılan işler harikadır. Yapılan bazı işleri sayayım. Dünyada şimendifer icad edileli yüz küsür sene geçmiştir. Biz de şimendifercilik icaddan otuz küsür sene sonra başladı. İmparatorluk zamanında senede elli kilometrolük yol yapılmıştır. Senede yüz kilometro yapılsa idi bu kadar kırılıp dökülmezdi, bu kadar acılar felaketler görmezdi. İmparatorluğun yaptığı şimendiferler ecnebilere imtiyazlar vermek suretile yapılmıştır. Bunların bir çok zararlarını gördük.

Balkan harbinda Rumeli şimendifer idaresinden gördüğümüz zararlar büyüktür. Bir haftada ancak bir katar gönderdikleri vakıdır. Cumhuriyet idaresi bize Ankara-Sivas, Samsun-Sivas, Irmak-Filyos, Kütahya-Balikesir, Fevzi Paia-Diyarbakir hatlarını yaptı. Afyon-Antalya, Sivas, Erzurum hatlarını yapıyor. Bizim en ziyade gözlediğimiz Erzurum hattıdır. Osmanlı imparatorluğu son zamanlarda nüfuz mıntıklarına ayrıldığı ve kendiliğinden şimendifer yapmak kudretini haiz olmadığı için nerede şimendifer yaptırmak istese bir hükümete imtiyaz vermek mecburiyetinde kalmıştı.

Bu gün şükür etmeliyiz ki istediğimiz yerde kendimiz yaptırıyoruz. Cumhuriyetin onuncu yıl dönümündeki hesapta Cumhuriyetin senede 200 kilometre ve geçen sene Diyarbakir hattının açılışında yapılan hesapta senede 227 kilometre yol yapıldığı anlaşılmıştır. Bu, başlı başına bir nur değil mi? Hangimizin aklından geçerde ki Türk şekerini yiyeceğiz?

Hükümet fabrikalar yaptırıyor. Geçen sene Kayseri fabrikasını gezdim, daha makineler yeni konuluyordu. Bana öyle bir ilham geldi ki Yurdun dört tarafına dör dritnot koymuşuz, azametli toplarım, yurda yan bakacaklara karşı çevirmişiz. Bir buçuk ay sonra İstanbulda hastahane yatıyorum, her gün

Cümhuriyet gazetesini okuyorum, bakıyorum. Bir zatta Kayseri fabrikasını gezerken tamamıyla benim gibi ilham almış, gazeteye yazmış

Arkadaşlar imparatorluk devrinde iğneden ipliğe kadar bu memleket bütün ihtiyacatını tamamıyla dışarıdan alıyordu. Memleketin serveti oluk gibi dışarı akıyordu. Memleketi biraz kavramış olanlar memleketin batmadığına hayret ediyordu. Bu şartlar altında hiç bir millet kendisini koruyamazdı, batardı. Memlekette her şey bozuktu. Yalnız Türkün temiz kanı dırki bozulmamıştı. Bu kan sayesinde kurtuldu. Ereğlide, Nazillide mensucat, Bursada merinos, Gemlik'te sün'i ipek fabrikaları yapılıyor. Bakırköy mensucat, Paşabahçe cam, İzmit kağıt, Zonguldak sumikok fabrikaları yapılmıştır. Kömür deyup geçmeyelim, kömür siyal elmasdır. Ve bizde bol kömür vardır. Hiç kimse iddia edemez ki her şeyimiz yapılmıştır. Ortalık gül gülistan olmuştur. Şüphesiz daha çok işlerimiz, çok noksanlarımız vardır. Elverirki inkılâbı benimseyelim ve çok sevelim, hepsini yapacağız.

Erzurumlular inkılapta sizin büyük rolünüz vardır. Biliyorsunuz ki mütarekede her tarafta bir çok cemiyetler teşekkül etmişti. Burada da bir Müdafaa-i Hukuk cemiyeti teşekkül etti. Atatürk Samsun, Merzifon, Amasya cihetlerini dolaştıktan sonra buraya geldi. Burada cemiyetin hedefini, maksadını, nizamnamesini şumullandırdı. Ve burada bir kongre yaptı. İşte inkılabın başlangıcı bu zaman oldu. Görülüyorki ikinci meşrutiyetin istihsalında olduğu gibi bundada senin muhim rolün var. İnkılâbı çok sev ve ona hor bakacakları hiç bir zaman affetme. Arkadaşlar, dost uyur düşman uyumaz derler. Gerçi sulh zamanındayız fakat milletler arasında gizli harplar devam ediyor. Gözle görülen kısım gümrükler harbidir. Diğeri ve en müthişi propağanda ve casusluk harbidir. Hiç hissetmezsiniz inkılâbı kötü gösterirler. Hükümete, büyüklere iftiralar ederler, seni soğuturlar. Sende şüpheler uyandırırılar. Bilirsiniz burada bir Hacı Akif vardı. Nur içinde yatsın. Ermeniler esir götürmüşler Bakûnun sığ köyünde ölmüştür. Erzurum inkılâplarına çalışmışıdı. İttihat ve Terakkida çalışıdı. Hıristiyanların askere alınmasının faidesini takdir edememişidi. Bunun faidelerini anlatırdım. Kail olurdu. Bir müddet sonra yine tereddüt gösterirlerdi. Anlardım ki yine yanlış telkinat vermişler. Tekrar izah ederdim, kardaş her kes senin gibi demiyor ki şöyle böyle diyorlar şimdi kandım derdi.

Arkadaşlar çok dikkatli olmak, zararlı lakırdıların menbaini aramak iyi şeyleri daima tekrar etmek lazımdır.

Arkadaşlar, sizi epeyce yordum. Beni dinlediğinizden dolayı sizlere çok teşekkür ederim.

Yaşasın inkılâp, yaşasın büyük Atamız, yaşasın inkılâpta büyük rolü olan Erzurumlular.

### *Zihni Orhon, İstiklal ve İnkılap, Erzurum, 16 March 1936*

BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1011-901-1

C.H.P. Başkanı Zihni Orhon'un Erzurumda (İnkılap ve İstiklal) konuları üzerine verdikleri ikinci Konferans,

Hepinizi Saygı ve sevgile selamlarım

Geçen günkü konuşmamız inkılap mevzuu üzerine idi. Bu gün istiklal mefhumu üzerine konuşacağız. Fakat istiklal ve inkılap birbirini bağı şeylerdir. İstiklal işleri üzerine konuşurken belki yine inkılaptan da bahis edeceğim.

İstiklal dünyada en tatlı şeydir. Can, canan, mal, menal hepsi ona kurban olsun.

Türkiye Cümhuriyeti Osmanlı imparatorluğunun yerine geldi. İmparatorlukta istiklal yokmu idi? İstiklal nasıl alındı? Evet: imparatorlukta istiklâlin izi kalmamıştı. İstiklalin ilmi tarifini yapamıyacağım. Zaten ilim adamı değilim.

Anlayabildiğim hususatı sayayım. Mustakil hükümetin toprağının sınırları vardır. Bu sınırları kendi askerleriyle bekler ve korur. Kendi milletinin menfaatine uygun bir şekilde ve kendisine lüzumu olan tarz ve miktarda asker alır, dahilde milletini idare için yine milletine ve menfaatına uygun gelecek şekilde kanunlar yapar ve hükümeti vasıtasile tatbik eder, hariçle olan münasebetini hiç bir hükümetin tesiri olmaksızın tanzim eder. Müstakil hükümetin toprağının sınırları vardır. Bu sınırları kendi

askerlerle bekler ve korur. Kendi milletinin menfaatine uygun bir şekilde ve kendisine lüzumu olan tarz ve miktarda asker alır, dahilde milletini idare için yine milletine ve menfaatına uygun gelecek şekilde kanunlar yapar ve hükümeti vasıtasile tatbik eder, hariçte olan münasebetini hiç bir hükümetin tesiri olmaksızın tanzim eder. Müstakil olan hükümet maliyasını milletin verim şartlarına memletteki işlere karşı gelecek şekillerde yapar, vergilerini tanzim eder, bilhassa iktisat işlerinde çok titiz davranır, dahili sanayiye korumak için gümrüklerine istediği resmi koyar, adaleti bütün halka müsavi taksim eder. Hükümlerini tek bir mahkeme tarafından verir.

Osmanlı imparatorluğu böylemi idi. en azametli zamanlarda cehaleti, bikessizliği inkilabı takdir edememesi yüzünden ecnebilere ihsan şekline imtiyaz verdi o ihsanlar kapitolasiyon namını aldı bir yılan, akrep şeklinde boğazına sarıldı onu istiklaldan mahrum bıraktı.

Tarihen meşhurdur. Bir müahede yapmak için ecnebi ve osmanlı delegeleri birleştirdikleri zaman ecnebi delegeleri iktisadi işlerinde ısrar ederler. Osmanlı delegeleri de bu şartları kabul ederler, canım bu çorbacılar ehemmiyetsiz olan bu işlerde neden böyle ısrar ederler derlermiş.

Osmanlı imparatorluğunun hiç bir şubesine istiklal kalmamıştı. Dilediği tarzda Gümrük resmi koyamıyordu. Yüz on veya on beş resmini ecnebilere lütf ve müsaadelerile koyuyordu. O da bir takım şartlara bağlı idi. Mesela: filan şehrin Gümrük varidatı rıhtım şirketinin, filan şehrin Gümrük varidatı filan borca mukabil filan milletindir, deniliyor ve bu suretle ödeme yapıyordu ve o zamanlar aşar vardı. Bu aşarın mühim bir kısmı yine ecanibe verilir. Devletin itibarı yoktu alacaklılar alacaklarını tahsil için duyunuumumiye idaresi teşkil etmişlerdi. Bu idare imparatorluk içerisinde ayrıca bir hükümet idi. Memleketin sahibi bulunan türk bütün vergileri verirken ecanip kazanç ve okuruva vermezlerdi. Memleketin parası dışarı akardı. Askerde de istiklal kalmamıştı. Bu günün tatbikat ve manevralarına göre asker oyunu mesabesinde bulunan tatbikatlar her sahada yapılamıyordu. Burada deve böynü cihetlerinde manevra yapılamazdı. Memleketin ihtiyacına kâfi gelecek miktarda asker alınmazdı. Her hangi bir hükümete isyan edenler şiddetle tenkil ve imha edilirler. İmparatorluğun buna da hakkı kalmamıştı. Bilirsiniz ki 317 de Taloride Ermeniler isyan ettiler üzerlerine gönderildi, sekiz tabur Antiranik'in çetesini arak manastırında sardı. Fakat filan ve filan devletler hoş görmez diye üzerlerine topçu ateşi açılmadı. Bu çete kaçtı. Yüzlerle insanın kanı beyhude yere aktı gitti. Ermeni isyanlarının birisi İstanbulda osmanlı bankasını bombalamakla başlar. Binlerce insanın kanı aktı asiler bir seferat haneye girdiler o sefaretin İstanbul limanında bulunan gemisinden çıkarılan askerlerin himayesinde olarak ve hakanı müezzimini gözü önünde bu asiler başka memlekete gönderildilerki orada daha ziyade talim ve terbiye görüp tekrar gelerek türkün kanını akıtsınlar. 330 da bitliste bir şeyih isyanı olmuş, yüzlerce insan telef olmuştu. Cani şeyih Selim bitlis çarlık konsoloshanesine girmişti. Zayıf hükümet bu caniyi alamadı. Taki seferberlek ve harp oldu şeyh konsoloshaneden alındı.

Rumelide vilayeti selaseden ibaret bir ıslahat dairesi teşkil olunmuş idi. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa müfettişi umumi idi.

Geçen zamanların işleri unutulur. Fakat nazarı çekenler, ehemmiyetlileri unutulmaz. Kırım da bahçe sarayda tercüman ismile bir gazete çıkardı bunu çıkaran İsmail Gaspirinski rahmetlisi idi 320 senesinde bir baş makale yazmıştı mahalenin hulasası şu idi. Müfettiş Hilmi Paşa Sadrazama şifre yazıyor. Bulgar çetelerini filan ormanda sıkıştırdık. Tenkil muamelesine başladık şifre babıalide sadrazama veriliyor. O sırada sadrazamı avusturya sefiri ziyaret ediyor. Bu çeteleer ne için bu kadar müsamaha gösteriyorsunuz bunları şiddetle tenkil ediniz. Çünkü bizimde islav tabalarımız var bunlarda şımarıyorlar diyor çıkıyor. Sadrazam çetenin tenkili hususunda şiddet gösterilmesi hakkında cevap yazılmasını emrediyor. Müsveddeyi görüyor şifre edilmeğe başlanıyor sonra çarlık sefiri ziyaret geliyor. Rumelide çetelere karşı şiddet gösteriliyor. Bunlara biz az müsameha yapmak lazım çünkü bizdeki penslavizler homurdanıyorlar. Diyup çıkıyor. Sadrazam şifreyi istiyor. Mümkün mertbe kan dökülmemekle beraber icabının icrasına hizzet buyurula gibi dişi bir emir veriyor. Beni o zamanlar can evimden vuran bu mükaveleyi bu güne kadar unutmadım. Rica ederim. Bu imparatorluğun istiklali var mıydı? Hanki müstakil hükümet böyle muamelelere müdahalelere katlanır? Hanki hükümet kendisine karşı isyan edenleri kan ve ateşle boğmaz.

Adli işlerde de istiklal yoktu. Kapitasyonlar icabınca ecanibe bazı haklar, imtiyazlar verilmişti. Türk vatandaşile bir ecnebi arasında çıkan davalarına konsoloshane tercümanları muhakimde bulunuyorlardı. Onların hukuk davalarına konsoloshaneleri bakıyorlardı. Ben çağda bulunanlar iskaryabin ismini bilirler. Türkler şükrü de, intikamı da bilmelidirler. Çarlık konsolosu daha hududdan içeri girerken kötek teğıraf memuru teğırafını göya bir kaç dakika tahir etmiş, nahiye müdürü kendisine secde etmemiş diye derhal bu memurları azl ettirdi. Burada bir çift at alış verişi meselesinden dolayı Kale kumandanı miralay Zöhtüyü bir gecenin içerisinde Bayburda nefyettirdiler Hasankalede Ayvaziyanlar isminde bir şişeci mağazası vardı şimdi miralaylıktan mütekaid bay Rıza o zaman milazım idi, bunların dükkanına giriyor. Alış esnasında terbiyesizlik ediyorlar bir tokar vuruyor ve ya vurmıyor bunlar çar tabiiyetinde bulduklarını iddia ediyorlar. İskaryabin küstahlıkla işe girişiyor. Hükümet bunlara yedi yüz lira tazminat veriyor. Rica ederim bir dükkanda herhangi bir karğaşalı da kaç paralık şişe kırılır? Tekmil dükkanda yedi yüz liralık sermaye varmı idi? Konsolosa sefire karşı herhangi bir hadise olabilir. Nihayet memleketin adliyesi vardır. Adliyeye iş düşer, adliye hüküm verir. Bu muamele afrika vahşilerinde tatbik edilmiş midir? Daha böyle hayatta görülen bir çok misaller söyliyerek içimizde bulunan gençlerin yüreklerini sızlatmak istemem. Bu Midilli hadisesi hatırlarsınız firansız olan istanbul rihtim şirketinin alacağı terakümde kalmış diye firansız donanması getti Midilli adasına asker çıkardı. Gümrükleri işgal etti. İstiklalin işi var mıdır? İmparatorluğun istiklali Zillüllahın ismini hutbede okumak sikke kestirmek asker sırmarı göstermek, resmi geçitlerle göz boyamaktan başka bir şey değildi. İşte imparator bu halde iken cihan savaşı başladı. Bu harbe giriş istiklali istirdad etmek kapitasyonları kaldırmak fikri hakim olmuştur. Bu millet çok kan döktü. Çok fedakarlık yaptı. Bazı eşhas ve hükümet isimleri geçiyor. Sözlerim sırf şahsime aiddir. Hayattan aldığım misalları anlatırken bunlardan kaçınmak imkanı yoktur. Müttefik bulunduğumuz bir hükümetin ikinci baş kumandanı müttefikimiz olmakla beraber bizi hafif görececek kelimeler kullanmıştır. Düşman olan bir hükümet başı bu harbi en aşağı iki sene uzattığımızı söylemek suretile türkün kudred ve kuvvetine işaret etmiştir.

Savaşta netice itibarile mağlup olduk. Ve yere serildik. Mondoros mütarekenamesi imza edildi. Bütün dünyanın renk renk askerleri vahşileri mühim limanlarımızı, şehirlerimizi işgal altına aldılar. İşte böylece düştük. Düşenin yarı olmaz doğrudur. Bizimde yarımız olmadı. İçi yanmış bir insan sıfatile söylerimki içimizdeki bazı yurddaşlarımızdan da vefasızlıkta gördük. Bilahere yunan orduları da İzmir'e saldırdılar. Hükümdar sırf tacını hanedanını kurtarmak için düşmanların kür bir aleti oldu.

Yalnız türk milletinin, azmi, imanı mağlup olmadı. Yer yer mühtelif cemiyetler ve komiteler teşekkül etti. Ortada bu cemiyetleri bir maksad uğruna sevk ve idare edecek bir baş henüz yoktu.

Erzurumda bir müdafayı hukuk cemiyeti kuruldu. Maksadı şarki anadoluyu kurtarmaktı.

Atatürk, ordu müfettişi sıfatile anadoluya ayak bastı. Samsun Merzifon taraflarını dolaştıktan sonra Erzurum'a geldi. Bura müdafaayı hukukunun başına geçti. Pirogramını, teknil yurdun kurtarılmasını göz önüne getirecek şekilde tadil etti. Ve etraftaki vilayetlerin mümessillerini buraya davet ederek burada bir kongura yapıldı.

İşte inkilap ve istiklalin başlangıcını bu konguranın toplandığı güzel gün olmuştur. Bundan sonra bütün vilayetlerin mümessilleri sivasda toplanarak bir heyeti temsiliye seçildi. Atatürk bu heyetin başına oldu.

İstanbul hükümeti, temsil heyetinin tazyikile mebus seçimi yaptırdı. Atatürk İstanbul serbest bir yer olmadığı için mebuslarının istanbulda değil Ankara'da toplanmaları hususunda ısrar ediyordu. Bazı mebusların eyi düşümemeleri ve sarayın entrikası yüzünden mebuslar istanbulda toplandılar. Nihayet İstanbul İngilizler tarafından işgal olundu. Meclisi, padişah fesh etti. Bu mebusların Ankara gidebilmelerine yeniden seçilen mebuslar Ankara'da toplanıp büyük millet meclisini teşkil ettiler. Bu günden itibaren iş itibarile Türkiye cümhuriyeti hükümeti meydana geldi. Bildiğiniz şekilde ordular teşkil edildi. Yunanlılara karşı cepheler alındı. Halifeyi müsliminde anadoludaki birliği mahv etmek için al altından propağandalar yapıyor düşmanlardan aldığı parayı serpererek isyanlar çıkarttırıyordu. İstanbulda teşkil olunan halife askerlerini de anadolya saldıırıyordu. Vaziyet çok nazik ve mühim idi.

Bu zamanlarda doğu cihetlerimizde Ermeniler bazı yerlerde 93 hududuna geçmişlerdi. İçlerinde kalan türk ve islam unsurunu kırıp geçiriyorlardı. Evvela Şark ordusu Ermeniler üzerine yürüdü. Ermenilerin dersini verdi. Moskova müahedesi yapıldı. Doğudaki Hududumuz çizildi. Anadoludaki isyanları bastırmak için epiyce uğraşıldı. Cebubta kahraman antepçiler, maraşlılar türkün kahramanlığını gösterdiler. Cenuptaki ecnebi işgalini kaldırdılar. Ankara itilafı yapıldı. Cenup hududumuz çizildi. Bu zamanlarda idiki Saray Sevr müahedesini imzalattırdı.

Arkadaşlar: Sevr'i hiç sevmeydik ve asla sevmeyeceğiz, kin ve intikamımızı unutmuyacağız, bu muahedeye imza koyanları af etmeyeceğiz.

Osmanlı hükümdarının mürahasları Rıza Tefvik, Ferik, Arap Hadi, Beren Sefiri Halis idi.

Sevr muahedesini hulaseten arz edeyim. Osmanlı hükümetine elli bin asker buldurmak hakkını beriyor bu askerler gönüllü olacak. Hangi para ile kimi silah altına alacaktı? Memleketin hududlarını bu kadar asker nasıl bekleyebilirdi? Yalnız Ermenilere bir hamlede yenilmezmi idi?

Sevr hududu şu idi bize Tire Boludan başlayarak şarki kara hisar yakınından geçen bir hat, Erzincan, Erzurum, Trabzon, Rize, Bitlis, Siirt, Van vilayetlerini Ermenilere vermek üzere amarika reisi cumhurunun emrine bırakıyor. Adananın cenubundan başlayarak maraş, urfa ve gazi antebi hudud dışarısında bırakıyor. İzmir'i ve içerilerini Yunanilere veriyor çatalcaya kadar yine Yunaniler geliyor her iki boğazın etrafındaki epeyce arazi ile marmara sahilleri boğazlar komisyonuna bırakılıyor ve askersiz mintika oluyor. Boğazla komisyonu İngiliz, Fransız, İtalya, Yunan, Japon, rumanya, Sırbıya hükümeti murahaslarıdır.

Bunların ayrıca bayrakları vardır. Masraflarını, tahsisatlarını türkler verecektir. Bir de muhtelif murakebe komisyonları vardır yine ecnebilere mürekkeptir. Bunların tahsisatı da türkler tarafından verilecektir. Bunlardan başka maliye komisyonu vardır. Bu komisyon devletin bütün maliyesini mürakabe eder bütçe yapılır. Bunlara verilir, bunlar bir kerre tetkik eder meclisi mebusana verirler. Meclisi mebusandan çıkan bütçe tekrar maliye komisyonuna gelir bunlar kabul ederlerse bütçe olur, yoksa olmaz ve olamaz rica ederim. Düşünün, böyle hükümette istiklalin isinin yarısında olur mu? Bir parça yukkumluğunu temin için bu muahedeyi kabul edenlerde zerre kadar vicdan varmı? Abdülhamidin haydaranlı hüseyin Paşası bundan daha çok müstakil değil miydi? Bu gürültüler devam ederken memleketin bir çok insanları istiklalden ve sairinden elini çekerek mandaya razı oluyorlardı. Manda himaye demektir. Suriye, filistin idareleri gibidir. Bunu tervec edenler pek çoktu söz buraya gelmişken acı bir hikaye anlatayım.

335de İstanbul'da idim. Yurddaşlarımızdan bir zabitin düğününe davet edildim. Davetliler arasında zabitler, siviller var idi bu cemiyetteki iş anlar. Görünenler mandaya mum olmuşlardı mandanın hangisi daha elverişli olduğunu münakaşa ediyorlar idi mandanın hangisini alalımki bizi daha fazla boynuzlamasın?

Kimi İngilizi kimi Amarikayı istiyor idi davetliler arasında bulunan bir köylü çocuğunun da reyini sordular o çocuk şu cevabı verdi kıral jorj benim elimi öpmesin türkün jandarması memedi versin tüfek dipçiğiyle kafamı kırsın dedi. Bu cevap çok hoşuma gitmiştir. Oradakilere iyi bir dere olmakla beraber istiklalin bence çok güzel bir tarifi olmuştur. O zamanki düşüncülerinde iyi bir hikayesidir.

Manda ve Sevr münakaşaları, yunan harekâtı, anadoludaki isyan işleri devam ederken türk kavminin kudretini ve onun azmini, iradesini iyi tartmış olan atatürk yüksek sesile cihana bağırıyor idi hayır, ne manda, ne Sevr misakı milli hududları ve tam bir istiklal. Yukarıda dediğim gibi şark ve cenup hududlarımız çizilmiş didi. Londraya giden Bekir Sani Bey, etinede bazı vaatlar yapıldı hatta bazı mukavelelere de imza konuldu fakat Atatürk'ün yüksek görüşü bu mukaveleleri de yırttı ve attı. Nihayet 338 ağustos nihayetine doğru Büyük Taarruz başladı 30 Ağustos'ta Baş Kumandanlık Meydan Muharebesi zaferle neticelendi büyük Atatürk hatifi sesile ordular ilk hedefiniz akdenizdir, emrini verdi yunan ordusunu anadolunun harimi ismetinde boğan ordular boğazlara doğru yürüyüşe başladılar. Mudanya mütarekesi oldu ondan sonra da lozana gidildi. Ordu başında ve müdanya mütareke heyetinde çok çetin savaşlarile milletin büyük bir çocuğu olduğunu gösteren şimdiki başbakan İsmet İnönü hemen bütün cihan murahaslarıle çok çetin mücadelelere girişti. Ve hatta Lozan'da bir defada müzakere kesildi. Tekrar yapılan toplantı neticesinde bu günkü hür ve müstakil Türkiye meydana geldi.

Arkadaşlar: Osmanlı imparatorluğunun istiklalsizliğiyle Türkiye cumhuriyetinin istiklalini ecnebi diyarında ve ecnebiyle her hangi bir temasda daha açık bir surette anlaşılıyor. İmparatorluk zamanında talihin sevkile ben bir kaç defa ecnebi komisyonlarında bulundum. Daima bedbaht idi. Şimdide ecnebi memleketlere gittim gördüm ki müstakil ve şerefli bir milletin evladıyım. Şerefli bir hükümetin vatandaşıyım.

Erzurumlular sizler hicret zamanlarında çok acılar duydunuz, mukaddes şehrinize yurdunuza dönmek ümidi de kalmamıştı, şimdi yurdunuzdasınız ve hür ve müstakilsiniz istiklal lezzetini sizler nefeslerinizde daha iyi gördünüz.

Çok şükür, ordumuz vardır, maliyemiz, adliyemiz vardır. Bütün şubati idarede müstakil ve serbestiz, hiç bir bağımız yoktur. Ve kabul de etmeyi, inkılabdan geçen defa bahsetmiştim işte istiklal de budur.

Türk genci: çok sevimli olan istiklal ve inkılabı Atatürk sana emanet etmiştir. Bunları saklamakta sen çok fedakar ve kıskanç ol. Tarihin yetişmediği devirlerde bile müstakil ve bay olan türk istiklalsiz asla yaşayamaz.

İstiklal olmasaydı zaten inkılap yapılamazdı. Yalnız müstakil olsaydık da inkılap yapamasaydık neye yarar? Yine harabeye sürüklenirdik yine istiklalimiz elimizden giderdi.

Arkadaşlar. Çanğiri tarafları pis bir sarı bezi, Kastamonu tarafları solgun bir yeşil bezi, torum, narman kirli, mikrop yuvası iğrenç bir beyazı başına seriyor başka taraflar külah geçiriyor, burada dar gün görmez giğva, öte tarafda şarık ve daha bin çeşit kıyafet, karnaval kıyafetini çok geçmiş. Medeni bir milletiz medeni milletler arasında saygı değer yerimiz vardır. Elbette kıyafetimizi medenileştirecektik adli kapitülasyonları kaldırıp ederken şer'i mahkemelere yer veremezdik tarihi hadisedir. Yıldırım Bayazıt kadıların zulmünden, irtikap ve irtişasından bizar olan halkı kurtarmak için kırk kadıyı toplamış Bursa'da bir eve doldurmuş ateşle yakmak istemişse bu cücenin maskaralığıle bunlar canlarını kurtarmışlar ceza müstahaklar vardır. Fakat ceza nerededir?

Şer'i mahkemelerin daha dördüncü hükümdar zamanında ne kadar bozuk olduğunu gösteren bir hadisedir. Bir memlekette adalet bir türdür ve bir türlü mahmeme ile adalet dağıtılır.

Bir zamanda kadının hakkını vermemek imkanı var mıdır? Hikaye etmezler mi: kitaplar yazmaz mı eski zamanlarda islâm kadınları muharebeye ordularla beraber giderlerdi bu kadınlar kabali mi gidiyorlardı? Yurdumuzun çok büyük kısmı köyler değil midir? Bu köylerdeki kadınlarımız açık değilmidirler? Geçen defa da söyledim her iş yurd müdafaasile ölçülür her memleket kadın askeri kıt'alar. Teşkil ederken bir kadına hakkı siyasisini, hakkı tabiisini vermesek kuvvetimizin yarısından mahrum kalmış olurduk. Kadının kapalı kalması, ona hakkı siyasisi verilmemesi fikrine düşenler varsa bu fikir kafalardan silinmelidir.

Parti oklarının birisi de laikliğe delalet eder layıklık dinsizlik değildir. Din ile dünyayı ayırmak demektir. Sen dindarsın, öteki değildir. Her ikiniz de inkılab ve rejime yürekten inanmışınız, işte her ikiniz de laiksiniz. Dünya işlerini hiç bilmemiş ve bunu zerre kadar kavramamış olanların dünya işlerine karışmaya zerre kadar hakları yoktur. İmparatorluk, Nizam-i Cedid'i elli sene evvel kabul etmiş olsaydı nezibde Mısır ordusuna mağlup olmaz, Hünkâr İskeleyi muahedesile himayeyi istemezdi. Bu günahlar dünyayı anlamayanların işlere karışması yüzünden olmuştur. Bazı yerlerde eski Nakşilerin bir az kuyruk oynattıklarını işitiyoruz eski bir şeyhin zıkkımlanması için Kurani ateşidir. Böylelerini artık kimse aldanacak değildir. Böylelerinin kafası parçalanır.

Bu memlekette Kars'ta da olduğu gibi bir dert görüyorum lazlık, acemlik sözleri gibi. Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin vatandaşı olan, yüreği bir Türk gibi çarpan kafası bir Türk gibi düşünen her fert Türktür. Eskiden hükümetlerde o kadar inzibat yok idi. Burada Osmanlı hükümdarlarından güzel bir kabile kalkıp Şirvan şahlara veya İran şahlara gidiyorlar idi. Oradan güdenler de anadoluya geliyorlar idi. Tabiatile hısımlar ve akrabalar amca ve dayı çocuklarından bazıları kalıyorlardı. Irklar lisanla ayrılır. Türkçeden başka bir dil bilmeyenlere nasıl acem deriz? Bunlar halis azeri türkleridi ve türktürler. Mıngirel neslinden bütün dünyada yirmi bin kadar insan vardır. Bunların büyük kısmı başka memleketlerdedir. Bizde Vice nahiyesinde, Pazar kazasında ufak bir kısım vardır. Bütün Rize, Trabzon, Ordu, Kirason vilayetleri türklerine de laz demek kadar düşüncesizliktir? İmparatorluk zamanında

yapılan büyük günahları şimdi işlemeyelim. Türke muhtelif isimler vermek suretile onu parçalamakta mahareti olanlar vardır. Biz de onlara hizmet etmeyelim Kürt ismile bir millet yoktur. Onların adetlerine, ananelerine bilhassa dillerine bakınız. Van tarihini ve sair eserleri okuyunuz bunlar dağlı türklendir. İstiklal üzerine konuşurken istiklal marşı ve bayrak hakkında da bir kaç söz söyleyeyim. İstiklal marşı söylenirken veya musika çalarken derhal şapkanı çıkar ve ayakta dinle bütün bir milletin tarihi bu marş içerisinde. Bayrak ve istiklal marşı türk milletinin hülasesidir. Bayrak çekilirken yine şapkanı çıkar ve ona tazim ve hürmet et.

Dün kolordu dairesinin bayrağı indiriliyordu. Müsika istiklal marşı çalıyordu. Dikkat ettim. Bir kaç genç durdu ve şapkalarını çıkardılar. Başkaları vazifelerini yapmadılar şerefli ve medeni bir milletiz. Bütün milletlerin yaptıkları böyledir. Biz öteden beri bayrağımıza ve istiklalimize çok bağlıyız biz de böyle yapmalıyız.

Ordu her memleketten mukaddestir. Bilhassa biz de orduya kıymet biçilemez onun hizmeti çok kutsaldır ona layık olduğu hürmeti yapmalıyız. Erzurumun kurtuluş gününde dikkat ettim. Bir tabur kahriman geçti. Gerçi onlar şiddetle alkışlandı. Fakat şapka çıkarıp saygı göstermek işi ihmale uğradı. Tabur, bölük veya takım herhangi bir birlik geçince şapka çıkarılır, ayağa kalkılır, saygı gösterilir.

Erzurumlu: sen tarihi bir yerde bulunuyorsun. Senin yurdun çok ehemmiyetli bir yerdir. Şimdiye kadar parlak vazifeler yapmışsındır. İstiklal ve inkılapta büyük rollerin var. Azmini, imanını kuvvetli tut, istiklal inkılabı sev, senin olan hükümetini sec, o senindir. Sen onunsun hiç bir vakit iddia etmeyizki her taraf gül gülistan olmuştur. Fakat refah ve saadet yoluna girilmiştir. Feragat ve fedakarlık numunesi olan sen bu millete, bu hükümete mensup olduğunı düşünerek göğsünü ger, gurur duy, çok geçmez nihayet on- on beş sene sonra her tarafta da sayılır, ve hürmet edilir, sülh ve müsalemet amili olursun bu müddette çok bir şey değildir.

Arkadaşlar. Herkes istiklalden ümidini kesdiği sıralarda yüksek bir kudret çıktı milletin kudretini kuvvetini sezdi o kuvvet ve kudreti kendisine iman ettirdi. Çok çetin savaşımlara girdi aziz türk milletini beraber götürdü. Nihayet istiklali aldı ve inkılabı yaptırdı. Yalnız bir adam bu büyük işleri yapmazdı, onun dehası, kudreti, cesaretidirki türkün bütün varlıklarını meydana koydu onun içindir ki Atatürk bihakkin milli şef olmuştur. Milli şefimizle iftihar ederiz bu vesile ile ona en samimi bağlılığımızı ve saygılarımızı sunarız.

Bizim inkılap ve istiklalimiz dünyada hayret uyandırdığı gibi bütün müslüm milletlere de örnek olmuştur.

Onun içindirki çok büyük kıymet ifade eder, çok vaktinizi zayıttim dinlemek lüfunu esirgemediğinizden dolayı sizlere saygılarımı sunarım.

Yaşasın büyük atamız, yaşasın istiklal ve inkılapda büyük hisseleri olan Erzurumlular.

## Appendix 4. Translations

---

### *Zihni Orhon, Independence and Revolution, Erzurum, 13 March 1936*

---

490-0-0-1/1011-901-1

Respectable compatriots,

By saluting you with respect and love, I would like to thank the Party General Secretary for allowing me to be with you for these few minutes. I present my longing and loyalty to this land where I was born.

You all know what I am going to say. However, since repeating good things is advantageous, I would like you to listen briefly.

I will talk about revolution. Revolution means to change [oneself] and [the structures], to understand what is necessary, and to remove what is unnecessary and dangerous.

You all know that when the Ottoman Empire was founded, the width of the plains, the storms of the seas, and the yellowness of the mountains could not stop it. It [the empire] moved from right to left, from the East to the West. They used to abide by the laws then, and reforms had not yet happened in Europe. Then, revolutions and insurrections occurred in England and France. Natural rights of humanity were obtained.

The Ottoman Empire remained foreign to these reforms. There is a sentence often repeated in Ottoman history. “A persona non grata arrived in Istanbul. His possessions were permitted.”<sup>1</sup> This sentence concerns governors, prefects, and commanders. When the situation is thus and so, imagine the people, the governors, prefects, and commanders hanged and slaughtered according to their wishes. Drudgery and crime were rampant. There had been times when the central government was in the hands of the Chief Eunuch of the Palace Gani Agha from Ethiopia and Sudanese Ser Karin Cevher Agha. Can you expect good auspiciousness from such a land?

Commercial power emerged in Europe. The world changed. Bulgars, Serbs, Hungarians, etcetera started to follow suit of European progress. The Muslim elements of the Empire continued to sleep. Law and order decayed. Only the military section could preserve its foundations. This was also spoiled during the last years [of the Ottoman Empire]. The country was doomed to collapse.

All the burden was on the Turks’ shoulders. The Arabs and Albanians did not join the army. Privileges were accorded to the Kurds by creating tribal regiments. Those who were studying at the medrese and those who were living in Istanbul were exempted from military service. Christians avoided military service by paying a tax as small as 72 piastres while they progressed more and more in demography, wealth, and education. The Turkish element carried all the burden and was drained away.

However, during this period, inequality reached such an extent that district governors and colonels studied at the School of War. Is it normal to have this kind of administration? Can you expect auspiciousness from such a land?

Liberty, equality, and justice are natural human rights that cannot be given by someone else; these rights should be taken. If people know their natural rights, palaces, and religious institutions, which [in turn] have their natural interests, cannot live on and continue to have their pleasures free of charge.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Sir makduh-i dersaadette îsal kılındı. Embali müsaade olundu.”



This is the way it works in Europe and the Ottoman realm. Besides, those who administered the country were ignorant and unaware of the happenings around them. Not only did they not give the people their rights, but they also prohibited traveling to Europe to prevent [people] from seeing Europe and understanding the world. There are some exceptions in history. The Great Peter of Russia implemented some reforms; the Afghan King Amanullah wanted to do something in his country but could not succeed.

There had been some movements in the Ottoman [Empire]. Osman II wanted to do something. [Consequently,] he was strangled. His father-in-law, who had Osman II strangled, was a Shaykh al-Islam.

The chef of Rusçuk *taran*, Mustafa Alemdar Pasha, came to Istanbul. This [small] unrest ended with the assassination of Selim III and Alemdar becoming a martyr.

The Gülhane Decree, called “Auspicious Reorganizations,” was supposed to reform the country. No benefit was acquired by this, either. The Constitutional Monarchy was proclaimed following Abdülhaziz’s dethronement. It would not be a mistake to say that the War of (12)93 [1877] was declared with the idea of strangling the Constitutional Monarchy. The Constitutional Monarchy was abolished at the beginning of the [Russo-Ottoman] war. The country was even more dragged to ruin. Every kind of evil progressed.

Venerable friends, a healthy person becomes sick by dint of sleeping and by remaining passive. [His] flesh rots, and [he] dies. A standing person loses his force and falls. A walking person advances. The country groaned from 1293 [1877] to 1324 [1908]. The Turk became abased and despicable. In the end, the meeting of Reval was organized to [decide on the terms of the] distribution of the Empire. Sporadic revolts started in the country. The Constitutional Monarchy was proclaimed.

You, the people of Erzurum, have an important role in this revolution. For a couple of years, there have been riots for the revolution. This revolution was carried out bookishly, without reflecting on its adaptation to this country. Armenians, Bulgarians, etcetera, who escaped from the country, filled the country on their way back with bombs and weapons.

Press liberty was also abused. They stirred anarchy [in the country] with newspapers like bombs, weapons, and daggers. In the Ottoman parliament, those like Boşo, Kozmedi, and Talip Paşa went so far as to insult the Turk from the pulpit of the parliament.

Riots happened in Yemen, Albania, and Houran. The Balkan War[s] happened. There had been painful defeats. We went to the World War. Should have we gone to this war or not? This is a distinct issue... It was impossible to avoid it. We went to the war and sacrificed a lot; we spilled a lot of blood. And, in the end, we licked the dust.

We started the independence struggle and Revolution at the same time. The nation can carry out a revolution or accord from above. We elect the deputies to legislate, and the government executes.

Now, let’s talk about the revolutions one by one.

Firstly, we separated the Sultanate and the Caliphate. The Sultanate was rotten and collapsed. Among the Ottoman dynasty, except for some, people wore huge medals, decorated their beards with pearls, and made [people] live epochs called Tulip or Weasel. There was no need for this Sultanate. Then, the Caliphate was abolished. While removing dangerous institutions to Turks, these institutions would be thrown away. What was the Caliphate? I will explain this.

Following some individuals who came after the Prophet’s holiness, the caliphate first passed from the Umayyads and the Abbasids. This does not have a place in Islam. This is proven. And [in 1517,] Selim I conquered Egypt. He took the relics and the title of Calif from Alallah, who was there, but his lineage was unclear. After that, the Turks suffered every kind of trouble because of this title. The son of Anatolia spilled his blood for the public order of Arabia, of Yemen; [he] gave away his goods to feed the Arab. This situation continued for centuries.

While starting the [First] World War (*Cihan Harbi*), the Calif [Mehmet] Reşat proclaimed the holy war (*cihad*) as if the Muslims in the world would participate in this holy war. How many Muslims came? On the contrary, the grandchildren of the Prophet [the Arab] collaborated with the enemy and

stabbed Turks in the back. Here you are, [today] the Caliphate is dissolved. We do not need it. Those who previously rivaled for the Caliphate can take it.

One of the revolutions is the abolition of dervish lodges and medreses. We also did well there. The classes [mingling there] were so ignorant that they thought that what they saw with their eyes was the world, and their neighbors were the governments on the earth. Those places were filled with draft dodgers. Dervish lodges had become wretched houses (*miskinhane*). Those from Erzurum from my age would know that the government deported some who still wore canonical hats (*sivri külahlı*) from Bitlis and Beyazit to other directions. They were ululating while marching on all fours towards their sheikh. One cannot accept such despising and insulting. In which religion [one can do this]? I work, and you eat at your [Sufi] lodge. Vows received by the sheikh... The suffering of this nation is enough! Would the poor folk who have difficulties paying taxes pay penalties through vows?

The Alphabet Revolution was also carried out. There are 35 Arabic letters. Every letter can connect to the other in three different ways. It makes 1005 different forms. [And] it is difficult to learn all these things. Do not be offended by the separation from tradition. Learning to write a letter in three or four years was impossible. Today, there are 28 letters. Learning to read and write in a small amount of time is possible. Our children read and write well and serially. Besides, reforms have an impact and benefit for future generations. This is also well done.

One of our revolutions is nationalism, and one of the arrows of the People's Party points to nationalism. During the Imperial era, the Turks, who were the genuine children of the country, were despised. On the other hand, there were many noble people.

We do not extend nationalism to include all the Turks [outside our borders] who intend to reassemble in our community. We are very far away from this reverie. Since they are our blood brothers, we would, of course, be saddened by their catastrophes. We would be pleased if they are in good condition. This is all our contact with them, and this contact is spiritual. Every individual who is within the borders of the Republic of Turkey, whose heart beats like ours, whose head works like ours, is a Turk. Especially the Kurds, who consider themselves Kurds by mistake despite being nothing else than mountain Turks, are Turks. This land is a land that does not accept even a hand span of separation. Those who think differently would have their heads smashed. And this is thus and so.

The Republic was one of the revolutions that have been carried out. There are many types of government in the world. The most mature form of [among them] is the republic. Republic means people governing themselves. Is this our [case]? Yes, it is so. We elect deputies. These deputies gather in the Great National Assembly in Ankara. They elect one deputy among them as the President of the Republic. The President of the Republic nominates one of the deputies to form the government. The Prime Minister then chooses the ministers among the deputies. The deputies read the government program before the parliament. You see, the republic is the government of the people! If we do not look like the republic in the books written by jurists, it is because we resemble ourselves, as Atatürk puts it. We cannot accept opposition parties because [the others] have various parties. We would not even quarrel with those opposed to the republic. In the chaos of the contemporary world, being similar to ourselves is very useful.

One of the revolutions was the giving of political rights to women. My friends, half the world is male, the other half female. World affairs have become so important and big that a country where women are not involved in affairs would have many deficiencies.

The defense of the [mother]land is the most important. If no right was given to women, we would lose half of our power in the defense of the [mother]land. Turkish women carried provisions and munitions in the Great War and the Independence Struggle. If we won independence, it would also be a woman's accomplishment. Women are also creatures of God. They will also have a walk to take some air and sun; they will also benefit from nature. This revolution is appropriate and necessary.

The Hat Revolution was carried out. We were not wearing fez when we came from Asia. We took the fez from Crete. Every business can be measured [by its relation to] the defense of the [mother]land. One cannot aim [with a gun] while looking at the sun. One needs a visor against the sun. When we

travel in summer, don't we wear a hat to protect us from the sun? Here you are, the hat works in all these situations and is a civilized guise. If you are doubting your faith so much that a piece of broadcloth and hodden would make you fall from grace and get you out of the Semitic religion, there is no auspiciousness for you in such a religion.

Compatriots, wear your hat properly and remove the shawl, which is quite an expense. Clothing is not just about protecting oneself from cold and heat; it also caresses the pleasures. Let the shawl and the hodden go, and have a tailor sew you a pair of pants.

Since the revolution started fourteen years ago. Everything done during this period is wonderful. I shall reckon for some of them. It has been more than a hundred years since the railway was invented. We started building railways thirty years after the invention of railways. In the time of the Empire, 50 km of railroads were built annually. If [they] had built 100 km per year, we would not have been in such a disaster. The Empire built railways according to the privileges granted to foreigners. We suffered a lot because of [them].

During the Balkan War[s], we suffered great harm from the Rumelia railroad administration. It is known that only one train has been sent in one week. The republican administration built for us the Ankara-Sivas, Samsun-Sivas, Irmak-Filyos, Kütahya-Balıkesir, and Fevzi Paşa-Diyarbakir railroads. The Afyon-Antalya and Sivas-Erzurum railway tracks are under construction. The one that we are waiting for the most is the Erzurum railway. Since the Ottoman Empire was separated into influence zones and since it did not have the power to build railroads in its last years, wherever [the imperial administration] wanted to build a railroad, it was in the obligation to accord privileges to a [foreign] government.

Today, we should be thankful that we can build [our railroads] wherever we want. According to the estimations [announced] at the Republic's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the republic has built 200 km per year; according to the calculation made at the inauguration of the Diyarbakir line last year, 227 km [of railway track] per year have been built. Is this not a divine light in itself? Who would think that we will [soon] eat Turkish sugar [instead of importing it]?

The government builds factories. Last year, I visited Kayseri's factory; the machines were just being installed. I was inspired that we put four dreadnoughts 31 in all four corners of the country, imposing cannons directed towards those leering at the [mother]land. One and a half months after, I was hospitalized in Istanbul and read *Cumhuriyet* every day, and I observed [the things around me]. One can have the same kind of inspiration while visiting the factory of Kayseri and write [about all his inspiration in the newspaper].

My friends! During the imperial era, the country received all necessary [material] from needles to thread from the exterior. The wealth of the country flowed to the exterior in abundance. Those who grasped a little bit [the realities of the] country were surprised that it did not sink before. Under these conditions, no nation can protect itself, and all would sink. Everything was rotten in the country. Only the pure blood of the Turk was not rotten. [The Turk] was saved thanks to this blood. Textile factories in Nazilli, merinos wool factories in Bursa, and artificial silk factories in Gemlik are being built. [Again], a textile factory in Bakırköy, a glass factory in Paşabahçe, a paper factory in İzmit, and semicoke factories in Zonguldak have been built. Let's not underrate coal; coal is a black diamond. And we have a lot of coal. Nobody can claim that everything is already done and things have become like a rose garden. There is no doubt there are still many things to do and a lot of deficiencies. We can do everything if we interiorize and love our revolution.

People of Erzurum! You played a great role in the revolution. You know that many associations were formed during the armistice era. An Association for Defense of National Rights (*Müdaafai Hukuk Cemiyeti*) was also formed here. Atatürk came here after visiting Samsun, Merzifon, and Amasya. He determined the scope of the association's objectives and regulations. He organized a congress here. The beginning of the revolution was this congress. Like in the making of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, your role was important in [the revolution]. Love the revolution and never forgive those who would despise it. My friends! There is a saying, "Friends sleep, foes do not." Yet, we are in

peacetime, but secret wars among nations continue. The visible part [of these secret wars] is the customs war. Otherwise, there are propaganda and espionage wars. You would not even perceive that some are framing the revolution as bad. They would slander the government and the big brass, making you indisposed [vis-à-vis the revolution]. They would raise doubts in you.

You know Hacı Akif here [in Erzurum]. May he rest in peace. Armenians held him captive. He died in the Sığ village in Baku. He worked a lot in the Erzurum revolutions. He worked for the Committee of Union and Progress. He did not approve of the benefits of recruiting Christians to the army. I told him the benefits [of the recruitment of the Christians in the army]. He became convinced. Yet, he would get suspicious again after a while. I understood that they preached him wrongly. I would explain [him] again. He used to say, "Brother, everybody does not think as you do. Now I believe [what you say]."

My friends, it is necessary to be careful, search for the origin of dangerous utterances, and always repeat the good ones.

My friends, I have tired you a lot. Thank you for listening to me. Long live the revolution, long live our great Atatürk, and long live the people of Erzurum, who played a major role in [the revolution].

### *Zihni Orhon, Independence and Revolution, Erzurum, 16 March 1936*

---

I salute you with love and respect.

Our last discussion was on the issue of revolution. Today, we will discuss the concept of independence. Yet, revolution and independence are interrelated. While talking about independence, I may mention revolution again.

Independence is the sweetest thing in the world. May life, the beloved, property, and everything else be sacrificed [for independence].

The Republic of Turkey replaced the Ottoman Empire. Was there any independence in the Empire? How much independence was taken? Yes, there was no trace of independence left in the Empire. I cannot give you a scientific description of independence [now]. I am not a scientist anyway.

I will reckon for the matters I can understand. A sovereign government's soil has borders. [This government] waits and protects these borders with its soldiers. It recruits soldiers depending on the nation's interests. In the Interior, it legislates to administer its nation depending on its interests and needs; it executes the legislation through its government. It organizes its foreign policy without the influence of [other] governments. A sovereign government organizes its finances depending on the conditions of the nation's productivity; it organizes taxes and acts meticulously, especially in economic affairs. To protect the home industry, the duties are determined depending on the industry's wishes. It distributes justice to the whole. It adjudicates in one and only court.

Was the Ottoman Empire as such? In its most splendid times, it gave privileges to foreigners as a gift. Those gifts took the name of capitulations and strangled [the Empire] like a snake, like a scorpion, they deprived [the Empire] of its independence.

It is well-known in history. When foreign and Ottoman delegates meet to sign a convention, the foreign delegates insist on economic affairs. Ottoman delegates accept these terms and ask themselves "Dear, why these *çorbacı* insist on these unimportant affairs?"

No branch of the Ottoman Empire had independence. [The imperial administration] could not determine customs duties at will. There were either 100 or 115 duties determined with the permission and grace of the foreigners. Even those were dependent on some conditions. For example, it was common to say, "X city's custom incomes belong to the harbor company while Y city's custom incomes belong to Z nation." Hence, no payment was made. At that time, there was the tithe [, Ashar]. A considerable part of this tithe was again transferred to foreigners. The state had no dignity. Creditors formed the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (*Düyun-u Umumiye*) to collect their debt. This administration was a distinct government within the Empire. It was the [real] owner of the country; the

Turk paid all the taxes while the foreigners<sup>2</sup> did not. The country's money flooded to the outside. There was no independence left in the army either. Organizing practices appropriate for today's [military] maneuvers was impossible. Here, around Deveboynu, it was not possible to make maneuvers. It was not possible to draft soldiers according to the country's needs. It is known that whoever revolts against whatever government would be exterminated and annihilated<sup>3</sup>. The Empire did not even have the right to do so. You know well that Armenians revolted in 1317, and [only] eight battalions were sent against them. Those battalions cornered the Antiranik gangs around Arak Monastery. However, no artillery was fired against them because it was deemed that X or Y government<sup>4</sup> would not tolerate this. This gang escaped. The blood of hundreds was spilled in vain. One of the Armenian revolts started by blowing up the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul. Blood of thousands was spilled while the rebels escaped to an embassy. They were sent to another country with a ship that belonged to the embassy and under their protection before the eyes of the sultan. They were sent [to this foreign country] for training to return and spill the Turk's blood again. In 1330, there was a Sheikh Revolt in Bitlis and hundreds had perished. This murderer Sheikh Selim had escaped to the Tsar's embassy. The weak government could not take this criminal until the mobilization [of 1914-1918] when the sheikh was returned [to the government].

A circle of reforms was formed in Three Provinces<sup>5</sup> in Rumelia. Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha was the general inspector.

The affairs of the past would be forgotten. However, those who pay attention will not forget what is important. İsmail Gasprinski published a newspaper called *Tercüman* in Bahçesaray in Crimea. Gasprinski wrote an article in 1320. The summary of the article was as follows: The inspector Hilmi Pasha wrote a ciphered telegram (şifre) to the grand vizier. "We cornered Bulgarian gangs in a forest. We started to exterminate." This coded telegram is transmitted to the grand vizier in the Sublime Porte. At this moment, the Austrian ambassador visits the grand vizier. [The ambassador says], "Why do you tolerate these gangs like this? You should banish them violently. Because we also have Slavic subjects, and they also get spoiled," and leaves. [Then,] the grand vizier orders the preparation of [another] coded telegram on the punishment of the gang. He proofreads the draft, and it starts to be coded. Then, the ambassador of the Tsar comes to visit [the Porte]. [He says,] "You use violence against gangs in Rumelia. [You] should tolerate them a little bit because the pan-Slavists in our country grumble," then he leaves. The grand vizier demands the coded telegram [again]. He orders them to "take the necessary [measures] while avoiding spilling blood as much as possible." I could not forget, until this day, this utterance that got the knife in me at that time. I am asking if this Empire had any independence [at all]. Which independent government puts up with this kind of treatment? Which government does not drown the rebels with blood and fire?

There was no sovereignty in judicial affairs either. According to the requirements of the capitulations, some rights and privileges were given to foreigners. The embassies proceeded with lawsuits between Turkish citizens and foreigners. Those who are my age know the name of Skryabin. The Turks should know gratitude as well as vengeance. The consul of Tsarist [Russia] dismissed the dispatch clerk of Kötek<sup>6</sup> just because he had spent a couple of minutes writing a telegram; [The same consul] also dismissed the district governor just because he refused to prostrate himself the moment he entered the [Ottoman] border. Here [in Erzurum], only because of a matter of trade they deported

---

<sup>2</sup> Ecanip.

<sup>3</sup> *Tenkil ve imha edilirler*. Tenkil: "A punishing, making an example of." Redhouse, 602. Kubbealtı [Online], "1. Kovma, uzaklaştırma. 2. Herkese örnek olacak şekilde cezalandırma. 3. Topluca ortadan kaldırma, yok etme, tepeleme, kökünü kazıma." İmha: "An effacing; an obliterating; a destroying", Redhouse, 197.

<sup>4</sup> filan devletler.

<sup>5</sup> *vilayet-i selase*. Includes Kosovo, Manastir, Salonica in Rumelia.

<sup>6</sup> Kötek telgraf memuru.

castellan colonel Zöhtü in the middle of the night to Bayburt. There was a bottle shop in Hasankale called the Ayzaziyans. Now, retired colonel Rıza Bey was lieutenant at that time. He enters their shop. During shopping, the [owners] misbehave, and Colonel Rıza Bey slaps [someone] in the face, or not... The [owners] claim that they are the subjects of the Tsardom. Skryabin presumptuously embarks on the business. The government pays the [owners] 700 liras of compensation. I beg you; how many bottles can be broken in a shop during whatever disturbance? There were [probably] 700 liras of capital in the whole shop. Any incident may happen against the consul or the ambassador. In the end, this country has a Department of Justice. This is the job of the courthouse; the courthouse adjudges. Is this [kind of] treatment can be observed in African savages? I do not want to sadden the youth among us by giving more examples. You would remember the incidents of Midilli. Just because the Istanbul harbor company – that belonged to the French at that time – had its debt remained in the backlog, the French navy landed its troops on the Midilli island. They occupied the customs. Is this anything that can be called independence here? The independence of the Empire was limited to repeating the name of Zillullah in the sermons, to produce coins [...], and to gill the pill through official ceremonies. Here you are, while the emperor was in this situation, the World War started. The participation in this war was motivated by the idea of restituting independence and abolish the capitulations. This nation spilled a lot of blood; made a lot of sacrifices. We hear about some individuals and governments. My words only belong to me. I cannot avoid these things while giving you examples; I have drawn from life. The second commander-in-chief of one of our allies used a word that belittles us. The government chief of an enemy power told that we have prolonged the war at least two years pointing at the force and power of the Turk.

In the end, we were vanquished. And we licked the dust. The Armistice of Mudros was signed. Soldiers, savages of the whole world, each of them wearing different colors, started to occupy our important ports and cities. Here you are, how we fell! Indeed, those who fall would not be loved. Neither were we. I say this as a person who suffered enormously that we saw the disloyalty of some of our fellow citizens. Then, the Greek Army attacked İzmir. The emperor became an instrument of the enemy only to save his throne.

Only the faith and resolution of the Turkish nation were not vanquished. Various associations and committees were formed from place to place. No leader could unite these associations and committees around one objective yet.

An Association of Defense of Rights was founded in Erzurum. Its objective was to save Eastern Anatolia.

Atatürk came to Anatolia as an army inspector. After traveling around Samsun and Merzifon, he came to Erzurum. Here, he became the leader of the Defense of Rights [Association]. He determined his program to include recovery<sup>7</sup> of the whole [mother]land. He invited the representatives of the other provinces and organized a congress here.

There, this beautiful day was the beginning of “Independence and Revolution.” After that, the representatives of all the provinces met in Sivas and elected a Committee of Representatives. Atatürk became the head of this committee.

The İstanbul government organized the election of the deputies under the coercion of the Committee of Representatives. Atatürk insisted that the deputies gather in Ankara rather than İstanbul since the latter was not free<sup>8</sup>. Some deputies gathered in İstanbul since they could not think through and because of the Palace’s conspiracy. Then, the British occupied Istanbul. The sultan dissolves the Assembly. The deputies who could reach Ankara and others re-elected afterward formed the National Assembly in Ankara. The army was formed as you know. [They] sided against the Greeks. [At the same time], the

---

<sup>7</sup> Kurtuluş.

<sup>8</sup> Serbest bir yer olmadığı için.

Calif of the Muslims<sup>9</sup> tried to destroy the unity in Anatolia through secret propaganda that he organized by spilling the money he took from the enemy; he provoked revolts. The army of the caliphate formed in İstanbul also attacked Anatolia. The situation was critical and important<sup>10</sup>.

At the same time, the Armenians in our eastern quarters passed to the borders of [12]93 [1877], slaughtering the Turkish and Muslim elements remaining among them. First of all, the Eastern Army attacked the Armenians and taught them a lesson. The Moscow Treaty was signed. Our Eastern order was drawn. We put lots of effort to suppress the revolts in the East. The heroes of Antep and Maraş showed their heroism. They removed the enemy occupation in the South. The Ankara Treaty was signed: our southern border was drawn. At the same time, the Palace signed the Sèvres Treaty.

My Friends, we never liked Sèvres, and we will never like it. We will never forget our hatred and grudge. We will never forgive those who signed this treaty.

The delegates of the Ottoman sultan Rıza Tevfî, Ferik, Arap Hadi, and Halis, the ambassador at Bern.

I will provide you with a summary of the Sèvres Treaty. It gave the Ottoman government the right to have 50,000 soldiers; these soldiers should be voluntary. Who would draft whom with which money? How could this small number of soldiers protect the country's borders? Would we not be vanquished by the Armenians in one move?

The Sèvres frontier was as follows: A line starting from Tire Bolu and passing near the eastern Kara Hisar, Erzincan, Erzurum, Trabzon, Rize, Bitlis, Siirt, Van provinces were given to Armenians at the command of the American President. Starting from Adana, Maraş, Urfa and Gazi Antebi are left outside the [Turkish] frontier. Izmir and its interior was to be given to the Greeks, and the Greeks come again until Çatalca. A considerable amount of land around both straits and the Marmara coast was to be left to the Straits Commission and become a demilitarized zone. The Straits Commission would comprise British, French, Italian, Italian, Greek, Japanese, Romanian, and Serbian government delegates.

They would also have flags [hissed on our territory]. Turks would pay for their expenses and allocations. There would also be various monitoring commissions composed of foreigners. The Turks would also give their allocations. There would also be a finance commission. This commission would examine all the state's finances, and the budget would be made. It is given to them; they would examine it once and give it to the parliament. The budget from the parliament would return to the Finance Commission, and if they accept it, it would become a budget. I beg you, it is not, and it cannot be otherwise. Imagine, in such a government, is there even half independence? Do those who accepted this treaty to secure a little bit of wealth have a shred of conscience? Wasn't Hussein Pasha of Haydaran of Sultan Abdulhamid's rule more independent than this? While these clamors were going on, many people of the country renounced to independence and so on and agreed to a mandate. Mandate means a protectorate. It is like the Syrian and Palestinian administrations. Many people favored it, and while we are on the subject, let me tell a bitter story.

In 1919 [1335], I was in İstanbul. I was invited to the wedding of an officer from our compatriots. Among the guests were officers and civilians who could understand the business in this society. Those who were present were enamored with the mandate; they were debating which of the mandates was more favorable; which mandate should we buy so that it would not screw us more?

Some wanted the British, some wanted the Americans, and they asked the opinion of a peasant boy among the guests, and he replied that he would not let King George kiss my hand. He would let the Turkish gendarme, Mehmed, and break my head with the butt of his rifle. I liked this answer very much. In addition to being a good lesson for the people there, I think it was a very good description of independence. It is a good story of the mentality of that time.

---

<sup>9</sup> Halifeyi müslimin.

<sup>10</sup> Nazik ve mühim.

While the debates on the mandate and Sèvres, the Greek campaign and the revolts in Anatolia were going on, Atatürk, who had weighed the might of the Turkish people and its determination and will, was shouting to the world with a loud voice: "No, no mandate, no Sevres, no national borders and full independence." As I said above, our eastern and southern frontiers had been drawn. Bekir Sani Bey, who went to London, made some promises and even signed some treaties, but Atatürk's high vision tore these treaties apart and threw them away. Finally, towards the end of August 1922 [1338], the Great Offensive began. On 30 August, the Battle of the Commander-in-Chief ended in victory and the great Atatürk gave the order in a clear voice: "Armies, your first target is the Mediterranean Sea." After drowning the Greek army in Anatolia's sacred and prohibited territories, the armies began to march towards the straits. The Mudanya armistice was signed, and then we headed to Lausanne. İsmet İnönü, the current Prime Minister, showed that he was a great child of the nation with his very tough battles at the head of the army and in the Mudanya armistice delegation engaged in very tough battles with almost all the world negotiators. And even the negotiations were interrupted once in Lausanne. As a result of the reconvened meeting, today's free and independent Turkey came into being.

My friend! The lack of independence of the Ottoman Empire and the independence of the Republic of Turkey becomes clearer when abroad or in contact with foreigners. During the Empire, I had the opportunity to work in foreign commissions. It was always unfortunate. Also, now, I have traveled to foreign countries and see that I am the child of an independent and honorable nation; I am a citizen of an honorable government.

The people of Erzurum suffered a lot during emigration (*hicret*); you had no hope of returning to your sacred city. Now, you are in your land. You are free and independent. You feel the taste of independence in your breath.

Thank God, we have our army, our finances, our justice. We are independent in all the branches of the administration; we have no bondage. I talked about the revolution the last time, [I talked about] accepting it. This is independence.

Turkish Youth, Atatürk, entrusted you with this lovely revolution and independence. Be very jealous and renunciant in protecting these. Even in prehistory, the Turks, who were independent, could not live without independence.

Without independence, the revolution would not be possible. If we were only independent without carrying out the revolution, would it serve a purpose? We would be dragged to ruin and lose our independence again.

My friends! Around Cangiri, they wear dirty yellow cloth; around Kastamonu, they wear pale green cloth; in Torum and Narman, they wear dirty, germ-infested, disgusting white [cloth] wrapped around their heads. In other places, people wear a conical hat. Here also, there is this ignoble *yiğva/giğva*, on the other side, turban and a thousand kinds of clothes going beyond the carnival costumes. We are a civilized nation; we have a respectable place among the civilized nations. Of course, we would civilize our clothing. We could not keep the Islamic courts while abolishing judicial capitulations; this is a historical event. If I were Bayezid, I would want to gather forty cadis and put them in a house in Bursa to burn them alive to save the people exasperated by their oppression and corruption. If they saved their lives even with the masquerade of this dwarf (Bayezid I), some deserve punishment. But where is the punishment?

This event shows to what extent the Islamic courts were rotten even during the time of the fourth sultan's (Bayezid I). This country has one type of justice, and one court distributes it.

Is it possible in these times not to give rights to women? Would women not talk about us? Would not they write books? In ancient times, Muslim women used to go to war with the armies. Did these women go to war veiled? Isn't the largest part of our country made out of villages? Aren't our peasant women unveiled? I also told you the last time that every business can be measured according to its [relation] to the [mother]lands defense. Every country drafted women as soldiers. Those who think that women should remain veiled and that we should not give them political rights should immediately erase these ideas from their heads.



One of the Party's arrows points to secularism. Secularism does not mean irreligiousness. It means separating religion and the world [affairs]. You are religious. The other is not. Both of you believe in the revolution wholeheartedly. Here you are. Both of you are secular. Those who do not know world affairs and those who cannot understand this do not have the right to meddle with world affairs. If the Empire had accepted the New Order (*Nizam-ı Cedid*) fifty years earlier [than it did at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century], the Egyptian army would not have defeated us, and we would not have asked for protection during the Hünkâr İskelesi Treaty. These sins happened because of the meddling of those who do not understand world affairs. We are here at some places where some *Nakşis* [members of a Sufi lodge] try to play up to someone. This is the Qur'anic (?) fire so a sheikh can gorge himself. Nobody is going to be duped by those of such kind. Their heads will be smashed.

I see a problem in this province like the one I see in Kars: the utterances around Lazness and Persianness. All individuals who are citizens of the republic and whose hearts beat like that of the Turks are Turks. There was not such a discipline in governments before. A nice convoy of Ottoman sultans visited the shahs of Şirvan or Iran. Those driven from there also used to come to Anatolia. Naturally, the kin and relatives, some cousins, used to stay [here]. Races distinguish from each other based on language. [Therefore], how can we call Persian those who do not speak any other language than Turkish? These were true Azeri Turks; hence, they are Turks. There are around 20.000 people worldwide from the bloodline of Moghol. Most of them are in other countries. We have some of them in the vice sub-district and Pazar district. What kind of inconsiderateness do you think of the Turks in Rize, Trabzon, Ordu, and Kirason (Giresun) provinces as Lazs? Let's not commit the sins of the imperial times now! Some are ingenious to call the Turk with different names. Let's not serve those. There is no such thing as a nation called the Kurds. Look at their customs and, especially, their language. Read works like History of Van, etcetera; these are mountain Turks. While talking about independence, I will also say a couple of things about the Independence March. While the Independence March is being sung and the music plays, remove your hat immediately, listen to it while standing [because] the history of a whole nation is contained by this march. The marches of the flag and independence are the summary of the Turkish nation. Also, remove your hat while hoisting the flag [to] pay homage to and venerate the flag.

Yesterday, the flag of the office of the army corps was being lowered. The Independence March was playing. I paid attention to it. A couple of youths stopped and removed their hats. Others did not execute their duties. We are an honorable and civilized nation. All nations do this. We have been attached to our flag and our independence all along. We should also do so.

The army is holier than [in] every [other] country. Especially in our country, the army is invaluable, and its service is sacred. We should venerate it as much as it deserves. I paid attention to the liberation day of Erzurum. A battalion of heroes marched in procession. However, they were applauded violently. But the affair of raising the hat to pay homage was neglected. If a battalion, company, or platoon marches in a procession, one stands up, raises his hat, and shows his respect.

People of Erzurum! You set foot in a historical place. Your homeland is a very important place. Until now, you fulfilled your obligations brilliantly. You played a great role in the independence and revolution. Keep your resolution and faith strong. Love independence and revolution. Choose the government, which is yours; it is yours. You belong to it. We would never claim that it is like a rose garden everywhere. Yet, we entered the track of welfare and felicity. You, an example of renunciation and sacrifice, pride yourself on thinking you belong to this government. Be proud. In a very short amount of time, in ten to fifteen years, you would be respected and venerated everywhere; you would become an example of peace and safety. And this amount of time is not so long.

My friends! The moment everyone lost their hopes in independence, a great power emerged, sensed the nation's power, and made it believe in its willpower. It started very difficult wars and took the glorious Turkish nation with it. Finally, it took its independence and carried out the revolution. Only a man could not do all these great services. His genius, willpower, and courage revealed all the assets of

the Turk. For that reason, Atatürk became rightly the national chef. We are proud of our national chef. And we express hereby our most sincere attachment and respect to him.

Our revolution and independence not only amazed the world but also set an example for all Muslim nations.

## Index

---

### A

Adana, 329  
Adivar, Halide Edip, 223, 332, 333  
Adnan Menderes, 299  
Ağaoğlu, Ahmet, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63,  
68, 80, 81, 112, 113  
Ağar, Ömer Kemal, 510, 513, 535  
*Akbaba*, 59, 247, 249, 339, 340, 534  
Akçuraoğlu, Yusuf, 52, 69, 70, 132  
Akdeniz, Ratip, 324, 325, 326, 344  
Aksoy, Ömer Asım, 324  
Akyol, Mürşide, 328, 329  
Alp, Nedime, 289, 295, 313  
Alpdoğan, Abdullah, 370  
*Altan*, 212, 215, 328  
Altaylızâde, Hüsamettin, 286, 336, 337  
Altıkulaç, Müveddet, 330, 331, 334  
Ankara, 73, 77, 84, 100, 103, 107, 126, 135, 159,  
179, 184, 205, 218, 219, 223, 224, 228, 232,  
234, 247, 250, 251, 252, 253, 257, 265, 268,  
274, 293, 294, 299, 300, 302, 314, 326  
*Antep Haberleri*, 335  
Ararat Revolt, 79  
Arın, Memduha, 334  
Ataç, Nurullah Ata, 84  
Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal, 54, 74, 80, 81, 101, 112,  
113, 127, 146, 155, 157, 179, 184, 190, 220,  
221, 224, 237, 241, 245, 246, 247, 319, 328,  
341, 377  
Atay, Falih Rifki, 45  
autobiography, 187, 188, 277, 289, 298, 299,  
311, 316, 330, 332, 431

*avam*, 78, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 149, 178  
Aydemir, Şevket Süreyya, 55, 84, 159, 160  
Aykaç, Fazıl Ahmet, 342, 514, 515, 536, 566  
Aytaç, Cemile, 41, 212, 328, 341, 342, 343, 344,  
345, 514

### B

Bahaeddin Şakir, 445  
Baku, 55, 437, 438, 455, 478, 592  
Balkan Wars, 138, 141, 144, 202, 316, 383, 384,  
385, 405, 406, 407, 408, 456, 480, 549, 552  
Baltacıoğlu, İsmail Hakkı, 45, 58, 123, 126, 127,  
128, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 180, 181, 205,  
536, 537, 541  
Bekman, Münir Müeyyet, 327  
Benda, Julien, 85  
Berlin, 53, 76  
Bilgen, Emin, 293, 316, 317, 344  
Bolu, 42, 189, 314  
Bonaparte, Napoléon, 68

### C

Çağlar, Behçet Kemal, 351, 375, 376, 378  
Canpolat, Muzaffer, 318  
Cemil Göğüş, 299  
*Cenub-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti Muvakkate-i  
Milliyesi*. See Southwestern Caucasus  
Provisional Government  
Chénier, André, 66, 68  
Child Protection Agency, 319, 334, 345  
Citizen, Speak Turkish, 38, 389  
*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*. See Child Protection  
Agency

coercion, 18, 37, 44, 46, 388, 393, 527, 595  
Committee of Union and Progress, 17, 54, 116,  
117, 120, 144, 159, 187, 223, 230, 304, 324,  
335, 393, 394, 395, 402, 403, 405, 406, 407,  
411, 412, 413, 447, 449, 450, 451, 454, 457,  
466, 480, 490, 522, 524  
Conker, Nuri, 411  
consent, 36, 37, 44, 71, 105, 111, 117, 154, 369,  
393  
Çorum, 297  
Cyprus, 324, 325

## D

*Darülmüallimat*. See Teachers' Training College  
for Girls  
Daudet, Alphonse, 83  
Daudet, Léon, 83  
Defense of Rights Associations, 395, 407, 410,  
412, 413  
Dersim Massacres, 46, 370, 380, 423, 482, 484,  
485, 510, 518, 566  
Derviş, Suat, 53, 54  
Develi, 96, 294  
Dicle, Hacer, 331  
Diyarbakır, 297, 314, 333, 357, 434, 495, 580,  
591  
Dokuzoğuz, Yılmaz, 187, 188, 189, 190, 194,  
197, 289, 290, 295, 300, 314, 318, 319, 329,  
344, 411, 414  
Dreyfus, Alfred, 69, 83, 85  
Durkheim, Emile, 447

## E

Edirne, 128, 296, 314, 351, 357, 358, 363, 375,  
376, 378

Elazığ, 100, 104, 105, 210, 211, 212, 214, 231,  
237, 254, 261, 262, 265, 266, 323, 328, 341,  
342, 343, 370  
Elgün, Nakiye, 330, 331, 332, 333, 368, 374  
elites, 144, 145, 199, 208, 210; administrative  
elites, 188, 245, 293, 305, 435; bureaucratic  
elites, 404, 405; civil servants, 22, 41, 317,  
352, 361, 362, 368, 370, 375, 376, 379, 398,  
399, 468, 469, 485, 492, 498, 499, 502, 520,  
521, 524; economic elites, 191, 285, 360;  
educated elites, 36, 40, 52, 57, 68, 86, 194,  
198, 215, 265, 282, 305, 340, 345, 369, 405;  
enlightened elites, 28, 78, 86, 166; governing  
elites, 20, 63, 78; intellectual elites, 26, 28, 44,  
50, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 83, 85, 86, 139, 149,  
178, 194, 196, 198, 200, 201, 203, 210, 216,  
282, 286; landowners, 42, 276, 278, 279, 283,  
284, 285, 298, 303, 359, 402, 504, 523;  
literary production, 202; military elites, 222;  
modernizing elites, 31; notables, 138, 223,  
224, 236, 278, 279, 283, 284, 285, 296, 299,  
303, 304, 305, 335, 336, 345, 359, 360, 437,  
525; provincial elites, 35, 36, 202, 435;  
religious elites, 283, 455; revolutionary elites,  
146; ruling elites, 148, 403; urban elites, 122;  
Westernized elites, 21  
eloquence, 89, 93, 149, 153, 161, 162, 164, 167,  
168, 170, 174, 180, 315, 522, 523  
enemy, 38, 106, 139, 144, 191, 382, 416, 417,  
419, 420, 423, 440, 444, 453, 458, 477, 486,  
499, 590, 595, 596  
Enver Pasha, 432  
Erdoğan, Fahrettin, 431, 432, 433, 435, 436,  
437, 438, 439, 525, 541, 565  
Erişirgil, Mehmed Emin, 71  
Ertem, Sadri, 78  
Erzincan, 98, 276

## F

Falih Rıfık Atay, 123, 145, 147  
fascism, 158  
Fascism, 158, 180, 182, 183, 210, 238, 257, 549,  
559  
Fenmen, Lamia Refik, 334  
Fergan, Eşref Edip, 53, 55  
First World War, 55, 104, 144, 178, 202, 304,  
309, 316, 332, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 390,  
395, 400, 405, 406, 409, 414, 415, 418, 420,  
421, 423, 425, 431, 435, 436, 440, 443, 444,  
445, 446, 450, 453, 456, 472, 476, 478, 482,  
485, 487, 516, 518, 519, 540, 543, 544, 547,  
566  
Florence, 84  
*Fukaraperver Cemiyeti*. See Poor Relief  
Association

## G

Galata, 91, 451, 487  
Gaziantep, 187, 188, 189, 236, 237, 251, 254,  
276, 285, 289, 290, 293, 295, 299, 300, 301,  
313, 314, 316, 317, 318, 324, 329, 335, 336,  
337, 344, 358, 360, 411, 412, 413, 415, 416,  
417, 542, 567  
General Inspectorate, 369, 370, 376, 441, 491,  
494, 497, 502, 504, 526  
genocide, 32, 33, 104, 105, 106, 111, 212, 213,  
236, 237, 355, 380, 381, 385, 386, 387, 388,  
389, 390, 391, 395, 400, 405, 411, 414, 415,  
416, 422, 425, 426, 444, 452, 459, 460, 477,  
481, 486, 488, 506, 507, 518, 525, 563, 568  
Goebbels, Joseph, 176, 178, 182, 183, 184, 185  
Göğüş, Cemil, 335  
Göğüş, Muhtar, 251, 300, 301, 324, 335, 336,  
337, 412, 413, 414, 525  
Göğüş, Sabahat, 300, 335

Gökalp, Ziya, 78, 123, 125, 139, 140, 141, 144,  
145, 153, 159, 199, 447, 516  
Gökçe, Cemal, 314, 315, 375, 378  
Gökçen, Sabiha, 510, 511, 514, 537  
Gültekin, Cemal, 215, 216, 233, 492, 508, 516,  
517, 536, 537, 566  
Gümüşhane, 314  
Gündüz, Aka, 82, 83

## H

habitus, 389, 390, 391, 423, 482  
Hacı İsmail Hakkı Efendi, 98  
Hafız Sabri Efendi, 98  
*Halk Terbiyesi*. See People's Education  
Hasan Fehmi, 451  
*havas*, 149  
*Heyet-i Nasiha*, 179  
*Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. See The Turkish Red  
Crescent  
*hitabet*. See oratory  
Hitler, Adolf, 176, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184  
Hunç, Hayriye Melek, 52

## I

ideology, 71, 72, 74, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159,  
160, 161, 182, 192, 194, 381, 460, 489  
İlgaz, Hasene, 8, 9, 11, 12, 37, 40, 41, 173, 325,  
326, 337, 338, 340, 344, 400, 401, 402, 403,  
420, 421, 422, 483, 484, 485, 486, 567  
İlker, Rasim, 428, 432, 433, 436, 439  
imha, 79, 474, 475, 476, 477, 485, 487, 527, 534  
inculcate, 6, 113, 147, 148, 161, 474, 507  
*inkılâp*. See revolution  
İnönü, İsmet Paşa, 101, 103, 114, 127  
intellectuals, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 45, 48, 49,  
50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64,  
65, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 77, 79, 82, 85, 86, 89,

118, 123, 126, 131, 132, 136, 139, 142, 145,  
149, 160, 162, 167, 169, 175, 178, 189, 190,  
191, 192, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201,  
202, 203, 206, 210, 211, 216, 223, 256, 262,  
266, 268, 286, 294, 320, 326, 340, 346, 381,  
398, 444, 447, 450, 457, 463, 487, 488, 489,  
502, 503, 524, 526

Ioannina, 407

Işıtman, Ziya, 293, 314

Islamic preachers, 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96,  
97, 98, 99, 102, 110, 128, 136, 137

Istanbul, 52, 53, 54, 58, 62, 76, 83, 84, 100, 109,  
124, 125, 126, 138, 140, 176, 178, 179, 200,  
201, 203, 223, 224, 232, 247, 249, 251, 252,  
253, 257, 265, 266, 276, 277, 282, 285, 293,  
294, 295, 297, 298, 299

Izmir, 80, 86, 106, 107, 197, 232, 253, 298, 299

## **K**

Kağan, Rıfkiye, 331, 428

Kanat, Halil Fikret, 72, 73, 74, 75

Kansu, Nafi Atuf, 45, 123, 128, 129, 134

Kaptancıoğlu, Hayriye, 334

Kara Vasıf, 412, 413

Karakol Society, 412, 413

Karaosmanoğlu, Yakup Kadri, 143, 200, 201, 202,  
203, 266

Karındaş, Mahmut, 373, 374

Kars, 42, 46, 176, 252, 276, 286, 301, 302, 323,  
331, 355, 357, 358, 362, 363, 364, 367, 375,  
380, 410, 418, 425, 427, 428, 430, 431, 432,  
433, 435, 437, 438, 439, 440, 442, 444, 447,  
452, 467, 478, 480, 481, 494, 525, 526, 557,  
586, 598

Kasımpaşa, 100

Kastamonu, 314

Kaya, Miktat, 301

Kaya, Şükrü, 99, 103, 106, 118

Kayseri, 96, 236

Kemah, 98

Kemalism, 27, 36, 45, 79, 155, 157, 217, 291,  
394, 549, 553, 556, 558, 560

Kemalist Pedagogy, 12, 13, 44, 118, 123, 190  
*konferans*, 163

Koptagel, Osman, 440

Kubilay, 81, 101, 192, 193, 194

## **L**

Le Bon, Gustave, 62

Levend, Agâh Sırrı, 293

Liberal Republican Party, 14, 15, 54, 79, 112,  
126

Loti, Pierre, 51

## **M**

Machiavelli, Nicolò, 84

Manisa, 101, 235, 265

Mardin, 202, 297

*meddah*: storytellers, 135

Medina, 49

*mefkûre*, 159

Mehmed, 100

*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*, 139

memory, 34, 105, 310, 399, 400, 404, 415, 425,  
431, 438, 452, 482, 485; memory  
entrepreneurs, 405

Menemen, 79, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 101, 102, 114,  
116, 194

Mersin, 91, 99, 236

Metinsoy, Murat, 92, 105, 106, 108, 115

Mevlana (Celaleddin Rumi), 63

Michelangelo, 84

*Millet Mektepleri*. See Nation's Schools  
modernization, 15, 29, 31, 36, 394, 565

*Muallimler Birliđi. See Teachers' Union*

Muhtar Gögüş, 300

Mussolini, Benito, 180, 181

Mu'allim Nāci, 63

## **N**

Namık Kemal, 436, 518, 545

Napoléon III, 236

Narodniks, 79, 139

Nation's Schools, 103

National Socialism, 113, 180, 184, 488, 522

Necip Bey, 100

Nevşehir, 341

New York, 53

Nezihe Muhiddin, 297

Nicosia, 324, 325

*nizam*, 191, 200, 452, 472, 491

Numan Efendi, 96

## **O**

Okyar, Fethi, 80, 86, 112, 113

oratory, 6, 86, 124, 127, 144, 163, 181, 182, 183,  
184, 187, 189, 204, 250, 289, 314, 327, 523,  
524

Orenburg, 437

Orhon, Zihni, 229, 285, 286, 362, 427, 428, 431,  
432, 433, 434, 435, 438, 439, 440, 441, 443,  
444, 445, 446, 448, 449, 450, 451, 453, 454,  
455, 456, 458, 459, 460, 461, 463, 464, 465,  
466, 467, 469, 470, 472, 473, 475, 476, 477,  
478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 485, 518, 526

Oruz, İffet Halim, 40, 172, 329, 330, 333, 340,  
341, 343, 345, 538

Ozanian, Andranik, 475, 582, 594

Ozanođlu, Yahya Saim, 66, 67, 68

## **P**

Paris, 53, 76, 83, 181, 212, 293

Pascal, Blaise, 67, 86

pedagogy, 119; Kemalist pedagogy, 47, 49, 127,  
178; popular pedagogy, 31; state pedagogy,  
45

People's Chairs, 226, 251, 417

People's Education, 29, 43-48, 70-86, 119, 122,  
124, 125, 129, 130-153, 203, 216, 502, 503

perpetrators, 380, 386, 391, 392, 427, 439, 477

political grammar, 79, 122, 155, 159, 386, 423,  
474

Poor Relief Association, 320

populism, 71, 78, 79, 119, 145, 161, 209, 210,  
421

progress: *terakki*, 142

propaganda, 20, 72, 73, 82, 89, 90-97, 100-116,  
146-149, 153, 158, 161, 174, 175, 176, 177,  
178, 179, 180, 184, 185, 186, 190, 222, 223,  
254, 265, 346, 370, 376, 492, 503, 504, 507,  
519, 522, 523

Propaganda Ministry, 174, 184

## **R**

race, 130, 139, 144, 200

Ratıp Bey. *See* Tekeliođlu, Sinan

reaction, 14, 29, 62, 68, 69, 78, 83, 103, 112,  
192, 193, 202, 257, 461, 565

Red Crescent, 315

responsibility of intellectuals, 82, 215, 216

revolution, 8, 19, 29, 36, 43, 46, 54, 57, 67, 68,  
69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 79, 102, 115, 129, 139, 146,  
147, 148, 151, 155, 156, 159, 160, 161, 165,  
191, 192, 193, 194, 198, 200, 203, 212, 213,  
214, 239, 247, 248, 256, 257, 310, 314, 328,  
329, 343, 345, 346, 391, 420, 441, 445, 447,  
448, 454, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 472,  
473, 489, 496, 509, 522, 527

rhetoric, 47, 82, 95, 106, 132, 156, 163, 166,  
168, 170, 204, 389, 463, 503, 522, 523  
Rifat Kozan, 294  
Rome, 84, 238

## S

Samsun, 215, 220, 260, 262, 329, 349, 352, 357,  
360, 361, 369  
Şapolyo, Enver Behnan, 310, 312, 313, 327  
Saralioğlu, Ali Bey, 335  
Savonarola, Girolamo, 62  
schoolteachers, 42  
Second Constitutional Monarchy, 138  
Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası, 298  
Sertel, Sabiha, 53  
Sertel, Zekeriya, 54  
Sheikh Mehmet, 81, 82, 83, 86, 101, 192  
Sheikh Said, 69, 70, 85, 105, 107, 108  
Sivas, 314  
social capital, 168, 169, 191, 319, 322  
Southwest Caucasus Provisional Government,  
432, 437  
Soykan, Münir, 376  
Special Organization, 412, 437, 446  
Şükûfe Abdurrahman, 330, 334  
Şükûfe Abdurrahman Hanım, 330  
Suner, Mehmet Ali, 313, 323  
Surname Reform, 39, 41, 298, 393, 487, 560

## T

Talin, 432  
Talınlı, Hüseyin, 285, 363, 410, 427, 428, 431,  
432, 433, 436, 437, 438, 440, 525  
tarikats, 137  
teachers, 81, 85, 101, 128, 204, 212, 216, 277,  
293, 294, 295, 298, 305, 311, 313, 314, 323,

324, 325, 330, 331, 332, 333, 338, 341, 357,  
371, 483, 494, 510, 513, 514  
Teachers Training College for Girls, 331, 332  
Teachers' Training College, 72, 236, 293, 294,  
308, 325, 326  
Teachers' Union, 309  
*tedip*, 36, 409, 471, 474, 484, 486, 493, 507, 527  
Tekelioğlu, Sinan, 411  
*telkin*. *See* inculcate  
*tenkil*, 463, 464, 465, 473, 474, 476, 477, 485,  
527  
*tenvir*. *See* enlighten; enlightening, 118  
*Tenvir*, 161  
*terbiye-i avam*, 147, *See* Education of the  
Commoners  
*tercüme-i hal*, 42, 187, 299, 319, 430  
*Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*. *See* Special Organization  
*Tıbbiye*. *See* The School of Medicine  
Toros, Meliha Taha, 330, 334  
Trabzon, 98, 204, 208, 209, 227, 233, 234, 272,  
304, 356, 357, 373  
Tuğrul Aka, 294  
Tümtürk, Baki, 313  
Tunç, Mustafa Şekip, 54, 56, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66,  
68, 85  
Tunç, Şekip Mustafa, 56  
Tunceli. *See* Dersim  
Tunçoğlu, Cevat Kazım, 329  
*Türk Kadınlar Birliği*. *See* Turkish Women's  
Union  
*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*. *See* Turkish Aeronautical  
Association  
Turkish Aeronautical Association, 94, 315, 319,  
320, 345  
Turkish Aeronautical Association., 408  
Turkish Communist Party, 55, 159, 160, 421



Turkish Hearths, 159; Türk Ocakları, 120, 121,  
125, 139

Turkish Red Crescent, 309, 314, 319, 320, 345

Turkish Women's Union, 330, 333

## **U**

Ülün, Hamiyet, 289, 308, 410

*Umumî Müfettişlikler*. See General Inspectorates

Unionism, 32, 120, 139, 141, 223, 333, 387, 402,  
404, 405, 408, 417, 423, 437, 443, 445, 446,  
449, 453, 455, 472, 477, 481, 491, 515, 564,  
565

## **V**

Varlık, Mediha, 334

*Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş*. See Citizen, Speak

Turkish

Venice, 84

Vienna, 53

Vural, Aliyar, 428, 431, 432, 433, 436, 439

## **W**

War of Independence, 17, 32, 35, 39, 43, 62, 70,  
107, 113, 201, 220, 236, 309, 380, 382, 383,  
384, 385, 390, 395, 398, 405, 407, 410, 411,  
414, 415, 420, 424, 425, 431, 432, 440, 444,  
477, 480, 516

Werfel, Franz, 38

Westernization, 31, 53, 60, 78, 116, 206

word of mouth, 150, 175

## **Y**

Yerevan, 432

Yıldırım, Cemal, 301

Yükselen, Niyazi Tefvik, 293, 317, 318

Yurdakul, Mehmet Emin, 446

Yüzüncü, Reşat Feyzi, 75, 76, 77, 302

## Résumé en français

---

### **Prêcher la République: Intellectuels et éducation populaire dans la Turquie post-génocidaire (1930-1950)**

Cette thèse examine comment le message politique du régime de parti unique en Turquie s'est diffusé dans les provinces entre 1923 et 1945, dans un contexte post-impérial marqué par les conséquences de la Première Guerre mondiale et l'éradication des populations non musulmanes et non turques d'Asie Mineure. Elle apporte une contribution à l'histoire du Parti républicain du peuple (*Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası*), qui a gouverné sans partage du pouvoir de 1923 à 1950, en se concentrant sur son organisation provinciale, notamment l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilâtı*), créée en septembre 1931. La thèse explore les conditions politiques et sociales de l'entre-deux-guerres, cherchant à comprendre pourquoi le parti a investi dans l'éducation politique des adultes à une époque marquée par des défis économiques et la Grande Dépression. L'analyse du projet pédagogique initié en 1931 met en lumière des concepts clés et des catégories sociales telles que les « *münevver* » (éclairés) et le « *halk* » (peuple). Elle montre comment les « éclairés » prenaient la parole en public, s'adressant aux foules pour éduquer la population au nom du parti et de la république. En examinant les trajectoires sociales et les carrières politiques des prédicateurs du peuple, cette recherche contribue à la socio-histoire des élites politiques du XXe siècle dans un contexte post-impérial. Le double mouvement analytique de la thèse explore l'appareil de communication politique mis en place par le Parti républicain du peuple pour gagner le soutien populaire, ainsi que le système éducatif axé sur l'éducation politique dispensée par les prédicateurs du peuple.

Cette étude révèle l'interconnexion entre la transmission des connaissances, l'intégration d'un idéal social genrée et le maintien de l'ordre. Elle retrace la généalogie de l'« intellectuel de province » (*taşra münevveri*) en Turquie, en examinant les transformations politiques et sociales ayant contribué à sa formation. Elle montre comment les intellectuels de province turcs se distinguent de leurs homologues européens par leurs origines sociales et leurs fonctions politiques, telles que l'application de la loi et l'intimidation des dissidents. Enfin, la thèse propose une lecture alternative de l'histoire de la Turquie à parti unique, liant sa nature post-

impériale à sa dimension post-génocidaire à travers l'étude des trajectoires sociales et les activités des prédicateurs du peuple dans le contexte des bouleversements démographiques et sociaux en Anatolie.

## Introduction

Quand j'ai pris la responsabilité de donner une seconde série de conférence pour le parti, je me suis arrêté pour un moment face à l'ampleur du sujet. Ce soir, je vais réfléchir sur la révolution et les réformes turques, qui sont tellement important que ni ma capacité à les décrire et les expliquer ni le temps j'ai alloué à cette tâche suffirait. En expliquant la révolution brièvement, j'ai été tenté de le diviser en deux parts.

La Turquie avant la révolution (*ihtilâl*).

La révolution turque (*inkılâp*).

L'analyse séquentielle de la révolution<sup>1</sup>.

C'est par ces mots que Hasene Ilgaz a commencé sa conférence intitulée « Indépendance et révolution » (*İstiklal ve İnkılâp*) en 1936. Elle s'est exprimée devant une foule rassemblée dans un centre culturel (Maison du peuple, Halkevi) à Şehremini, un quartier d'Istanbul, sa ville natale. À l'époque, Hasene était une enseignante de trente-trois ans, mais le « devoir » de donner cette conférence lui avait été confié par une lettre circulaire du secrétaire général du Parti républicain du peuple (Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası, CHP)<sup>2</sup>.

Le CHP était au pouvoir depuis la proclamation de la République de Turquie en 1923, et le parti avait été à l'origine d'une « révolution » (*inkılâp*) vaste et importante. Les dirigeants du parti ont organisé la lutte nationale après la défaite ottomane lors de la Première Guerre mondiale, libéré le pays de l'occupation étrangère, aboli le sultanat et le califat et préparé le terrain pour un nouveau style de gouvernement. Les premières années du nouveau régime ont été marquées par des réformes radicales portant notamment sur l'alphabet, la langue, le calendrier, le Code civil et l'éducation.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Fırkanın ikinci seri konferansını söylemek vazifesini aldığım zaman mevzuun büyüklüğü karşısında bir an düşündüm. Bu gece muhasebesini yapacağım bütün cihanın örnek ve gayret aldığı Türk ihtilal ve inkılabı o kadar büyüktür ki bunu hakkile tarif ve tavzife ne söyleme kudretim ve ne de tahsis ettiğim zaman müsaittir. Ben kısaca inkılabımızı tedkik etmek isterken bunu kısımlara ayırmak mecburiyetini duydum." Speech delivered by Hasene Ilgaz, Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı, Hasene Ilgaz Özel Arşivi, 10002-003-182.

<sup>2</sup> Recep Peker, *İstiklal ve İnkılâp Konferansları Hakkında Genelgeler*, 1935, BCA CHP 490-01/3-11-17, Ankara.

Dans les années 1930, le CHP a intensifié la promotion de ces réformes dans tout le pays. Comme l'a humblement noté Hasene, une heure ne suffirait pas à saisir l'essence de la révolution menée par Mustafa Kemal. Elle devait parcourir l'adoption de l'alphabet latin au lieu de l'écriture arabo-persane utilisée dans l'Empire ottoman, l'abolition du « fez » en faveur du chapeau du style Panama, les projets d'infrastructure, la laïcisation de l'éducation et l'émancipation des femmes. Elle devait fournir une perspective historique, mettre l'accent sur l'identité nationale et l'idée de progrès, et mettre en garde contre ceux qui risquaient d'entraver la continuité de la révolution. Hasene Ilgaz a néanmoins réalisé tout cela en 2 800 mots, ce qui correspond à une conférence de 20 minutes.

Hasene Ilgaz était née en 1902 dans la capitale ottomane. Son père venait de Safranbolu, une ville dans la région de la mer noire. Sa mère, Hatçe, était de "Kemaliye". Localiser le lieu de naissance de la mère d'Ilgaz est compliqué. Les changements de toponymes était récurrent depuis la Second Monarchie Constitutionnelle (1908). Ils étaient même exacerbés dans la période républicaine<sup>3</sup>. Comme Hasene Ilgaz, de nombreux membres de parti dévoués avaient adopté les nouveaux toponymes, qui ont dissimulé le caractère multilingue de l'Anatolie ottomane, dans leurs expressions de soi. De plus, de nombreuses villes avaient été rebaptisées "Kemaliye" après le fondateur de la république, Mustafa Kemal, à partir de 1928<sup>4</sup>. Hatçe pourrait être né à Egin en Anatolie orientale (Arménie) ou à Menderexora en Anatolie occidentale (Grèce).

Ilgaz faisait partie de l'élite lettrée de la Turquie du début de la république. Elle a fréquenté l'École normale pour filles d'Istanbul, grâce à l'engagement indéfectible de son père en faveur de son éducation. Elle s'est épanouie en tant qu'enseignante et est devenue plus tard directrice d'école dans la même ville<sup>5</sup>. Elle était également membre du grand parti. Le CHP a été au

---

<sup>3</sup> Kerem Öktem, "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 7 (2008).

<sup>4</sup> Selon le dictionnaire toponymique de Sevan Nişanyan, treize villes ont été nommées "Kemaliye" à partir de 1928. Sevan Nişanyan, in *Türkiye Yer Adları Sözlüğü - Index Anatolicus*. <https://www.nisanyanyeradlari.com/>.

<sup>5</sup> TRT Arşiv, "Bir kadın milletvekili olarak pek çok sosyal işlerle beraber hayatımı renklendirmeye muvaffak oldum. 'Erken dönem kadın milletvekillerimiz arasında yer alan Hasene Ilgaz'ın, o döneme ait anlatımına kulak veriyoruz. (1986)," *Facebook*, 8 March, 2024." Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VII. Dönem Milletvekili, 1943-1946, HT\_1230\_1\_7, Yasama Organı Üyelerinin Tercüme-i Halleri ve Seçim Mazbataları, TBMM Kütüphane, Ankara; Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VIII. Dönem

pouvoir sans véritable partage de 1923 à 1950. Le nombre de membres du parti était élevé à l'époque du parti unique et il reste l'une des organisations politiques les plus influentes de Turquie. Ilgaz a été un membre actif du parti depuis sa fondation en septembre 1923. Tout en travaillant comme enseignante, elle a servi avec diligence dans les comités administratifs de district, de sous-district à Istanbul.

Les organisations locales qui ont accueilli sa conférence de 1936 ont été créées par le CHP. Les maisons du peuple (*Halkevleri*) ont été créées en février 1932 et étaient étroitement liées aux sections locales et provinciales du parti. Ces centres culturels étaient animés par des activités telles que des cours du soir, l'assistance sociale, des concerts, des pièces de théâtre et des conférences hebdomadaires permettant aux citoyens adultes d'approfondir leurs connaissances sur divers sujets. Les maisons du peuple ont été créées comme un lieu de socialisation alternatif aux cafés et ont joué un rôle crucial dans le développement des technologies de l'impression et de la radiodiffusion, ainsi que dans la culture générale de la communication en Turquie<sup>6</sup>. Ilgaz a été un membre actif de la Maison du peuple avant de devenir prédicatrice du peuple (1938). En 1935, elle a pris la tête de l'une des maisons du peuple les plus influentes de Turquie, à Şehremini, Istanbul.

Les droits politiques et sociaux des femmes ont connu une évolution remarquable dans la Turquie de l'entre-deux-guerres. En 1930, les femmes ont obtenu le droit de participer aux élections municipales. Le suffrage partiel des femmes a également augmenté le nombre de femmes souhaitant devenir membres du CHP. Hasene Ilgaz était déjà membre du parti. Après l'ouverture du parti aux femmes, elle a rejoint le comité administratif local d'Istanbul. En 1931, le secrétaire général du parti a ordonné à ses comités administratifs locaux de créer une organisation regroupant les « Prédicateurs du peuple » (*Halk Hatipleri*). Cette organisation devait mobiliser, former et faire monter sur scène des porte-parole du parti sélectionnés localement, qui prononceraient devant les foules des discours sur les valeurs du parti et la «

---

Milletvekili, 1946-1950, HT\_1230\_1\_8, Yasama Organı Üyelerinin Tercüme-i Halleri ve Seçim Mazbataları, TBMM Kütüphanesi, Ankara.”

<sup>6</sup> Sefa Şimşek, *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi: Halkevleri, 1932-1951* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayinevi, 2002); Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey: The 'People's Houses', the State and the Citizen* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015); Kemal H. Karpat, “The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951,” *Die Welt des Islams* 15, no. 1/4 (1974): 70.

révolution » (*inkılâp*) qu'il a provoquée. Les sections locales du parti ont préparé des listes de Prédicateurs du peuple en 1931 et 1938.

Ilgaz ne figurait pas sur les premières listes préparées pour informer le secrétaire général du parti de l'identité des prédicateurs du parti. En 1934, les femmes ont obtenu le droit de vote. Quatre ans plus tard, Ilgaz apparut sur la liste des Prédicateurs du peuple. Après neuf ans de prédication pour le parti, Ilgaz a été élue à la Grande Assemblée nationale turque (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*, TBMM). À quarante et un ans, elle est devenue l'une des premières femmes élues au parlement de la République de Turquie, qui a vingt ans.

L'extrait dans lequel elle esquisse son discours et exprime ses inquiétudes quant à ses qualifications et à la gestion de son temps provient d'une des occasions où elle a « prêché » pour le parti. Lorsqu'elle a dû remplir un formulaire pour commencer son mandat au Parlement, il lui a été demandé d'énumérer ses « œuvres » (*eserleri*). Cette section était censée contenir les publications d'un député. Cependant, Ilgaz a choisi de lister ses « conférences et articles non publiés », considérant ses conférences, comme celle ci-dessus, comme l'une de ses contributions les plus significatives<sup>7</sup>.

Hasene Ilgaz a été l'un des 143 « Prédicateurs du peuple » sélectionnés à Istanbul en 1938. Quatorze d'entre eux, hommes et femmes, ont été sélectionnés dans son district (Fatih). Elle était l'une des rares femmes à pouvoir agir en tant que porte-parole locale du CHP en 1938. En 1938, seules quatre-vingt-cinq femmes sont devenues Prédicateurs du peuple sur les 2 062 personnes sélectionnées dans chaque province et district de la Turquie républicaine<sup>8</sup>.

Parmi les 3 500 noms figurant sur les listes des Prédicateurs du peuple envoyées au secrétaire général du CHP, celui de « Hasene Ilgaz » sortait du lot. Non seulement elle était l'une des rares femmes figurant sur ces listes, mais elle était aussi l'un des rares « prédicateurs » (homme ou femme) dont j'ai pu retrouver la trace dans diverses archives de la Turquie du début de la république. J'ai trouvé « Hasene Ilgaz » dans d'autres archives parce qu'elle était l'une des premières femmes politiques de la République de Turquie. Consciente et fière de sa

---

<sup>7</sup> « Basılmamış konferans ve makaleler. » Hasene Ilgaz, *Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi* TBMM VIII. Dönem Milletvekili.

<sup>8</sup> Listes des Prédicateurs du peuple envoyées par les sections provinciales au Secrétaire général du CHP, 1931-1938, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/1175-126-2.

distinction, elle a fait don de ses archives privées à la Bibliothèque des femmes et au Centre d'information (Kadın Eserleri ve Bilgi Merkezi) avant sa mort en 2000<sup>9</sup>. Elle a également publié deux mémoires, qui témoignent des moments cruciaux de l'histoire de la Turquie dont elle a été le témoin et l'acteur<sup>10</sup>. Malgré sa trace archivistique exceptionnelle, le discours d'Ilgaz n'est qu'un discours parmi des centaines, voire des milliers, prononcés par les Prédicateurs du peuple pour enseigner le « programme du parti, les valeurs, les fondamentaux et les principes de la république » entre 1931 et 1945<sup>11</sup>.

Cette thèse se penche sur l'histoire des Prédicateurs du peuple comme Ilgaz et sur les discours qu'ils ont prononcés afin d'explorer comment le CHP a diffusé son message au « peuple » (*halk*) par l'intermédiaire de ces prédicateurs. Elle se concentre sur la « pédagogie kémaliste », comprise comme le projet partisan pour l'éducation politique des citoyens adultes, réglementée par ce que la direction du parti a appelé « l'éducation du peuple » (*Halk Terbiyesi*) pendant la période où le CHP était gouverné par un parti unique.

### **Pédagogie kémaliste et « élites locales »**

La vie de Hasene Ilgaz a été étroitement liée à deux organisations majeures de la pédagogie kémaliste : L'Organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple, qui ont été créées en l'espace de six mois. Son militantisme fervent s'exprime dans les discours qu'elle prononce en tant que Prédicateur du peuple lors des rassemblements qu'elle organise dans les Maisons du peuple. Ces institutions mobilisent les élites provinciales, qui considèrent qu'il est de leur devoir d'expliquer les valeurs du parti au « peuple » (*halk*). Le « peuple » est une préoccupation majeure pour les dirigeants du CHP. Le parti prétendait être le « Parti du peuple », les sections provinciales du parti étaient appelées « Maisons du peuple » et les porte-parole du parti étaient les « Prédicateurs du peuple ».

Ilgaz était « locale » au sens le plus fondamental du terme. Elle est née à Istanbul et a résidé à Samatya, sur Ulufeci Sokak, à quelques pas de la Maison du peuple de Şehremini, où s'est

---

<sup>9</sup> “The Women’s Library and Information Centre Foundation,” Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi Vakfı, accessed 1 June 2024, <https://kadineserleri.org/aabout-us/>.

<sup>10</sup> Hasene Ilgaz, *Unutulmayan Yıllar* (Istanbul: Babiâli Aziz Uçtay Matbaası, 1970); Hasene Ilgaz, *Okuduklarım, Gördüklerim, Yazdıklarım* (1991).

<sup>11</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 6.

déroulé son parcours politique, qui l'a conduite à devenir députée du CHP en 1943<sup>12</sup>. Elle faisait partie de l'élite culturelle et se distinguait par son niveau d'éducation relativement élevé. L'organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple recherchaient des personnes d'un statut social plus élevé. Les prédicateurs du peuple devaient être sélectionnés parmi les « personnalités appréciées dans leur localité »<sup>13</sup>. Le parti distinguait ces personnes du reste de la société, qu'il qualifiait de « paysans et citoyens simples d'esprit » (*köylüler ve basit görüşlü vatandaşlar*) et d'« individus lambda » (*herhangi zevat*)<sup>14</sup>.

L'Organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple ont été conçues pour mobiliser le segment « éclairé » (*münevver*) de la société. Le terme « *münevver* » était à la fois un adjectif et un nom utilisé pour souligner la supériorité intellectuelle des classes les plus éduquées de la population. Le fait de confier aux « éclairés » la responsabilité d'éduquer le « peuple » (*halk*) était un élément clé de la pédagogie kémaliste. Le manque d'éducation perçu par le peuple était un fardeau pour les dirigeants républicains. Le rapport de 1942 sur les maisons du peuple mettait l'accent sur les « conférences » (*konferans*) où des conférenciers « éclairés » s'adressaient à leur auditoire derrière une chaire<sup>15</sup>. Ils s'exprimaient sur une scène équipée d'un microphone annulaire présentant les moyens étendus de l'État-parti républicain. Le fait de se tenir sur la toile de fond de la nouvelle carte de la Turquie signifiait leur alignement sur la vision politique du parti et du nouveau régime.

La pédagogie kémaliste est apparue en réponse à la multitude de défis auxquels le CHP a été confronté dès le début de la république. Le parti a dû faire face à un vaste soulèvement dans les régions kurdes du sud-est de la Turquie en 1925. La révolte de Cheikh Saïd a éclaté en février 1925 et a manifesté une ferveur nationaliste et une résistance aux réformes centralisatrices et laïques<sup>16</sup>. L'insurrection a rapidement embrasé la région et sa répression a été aussi intense que brutale. Le gouvernement a déployé environ 50 000 soldats pour réprimer

---

<sup>12</sup> Hasene Ilgaz, Hasene Ilgaz Kısa Hal Tercümesi TBMM VIII. Dönem Milletvekili.

<sup>13</sup> “ Bulundukları mahalde şahısları itibarile sevilen zatlar olmalı.” *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931).

<sup>14</sup> “Herhangi zevat” (...) “Basit görüşlü vatandaşlar” ibid.

<sup>15</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*, (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 1942), 36.

<sup>16</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State : The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London ; Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Zed Books, 1992); Hamit Bozarslan, *L'histoire de la Turquie: de l'empire à nos jours* (Paris: Tallandier, 2013), 348-49.



la rébellion, recourant à des bombardements aériens contre les insurgés<sup>17</sup>. Dans le contexte de cette révolte, la loi sur le maintien de l'ordre (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*) a été promulguée, ouvrant la voie à des exécutions sommaires et à des représailles violentes non seulement contre les nationalistes kurdes, mais aussi contre toute forme d'opposition critique à l'égard de la politique du parti<sup>18</sup>.

En novembre 1924, un clivage idéologique au sein de la Grande Assemblée nationale a donné naissance au Parti républicain progressiste (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), une entité d'opposition vouée à ne durer que six mois. Dans le tumulte de la révolte de Cheikh Said, ses dirigeants ont été accusés d'inciter à des sentiments « réactionnaires », ce qui a conduit à la fermeture et à l'interdiction du parti<sup>19</sup>. À la suite de ce bouleversement, la révolte d'Ararat (1930), dans les confins de l'Anatolie orientale, pose aux dirigeants du CHP de nouveaux défis majeurs, apparemment insurmontables, à l'encontre de leur autorité. La révolte est écrasée par un massacre à grande échelle perpétré par les forces aériennes turques<sup>20</sup>. À partir de mars 1925, la plupart des régions kurdes ont été gouvernées dans le cadre d'un état d'exception, ce qui témoigne de la volatilité persistante du pouvoir et de la lutte incessante pour le contrôle<sup>21</sup>.

En octobre 1930, un parti d'opposition nouvellement créé remporte un succès imprévu aux élections municipales. Le Parti républicain libéral (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, SCF) a profondément ébranlé la confiance en soi des dirigeants du CHP grâce à son succès électoral. En décembre 1930, un cheikh soufi Nakshibendi a déclaré à Menemen, ville de la région égéenne et bastion du parti, que Mustafa Kemal était un « messie trompeur » (*deccal*),

---

<sup>17</sup> Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism," *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no. 1 (2000); Ümit Uğur Üngör, "Young Turk Social Engineering : Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950" (Ph.D. University of Amsterdam, 2009), 233.

<sup>18</sup> Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti hde Tek-Parti Yönetimi nin Kurulması (1923-1931)* (Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1981, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, "The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 33 (2021-09-28 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Mesut Yeğen, "State Violence in 'Kurdistan'," in *Collective and State Violence in Turkey*, ed. Stephan Astourian and Raymond Kévorkian (New York, Oxford: Bergahn, 2020), 308.

<sup>21</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, *L histoire de la Turquie : de l'empire à nos jours*, 350-51.

s'opposant à lui pour des raisons liées à la religion<sup>22</sup>. Ses disciples ont ensuite assassiné un enseignant et officier de réserve nommé Kubilay à Menemen.

Au cours des sept premières années de la république, la mise en place et le renforcement du nouveau régime ont pris le pas sur l'urgence de propager l' « idéologie » du CHP<sup>23</sup>. La direction du parti a perçu la révolte des Menemen et la montée du Parti républicain libéral comme des manifestations de diverses formes de « réaction », allant de la résistance armée à une opposition politique plus subtile, comme la circulation de rumeurs. Ces événements ont mis en lumière le spectre de la « réaction » (*irtica*) pour la direction du parti<sup>24</sup>.

Lors du congrès du troisième parti qui se tient en mai 1931, de nombreux membres ont fait part de leurs inquiétudes concernant la « réaction » (*irtica*) et les acteurs et organisations de l'opposition qui manipulent le « peuple » (*halk*)<sup>25</sup>. Ils craignaient la réticence du peuple à payer des impôts, à fournir de la main-d'œuvre et à se conformer aux nouvelles règles introduites par les réformes. La solution proposée consistait à investir dans l'éducation et la communication politique. Les membres « éclairés » de la société étaient chargés d' « éclairer » (*tenvir*) les citoyens républicains, de les « guider sur le bon chemin » (*irşad*) et d'enseigner l' « idéologie » aux membres du parti<sup>26</sup>.

Quatre mois après le troisième congrès, le secrétaire général du parti a créé l'organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple, suivie par la création des Maisons du peuple cinq mois plus tard. Ces deux organisations interdépendantes sont apparues dans un contexte de vulnérabilité de l'État, ce qui a incité les dirigeants du CHP à adopter des initiatives coercitives d'un côté, et des mesures plus inclusives de l'autre, pour obtenir le consentement à leur pouvoir<sup>27</sup>. Les

---

<sup>22</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, « Le madhisme en Turquie : L'« incident de Menemen » en 1930, » *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, no. 91-94 (2000).

<sup>23</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, « Institution Building in the Kemalist Republic: The Role of the People's Party, » in *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, ed. Touraj Atabaki and Erik Jan Zürcher (London: Tauris, 2004), 105.

<sup>24</sup> « Bundan sonra zuhüra gelen Menemen hâdisesi, irticanın ? Kurunu Vustadaki kadar vahşi ve müntakim olduğunu gösterdiği gibi ahvalden ne kadar cür'et almış olduğunu da göstermek itibarile intibaha şayandır. » Inaugural speech by İsmet İnönü. *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 5.

<sup>25</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

<sup>26</sup> *C.H.F. Üçüncü Büyük Kongre Zabıtları: 10-18 Mayıs 1931*, (Istanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 236.

<sup>27</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *L'énergie de l'État : pour une sociologie historique et comparée du politique* (Paris : La Découverte, 2022), 567.

Prédicateurs du peuple ont joué un rôle crucial dans le développement et la diffusion de l'idéologie dominante en transmettant des connaissances politiquement pertinentes dans les régions reculées de la Turquie d'après-guerre. Leur mission consistait à convaincre l'ensemble de la population des idées, des principes et des idéaux du parti et de sa révolution<sup>28</sup>.

L'objectif premier des Prédicateurs du peuple était de mobiliser les citoyens, car la République turque naissante était ouverte à la transformation plus large de la politique et à l'évolution de la relation entre les partis et les masses dans le monde entier. Dans son livre, *Turkey : A Modern History*, Erik-Jan Zürcher compare la direction du CHP pendant les années de formation de la République (1923-1945) au parti fasciste en Italie, notant que le CHP ne s'est pas concentré sur la mobilisation à grande échelle de la population ou n'a pas organisé de rassemblements de masse dans le cadre de sa stratégie politique<sup>29</sup>. Cependant, les traces archivistiques laissées par les Prédicateurs du peuple racontent une histoire différente en ce qui concerne le rôle de la mobilisation de la population et de l'oratoire de masse pendant les premières décennies de la République. De 1931 à 1938, le parti a rassemblé environ trois mille personnes, dont quelques femmes, pour former des citoyens par le biais de conférences et de rassemblements publics. Les sections locales du parti sélectionnaient avec diligence des prédicateurs dans chaque province, district et sous-district pour prononcer des discours publics conformes au programme politique du parti.

En 1931, chaque section provinciale et de district du CHP avait sélectionné 1 360 personnes, dont des enseignants, des médecins, des gouverneurs, des gouverneurs de district, des maires, des chefs de village, des juges, des pharmaciens, des commerçants, des agriculteurs, des procureurs, des ingénieurs et du personnel militaire. Ce nombre est passé à 2 033 en 1938. Parallèlement, le nombre de maisons du peuple est passé de moins de 100 en 1932 à environ 500 en 1942. L'activité principale reliant les Prédicateurs du peuple aux Maisons du peuple était l'organisation de « conférences » (*konferanslar*) dans ces lieux, le nombre de ces conférences atteignant des milliers en 1941<sup>30</sup>.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*.

<sup>29</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 186.

<sup>30</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*, 34.

La création de l'Organisation du Prédicateur du peuple est un effort ambitieux mais improvisé pour institutionnaliser la communication du parti, qui trouve ses origines dans des tentatives antérieures. Avant la création des Maisons du peuple en 1932, les prédicateurs du peuple s'adressaient à leur public sur ordre du secrétaire général du parti sur les places publiques, dans les sections locales du parti et dans les « foyers turcs » (*Türk Ocakları*), des centres culturels progressivement alignés sur le Comité de l'Union et du Progrès (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, CUP) sous la seconde monarchie constitutionnelle ottomane (1908-1920)<sup>31</sup>. Les Prédicateurs du peuple ont été rassemblés en tant que partie intégrante de l'appareil de communication et d'éducation du parti lorsque l'accès aux médias de masse était limité<sup>32</sup>.

Ces limitations étaient liées à la dévastation économique de l'Anatolie à la suite d'une longue décennie de guerre. Les efforts de guerre considérables, notamment les guerres balkaniques (1912-1913), la Première Guerre mondiale (1914-1918) et la guerre d'indépendance, ont précédé la proclamation de la République. Ces guerres ont entraîné une perte importante de population en Anatolie, estimée par Şevket Pamuk à environ deux millions de personnes<sup>33</sup>. Les déportations, les massacres et les échanges de populations impliquant les Assyriens, les Syriens, les Chaldéens et surtout les Arméniens ont exacerbé ce déclin démographique<sup>34</sup>. Globalement, la population de la Turquie a diminué de 25 % entre 1914 et 1924<sup>35</sup>.

Ces mesures d'anéantissement soutenues par l'État ont été mises en œuvre avec la participation du gouvernement, des forces militaires et paramilitaires, des milices locales et de la population civile<sup>36</sup>. Les Prédicateurs du peuple s'adressaient à leur public dans les villes d'Anatolie ravagées par la guerre et le génocide. Certaines maisons du peuple étaient des bâtiments convertis à partir d'églises ayant appartenu à des populations persécutées.

---

<sup>31</sup> Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1997).

<sup>32</sup> Sur l'accessibilité de la radio au début de l'ère républicaine, voir Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

<sup>33</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998), 11; Şevket Pamuk, "Economic Change in Twentieth-Century Turkey: Is the Glass More Than Half Full?," (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 267.

<sup>34</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*, 11; Hamit Bozarslan, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Introduction," in *Comprendre le génocide des Arméniens* (Paris: Tallandier, 2022), §2.

<sup>35</sup> Roger Owen and Şevket Pamuk, *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, Vincent Duclert, and Raymond H. Kévorkian, "Chapitre 4. Les acteurs du génocide."

Nous ne pouvons pas situer la ville natale de la mère de Hasene Ilgaz entre l'Anatolie orientale et l'Anatolie occidentale en raison de l'héritage de la destruction des populations en Anatolie et des efforts de l'État républicain à ses débuts pour effacer les signes de ces populations exterminées sur les cartes<sup>37</sup>. Compte tenu de l'ampleur de ces événements et de leur rôle dans l'homogénéisation démographique de l'Anatolie, qui a facilité la fondation et le développement de l'État-nation, dans les années 1930, le passé génocidaire et le présent post-génocidaire de l'Anatolie faisaient partie intégrante de la production du consentement au nouvel ordre politique et social.

Cette thèse a deux objectifs principaux. Le premier est d'aborder la construction de l'État-nation du point de vue des intermédiaires entre la direction du parti, ses branches provinciales et les citoyens turcs. Ce faisant, elle propose une « histoire par le milieu » pour discuter de la manière dont le projet politique visant à faire converger le « haut » et le « bas » a pris forme sans effacer cette distinction, voire en la renforçant. Cette « histoire par le milieu » implique également l'étude de l'établissement des catégories sociales dans le cadre du passage de l'empire à l'État-nation. En ce sens, les Prédicateurs du peuple et leurs discours constituent un préalable à l'examen de la manière dont des catégories telles que les « éclairés » (*münevver*) ou le « peuple » (*halk*), qui sont devenues les pierres angulaires de la sémantique politique républicaine en Turquie, ont été élaborées à une échelle locale.

Le deuxième objectif est d'insérer l'histoire de la violence étatique dans l'histoire de ces intermédiaires et vice versa. Le lieu de rencontre entre le parti-État et son public-citoyen était aussi un lieu où la violence était décrite, justifiée et légitimée, et où sa signification était réinterprétée pour faire face aux menaces imminentes et à la présence d'ennemis à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'État. En examinant à la fois le régime du parti unique et les Prédicateurs du peuple, nous pouvons acquérir de nouvelles connaissances sur l'interaction entre la coercition et la cooptation dans un contexte révolutionnaire.

### **La révolution par le « milieu »**

---

<sup>37</sup> Kerem Öktem, "The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey."

Le « nationalisme » était l'un des six piliers idéologiques du CHP. Les Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple étaient des institutions créées par des « entrepreneurs nationalistes » pour diffuser les idéologies nationalistes parmi les citoyens adultes des provinces. L'opposition ou l'indifférence à l'égard du changement politique dans ces régions a suscité une grande inquiétude chez les dirigeants du parti<sup>38</sup>. L'un des principaux objectifs de la création de ces organisations était d'éduquer une population perçue comme ignorante et indifférente aux développements du nouveau régime, en particulier en ce qui concerne la culture, la littérature et l'histoire nationales.

Les documents fondateurs de l'organisation et les discours des Prédicateurs du peuple mettent tous deux l'accent sur la « nation » et le « nationalisme ». Néanmoins, je n'ai pas abordé cette recherche sous l'angle des études sur le nationalisme, ce qui aurait nécessité de s'engager dans les débats théoriques et conceptuels de ses spécialistes. Pour cette étude, la construction de l'État-nation a été la toile de fond principale, soutenue par un riche corpus de littérature qui a alimenté mes recherches sur le nationalisme en Turquie et à l'étranger<sup>39</sup>. Cependant, comme mon intérêt pour la transmission orale de messages politiques ne pouvait ni répondre ni contredire les conclusions des études sur le nationalisme ou la construction de l'État-nation,

---

<sup>38</sup> Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>39</sup> Erol Ülker, "Empires and Nation-Building: Russification and Turkification Compared" (Master's Central European University, 2004); Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010); Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*; Meltem Türköz, *Naming and Nation-Building in Turkey: The 1934 Surname Law* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*; Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); İlker Aytürk, "Turkish Linguists against the West: The Origins of Linguistic Nationalism in Atatürk's Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (2004); Meltem Ahıska, *Occidentalism in Turkey: Questions of Modernity and National Identity in Turkish Radio Broadcasting*; Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*; Gavin D. Brockett, *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk: Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*, 1st ed., Modern Middle East series, (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2011); Ümit Uğur Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Benjamin C. Fortna, "The Ottoman Empire and After: From a State of "Nations" to "Nation-states",," in *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna et al. (London: Routledge, 2012); Ümit Kurt, *Türk'ün Büyük, Biçare ırkı" : Türk Yurdu'nda Milliyetçiliğin Esasları, (1911-1916)*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2012); Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish: Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013); Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021).

j'ai choisi de mettre cette question de côté et de me concentrer sur ce que mes sources appellent la « révolution » (*inkılâp*).

Pour les dirigeants du CHP, la « révolution » signifiait l'homogénéisation linguistique et religieuse de la population, la lutte contre les institutions impériales liées au califat et au sultanat, le développement des infrastructures, la centralisation et la lutte contre les ambitions coloniales des puissances occidentales. En tant que tel, il allait au-delà de la création d'une « communauté imaginée »<sup>40</sup>. Le CHP a mobilisé les Prédicateurs du peuple pour diffuser une culture de masse nationaliste et révolutionnaire.

L'histoire des Prédicateurs du peuple en tant qu'organisation partisane est un sujet négligé. De nombreux ouvrages sur la période du parti unique du CHP mentionnent l'organisation ou ajoutent les directives dans leur annexe, sans autre commentaire<sup>41</sup>. Le travail empirique le plus important se concentrant directement sur l'organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple est *Konuşunuz, Konuşturunuz* (Parler et faire parler) d'Işıl Çakan. L'analyse détaillée de Çakan inclut différents efforts de propagande, notamment les Prédicateurs du peuple, les conférences des Maisons du peuple, les projections cinématographiques et les expositions<sup>42</sup>. Ce travail souligne la centralité de la « parole » (*söz*) pour les dirigeants républicains. Il explique l'importance de la mobilisation des acteurs individuels à l'échelle nationale pour la « propagande » en l'absence de médias de masse accessibles tels que la radio. Les recherches de Çakan ont permis de situer la fondation de l'Organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple dans le cadre des efforts de communication plus larges déployés par les élites dirigeantes depuis les années 1920. Bien qu'informatif et riche en descriptions, *Konuşunuz, Konuşturunuz* limite les transcriptions de discours publiées dans la presse à un usage illustratif et exclut une analyse systématique basée sur des critères spécifiques. Il n'a donc pas approfondi les concepts disciplinaires ou les paradigmes historiographiques dominants.

---

<sup>40</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*, (Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999), 484-489.

<sup>42</sup> Işıl Hacıbrahimioğlu Çakan, *Konuşunuz Konuşturunuz: Tek Parti Döneminde Propagandanın Etkin Silahı: Söz* (Istanbul: Otopsi, 2004), 33.

La deuxième recherche portant sur les Prédicateurs du peuple est un article de Hakan Uzun. Le texte analyse le document fondateur de l'organisation à travers le prisme de la « propagande ». Il fournit des informations de fond – déjà présentes dans le travail de Çakan – sur les efforts de propagande initiés depuis le début de la lutte nationale, allant de la presse locale et des initiatives plus modestes de conférences publiques aux rassemblements de masse.<sup>43</sup> Il informe le lecteur sur la formation des prédicateurs du peuple à Istanbul, Ankara, Trabzon, Ardahan, et sur leur rémunération potentielle<sup>44</sup>.

Bien que le nombre et la portée des études menées spécifiquement sur les Prédicateurs du peuple soient limités, les études sur les Maisons du peuple et la pédagogie populaire apportent également un éclairage sur ce sujet. La pédagogie publique est souvent étudiée à travers le prisme de l'éducation nationale en se concentrant sur les manuels et les programmes produits sous le contrôle du ministère de l'Éducation. Füsün Üstel a exploré la pédagogie d'État en analysant les programmes et autres matériels éducatifs normatifs de la deuxième monarchie constitutionnelle (1908-1920) jusqu'à aujourd'hui<sup>45</sup>. Üstel a montré comment le régime de parti unique s'est investi dans l'éducation des nouvelles générations sous la république. Dans son ouvrage intitulé *Pedagogical State*, Sam Kaplan a montré l'importance persistante accordée aux politiques éducatives à la suite de transformations politiques radicales, généralement provoquées par des coups d'État militaires en Turquie<sup>46</sup>. Étant donné que l'éducation contrôlée par le ministère concernait principalement les élèves des écoles, l'éducation à la citoyenneté pour les adultes est restée un sujet marginal dans l'historiographie de la Turquie. Alexandros Lamprou a traité la question de « l'éducation du peuple » (halk terbiyesi) qui était souvent

---

<sup>43</sup> Hakan Uzun, "Bir Propaganda Aracı Olarak Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı," *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, 11 (2010): 91.

<sup>44</sup> Les affirmations concernant la rémunération des prédicateurs n'ont pas pu être vérifiées car les documents cités étaient introuvables dans les archives. J'ai remarqué que les commentaires d'Uzun sur la rémunération des prédicateurs étaient spéculatifs, et j'ai donc tenté de localiser les documents pertinents dans les archives de l'État. Malheureusement, les documents cités n'ont pas été retrouvés et les archivistes soupçonnent une erreur dans la citation. "Bu gruplandırmanın hangi ölçüye göre yapıldığının belirtilmemiş olmasına karşın, bunun şehir, ilçe ve köylerde görev yapacak hatiplere göre yapıldığı ve buna göre, illerde görev yapan hatiplere 100, ilçelerde görev yapan hatiplere 30, köylerde görev yapan hatiplere de 20 lira ödenmesinin düşünüldüğü ileri sürülebilir." Ibid., 103.

<sup>45</sup> Füsün Üstel, *İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Türk Milliyetçiliği: Türk Ocakları 1912-1931*.

<sup>46</sup> Sam Kaplan, *The Pedagogical State: Education and the Politics of National Culture in post-1980 Turkey* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006).



utilisée pour faire référence aux activités des maisons du peuple. <sup>47</sup>Lamprou a abordé la question de la pédagogie populaire comme une « mission civilisatrice » coloniale des « élites occidentalisées » sur les « populations indigènes non occidentales » <sup>48</sup>.

Il est essentiel de reconnaître que le régime du parti unique a inscrit sa mission pédagogique dans un discours civilisationnel. Cependant, le simple fait de faire cette observation risque d'entraîner une analogie improductive avec les missions coloniales civilisatrices<sup>49</sup>. Cela ne signifie pas que l'approche post-coloniale n'est pas pertinente pour la Turquie. Au contraire, elle peut être appliquée, même si ce n'est pas de manière uniforme dans toutes les provinces. En limitant notre analyse à la présence d'un discours civilisationnel, nous risquons de galvauder le concept et de créer une analogie creuse dont la valeur analytique est limitée. Il est donc nécessaire d'approfondir l'enquête en prenant plus au sérieux les concepts sociopolitiques et les catégories sociales des projets politiques la république pendant l'entre-deux-guerres.

Les traces écrites laissées par les Prédicateurs du peuple sont riches en sources sur les concepts sociopolitiques et les catégories sociales. Ces archives, créées par l'État et le parti au pouvoir à l'époque, sont de nature top-down. Elles sont conservées dans les collections républicaines des archives d'État de la présidence turque, qui sont consacrées au CHP à l'époque du parti unique, soit de 1923 à 1950. Cependant, pour retrouver les voix du régime de parti unique dans ces archives, il faut naviguer dans la communication entre les branches provinciales du CHP et son secrétariat général, ce qui leur confère un caractère localisé.

Les Prédicateurs du peuple étaient liés au gouvernement central par leur association avec le secrétaire général du CHP à une époque marquée par la porosité entre les institutions du parti et de l'État. Un autre lien avec l'appareil d'État central et centralisé était leur profession, puisque la plupart des Prédicateurs du peuple étaient des fonctionnaires. Ces caractéristiques font des Prédicateurs du peuple un point d'entrée précieux pour examiner l'histoire de l'ère du parti unique « par le milieu », malgré la nature top-down des archives.

---

<sup>47</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 32.

<sup>48</sup> "Halk Terbiyesi appears a civilizing and disciplining operation, almost a colonial mission to civilize the indigenous Other of the country's periphery." Ibid., 44.

<sup>49</sup> Marc Aymes, "Many a Standard at a Time: The Ottomans 'Leverage with Imperial Studies,'" *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 8, no. 1 (01 Jun. 2013).

Dès sa création, le dispositif des Prédicateurs du peuple et des Maisons du peuple a été conçu comme des médiateurs entre les gouvernants (la direction du parti) et les gouvernés (le reste de la population). Il s'appuyait sur les branches provinciales et de district du parti, recevant des directives de l'organisation centrale à Ankara, le secrétaire général du CHP. Les prédicateurs et les membres des Maisons travaillaient en tant que représentants locaux du parti et du gouvernement. Ils étaient autorisés par les conseils d'administration provinciaux du parti à parler au nom du parti. Ils jouaient un rôle de « médiateur » en produisant des arguments et des représentations communes, en recueillant et en comprenant les différents points de vue et en trouvant un langage commun pour faire circuler efficacement le message du parti<sup>50</sup>. Le dispositif de Prédicateurs-Maisons permet de reconsidérer l'histoire du CHP à la période du parti unique dans une perspective qui n'oppose pas « État » et « société ». Il examine néanmoins les enchevêtrements entre l'État et les secteurs bureaucratiques et partisans<sup>51</sup>.

L'opposition entre le « centre » (merkez) à Ankara et la « périphérie » ou la « province » (taşra) était fondamentale pour le dispositif des maisons de prêcheurs. Cette dichotomie rappelle le modèle centre-périphérie qui a longtemps dominé dans les études ottomanes et turques<sup>52</sup>. Des études récentes ont critiqué à juste titre les dichotomies État-société, centre-périphérie et élite-masse en faveur d'une approche « État dans la société »<sup>53</sup>. Selon l'approche de Joel Migdal, l'État est défini comme suit,

« un champ de pouvoir marqué par l'usage et la menace de la violence et façonné par l'image d'une organisation cohérente, contrôlante, sur un territoire, qui est une représentation des personnes délimitées par ce territoire, et les pratiques réelles de ses multiples parties. <sup>54</sup>»

---

<sup>50</sup> Patrick Hassenteufel, "Chapitre 8 - Les acteurs intermédiaires des politiques publiques," in *Sociologie politique : l'action publique* (Paris : Armand Colin, 2011), §3.

<sup>51</sup> Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard, *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 5.

<sup>52</sup> Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery Relations: A Key To Turkish Politics?," *Daedalus* 102, 1, no. Winter (1973).

<sup>53</sup> Yiğit Akın, "Reconsidering State, Party, and Society in Early Republican Turkey: Politics of Petitioning," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 3 (2007); Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard, *L'art de l'État en Turquie: arrangements de l'action publique de la fin de l'Empire ottoman à nos jours*, Meydan, (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2013).

<sup>54</sup> Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society : Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 15.

Cette définition permet également de voir les « pratiques contradictoires et les alliances de l'État avec ses parties disjointes »<sup>55</sup>. L'approche de l'État dans la société a apporté de précieuses contributions à l'historiographie de la Turquie contemporaine<sup>56</sup>. Néanmoins, elle a parfois conduit à accorder une importance excessive à l'action locale, au point d'assimiler le « local » à une « société civile » prétendument autonome, jouissant d'une autonomie relative par rapport à l'autorité de l'État, remplie de « vastes réseaux formels et informels » qui sont rarement clairement démontrés<sup>57</sup>. Cette perspective présente les « locaux », les « populations locales » et les « provinciaux » comme un groupe homogène ayant les mêmes visions du monde et les mêmes intérêts. Ils sont présentés comme des groupes « sympathiques et essentialisés », ce qui permet aux chercheurs de remettre en question la dichotomie entre l'État et la société<sup>58</sup>.

Dans cette perspective, chaque interaction entre l'autorité de l'État central et les « locaux » est décrite comme une source de « négociation ». Cependant, l'accent mis sur la résistance et la négociation a parfois été utilisé pour minimiser la dépendance des acteurs locaux à l'égard du gouvernement central<sup>59</sup>. L'État républicain à ses débuts n'était ni tout-puissant ni monolithique. Néanmoins, l'accent mis par Migdal sur la copénétration entre les acteurs étatiques et non étatiques et son appel à examiner les confrontations, les négociations, les partenariats et les improvisations avec d'autres acteurs puissants au niveau local ou national n'avaient pas pour but d'homogénéiser les acteurs locaux afin de relativiser le pouvoir ou la violence de l'État. Il s'agissait plutôt de mieux comprendre le fonctionnement des États.

Dans cette thèse, je n'utilise pas les termes « centre » et « périphérie » comme outils analytiques. Néanmoins, je les prends au sérieux puisque le parti les a utilisés pour décrire le cadre institutionnel à travers lequel les Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple

---

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>56</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*; Élise Massicard, "The Incomplete Civil Servant? The Figure of the Neighbourhood Headman (Muhtar)." In *Order and Compromise: Government Practices in Turkey from the Late Ottoman Empire to the Early 21st Century*, ed. Élise Massicard, Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse and Élise Massicard, (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 256-90

<sup>57</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, "Local Negotiation of Change: Historiography of Modern Turkey and the Study of Provincial Anatolian Towns," *SIYASAL: Journal of Political Sciences*, no. 32 (2023): 256; Burak Basaranlar, "Pragmatic Coexistence: Local Responses to the State Intrusion in Dersim during the Early Republican Period of Turkey (1938–1950)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 58, no. 6 (2022).

<sup>58</sup> Jean-François Bayart, *L'énergie de l'État : pour une sociologie historique et comparée du politique*, 568.

<sup>59</sup> Murat Metinsoy, "Fragile Hegemony, Flexible Authoritarianism, and Governing From Below: Politicians' Reports in Early Republican Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011).

opéraient. L'opposition entre le centre et la périphérie implique une confrontation, des interconnexions et une interdépendance entre le « central » et le « provincial ». Pourtant, ce dernier se définit par sa relation avec le premier.

Les Prédicateurs du peuple étaient étroitement liés à l'organisation centrale du parti, en particulier au secrétaire général par l'intermédiaire des branches provinciales. Afin de réfléchir à leur degré d'autonomie ou d'hétéronomie plutôt que de présumer que « les locaux » avaient une capacité d'action inhérente, cette thèse interroge les ressources économiques, politiques, culturelles et symboliques des acteurs locaux du parti. En mettant l'accent sur les différences en termes d'origine sociale et de trajectoires des Prédicateurs du peuple, je vise à clarifier leur relation avec l'appareil d'État et leurs ressources économiques, sociales et symboliques avant et après qu'ils sont devenus des Prédicateurs du peuple.

Afin de mieux comprendre et de recatégoriser les organisations locales du CHP, cette thèse examine le processus de sélection des Prédicateurs du peuple. Elle examine les points communs et les différences entre les régions, les provinces et les districts en termes de répartition professionnelle et sociale, en s'interrogeant sur la manière dont ces critères varient entre les différentes branches provinciales du parti. L'étude explore également les motivations et les rétributions des Prédicateurs du peuple afin d'évaluer l'autonomie ou l'hétéronomie des agents locaux du parti. En utilisant la catégorie créée par l'État républicain à ses débuts des « Prédicateurs du peuple », cette recherche réfléchit à l'évolution des structures sociales, des classes et des groupes tout au long des réformes républicaines et des projets d'éducation populaire.

### **Catégoriser le monde social**

La dichotomie « élite » et « masse », tout comme celle de « centre » et « périphérie », est au cœur de la conception de la mission pédagogique du parti. La correspondance du parti oppose fréquemment deux groupes sociaux. Le premier groupe, les « *münevver* » (éclairés), comprend l'ensemble des membres du parti, y compris les Prédicateurs du peuple et les membres de la Maison du peuple. Ce groupe s'oppose au « *halk* » (peuple), qui désigne l'ensemble de la population, y compris les paysans et les ouvriers. Cette thèse examine ces oppositions et situe leur place au sein de la pédagogie populaire de la République.

Les sections provinciales du parti sélectionnaient les Prédicateurs du peuple au sein d'un groupe socialement distingué, leur statut social étant ancré localement. Les directives

insistaient sur le fait qu'ils devaient être appréciés, respectés et écoutés par leurs communautés<sup>60</sup>. Leur rôle de porte-parole local du parti les rapprochait de l'appareil d'État, mais ils restaient à l'écart des centres de décision en raison de leur éloignement géographique et professionnel. Leur rôle consistait à jouer un rôle de médiateur entre les organes normatifs et décisionnels, avec une participation limitée. Subordonnés aux instances décisionnelles du parti, ils sont mobilisés en tant que produits et vecteurs du « kéralisme », chargés de diffuser les idées du régime « en province ».

Par leur distinction sociale et leur association au gouvernement de parti unique, ils participaient au « champ du pouvoir » ou aux « classes dominantes », bien qu'à partir d'une fraction subordonnée. Porte-parole et orateurs, ils incarnent ce que l'on pourrait appeler la « fraction dominée de la classe dominante »<sup>61</sup>. Un exemple typique de ce groupe est celui des « intellectuels », traduction la plus courante de « münevver »<sup>62</sup>. Cette thèse vise également à problématiser cette traduction et à réfléchir sur les points communs et les différences entre les « münevver » et les « intellectuels » turcs.

Le rôle principal des Prédicateurs du peuple était d' « éclairer » (*tenvir*) les gens, et ils étaient souvent subsumés dans la catégorie des « münevver » dans la correspondance du parti. Les deux termes proviennent de la même racine, « lumière ». La réforme de la langue turque a remplacé les deux mots par des substituts prétendument « purement turcs » (*aydınlatma* et *aydın*) au début des années 1930. Dans le turc actuel, « münevver » est utilisé de manière interchangeable avec « intellectuel » et reflète un statut social lié à la connaissance et à l'éducation<sup>63</sup>. Au départ, il s'agissait d'un adjectif qualificatif signifiant « éclairé » ou « illuminé

---

<sup>60</sup> *Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>61</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, « Champ du pouvoir et division du travail de domination. Texte manuscrit inédit ayant servi de support de cours au Collège de France, 1985-1986, » *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 190, no. 5 (2011); François Denord, « Classe(s) dominante(s), » in *Dictionnaire international Bourdieu*, ed. Gisèle Sapiro et al. (Paris : CNRS éditions, 2020).

<sup>62</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, « Champ du pouvoir et division du travail de domination, » 129. The most recent dictionary of the Turkish Language Institute translates *münevver* as “*aydın, aydınlatılmış, and aydın kimse.*” “*Aydın*” on the other hand, means “*kültürlü, okumuş, görgülü, ileri düşünceli kimse, münevver, ziyalı, entelektüel.*” “*aydın,*” in *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*, ed. Mustafa Arğunşah et al. (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2011).

<sup>63</sup> “Türk Dil Kurumu Güncel Sözlük,” Türk Dil Kurumu, 2023, <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>.

»<sup>64</sup>. Il a progressivement évolué pour désigner un groupe social spécifique, indiquant « des caractéristiques sociales, des préférences culturelles et des traits psychologiques »<sup>65</sup>.

Le terme « mûneuver » reflétait les débats et modèles étrangers sur les « intellectuels ». Le terme « intellectuels » est apparu comme une catégorie sociale moderne en France dans les années 1890. Un groupe d'universitaires, d'écrivains et de journalistes français réagit à l'injustice du procès intenté à Alfred Dreyfus en publiant le Manifeste des intellectuels<sup>66</sup>. Ils interviennent dans la sphère politique en organisant des pétitions au nom du statut social qu'ils s'attribuent en tant qu'« intellectuels ». La genèse de cette catégorie sociale s'inscrit dans les transformations structurelles du « champ intellectuel », à l'intersection du champ éditorial et du champ académique de la France de la fin du XIXe siècle. Les signataires du Manifeste ont pu exprimer leur désapprobation de la condamnation de Dreyfus grâce à l'autonomie relative du « champ intellectuel »<sup>67</sup>.

En ce qui concerne l'historiographie de la fin de l'Empire ottoman et du début de la Turquie républicaine, les études se sont concentrées sur « l'histoire intellectuelle » en analysant les figures intellectuelles telles que les écrivains et les artistes célèbres, un groupe d'élites lettrées considérées *a priori* comme des « intellectuels » ou les lieux d'édition littéraire et philosophique<sup>68</sup>. En d'autres termes, l'accent mis sur les « grands hommes », et parfois sur les femmes, a dominé l'histoire des intellectuels<sup>69</sup>. Si l'apport à leurs domaines de recherche

---

<sup>64</sup> James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon: Shewing in English the Significations of the Turkish Terms* (Constantinople: A. H. Boyajian, 1890).

<sup>65</sup> Jean-Baptiste Comby and Julie Pagis, "Introduction. Politiques de catégorisation du monde social," *Politiques de communication* 10, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>66</sup> Christophe Charle, *Birth of the Intellectuals : 1880-1900*, trans. David Fernbach and G. M. Goshgarian (Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity, 2015), 2-3.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>68</sup> Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 15-19; Erdal Kaynar, *L'héroïsme de la vie moderne: Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930) en son temps*, (Paris: Peeters, 2021); Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel a la fin de l'Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps* (Peeters Publishers, 2023); James D. Ryan, "The Republic of Others: Opponents of Kemalism in Turkey's Single Party Era, 1919-1950" (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2017) (10683539); Daniel Kolland, "Making and Universalizing New Time: A History of the Late Ottoman-Turkish Magazine *Servet-i Fünûn* (1891-1914)" (Ph.D., Freie Universität Berlin, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Nazan Maksudyan, "“This Is a Man’s World?”: On Fathers and Architects," *Journal of Genocide Research* 21, no. 4 (2019).

revendiqués n'est pas négligeable, l'accent mis sur les «grands hommes» (de lettres) a conduit à la dissimulation de figures intellectuelles intermédiaires telles que les Prédicateurs du peuple.

Parmi les travaux qui ont accordé une attention particulière à l'émergence des « intellectuels » dans l'Empire ottoman tardif, on peut observer une large place accordée aux écrivains, journalistes, artistes et faiseurs d'opinion les plus influents<sup>70</sup>. Leyla Dakhli a montré que ce n'est pas le mouvement des Jeunes Ottomans des années 1860, mais la révolution de 1908 qui a fait émerger la figure sociale de l'« intellectuel »<sup>71</sup>. Si le mot « intellectuel » n'a pas d'équivalent dans la langue arabe de l'époque, les trois registres clés pour l'émergence du concept en France, à savoir le social, le culturel et le politique, existent chez les hommes de lettres du Bilad al-Sham (Grande Syrie) à partir de la Seconde Monarchie constitutionnelle<sup>72</sup>.

Dans sa thèse, Özgür Türesay a étudié un important intellectuel musulman turcophone de la fin de l'ère ottomane, Ebüziyya Tevfik (1849-1913), et a discuté de la pertinence de l'utilisation du terme « intellectuel ». Türesay a remarqué qu'Ebüziyya Tevfik ne correspondait pas à l'« intellectuel » tel qu'il était compris dans les études sociologiques et historiques sur les contextes européens. En conséquence, il a opté pour parler d'« élites intellectuelles » et qualifier les personnes en fonction de leurs « activités intellectuelles concurrentes » telles que « hommes de lettres » (*edip*), « hommes de plume » (*erbâb-ı kalem* et/ou *eshâb-ı kalem*), « écrivain » (*muharrir*), « journaliste » (*gazeteci*, *gazete muharriri*), publiciste (*nâşir*), imprimeur ou propriétaire d'imprimerie (*matbaacı*), « poète » (*şâir*), ou « prosateur » (*münşî*)<sup>73</sup>. En fin de

---

<sup>70</sup> Dyalah Hamzah, "Introduction: The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood," in *The Making of the Arab Intellectual: Empire, Public Sphere, and the Colonial Coordinates of Selfhood*, ed. Dyalah Hamzah (London: Routledge, 2013), 1; Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914*, The California World History Library, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 44; See also Anne-Laure Dupont, "What is a Kâtib ā'mm? The Status of Men of Letters and the Conception of Language According to Jurjī Zaydān," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 13, no. 2 (2010): 181; Omnia El Shakry, "Rethinking Arab Intellectual History: Epistemology, Historicism, Secularism," *Modern Intellectual History* 18, no. 2 (2021): 551; Erdal Kaynar, "The Almighty Power of the Written Word: Political Conceptions of the Press at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman et en Turquie: Études réunies pour François Georgeon*, ed. Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar, Turcica (Paris, Louvain, Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 160.

<sup>71</sup> Leyla Dakhli, *Une génération d'intellectuels arabes. Syrie et Liban (1908-1940)* (Paris: Karthala, 2009), 7.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> Özgür Türesay, "Être intellectuel à la fin de l'Empire ottoman : Ebüziyya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps" (Ph.D. INALCO, 2008), 15-16.

compte, Türesay a qualifié Ebüziyya Tevfik d'« homme des Lumières »<sup>74</sup>. Bien que les Lumières et leurs échos dans le domaine intellectuel ottoman soient au cœur de l'étude de Türesay, ce dernier n'a pas discuté de la relation entre le terme emic « *münevver* » et les Lumières. Il n'a pas établi de lien entre ce dernier et l'émergence du « *münevver* » en tant que catégorie sociale du discours politique de la République. Enfin, Erdal Kaynar a remarqué que dans l'Empire ottoman de la fin du XIXe siècle, il existait une relation intrinsèque entre la publication et le fait d'être un « intellectuel »<sup>75</sup>. La publication d'articles d'opinion était considérée par les milieux lettrés comme une action politique suite à l'expansion de l'imprimerie. De la même manière, Kaynar s'est concentré sur l'émergence de la figure de l'« intellectuel » plutôt que sur l'émergence d'une catégorie sociale spécifique pour parler de cette figure<sup>76</sup>. Il a également noté que la division entre « l'élite éclairée » et « la masse ignorante » était la clé de la vision éducative des intellectuels ottomans tardifs<sup>77</sup>.

Dans ce contexte, il est intéressant d'examiner comment des figures intermédiaires comme les Prédicateurs du peuple s'inscrivent dans cette équation où les élites éduquent les masses. Erik-Jan Zürcher a traduit « *münevver* » par « élites éclairées ». Selon lui :

Le régime kémaliste se définissait lui-même comme un régime révolutionnaire, bien qu'il ait introduit la modernisation révolutionnaire de manière ordonnée et en haut lieu - « *inkılap* » (le mot utilisé pour la révolution ordonnée des planètes) plutôt que « *ihtilâl* » (émeute ou rébellion, le mot ottoman utilisé pour la révolution française). Dans ses efforts pour légitimer ses actions et mobiliser le soutien en leur faveur, il a créé une antithèse entre son propre caractère progressiste et éclairé et ce concept de réactionnaire inspiré par la religion, qui visait à ramener la Turquie vers un passé sombre. Dans cette conception, le peuple était considéré comme une sorte de tabula rasa, un « *masum halk* » innocent qui, en raison de son manque d'éducation, pouvait être guidé vers la modernité par une élite éclairée (les *münevver*, plus tard les *aydın*) ou égaré par des réactionnaires<sup>78</sup>.

---

<sup>74</sup> Özgür Türesay, *Etre intellectuel à la fin de l'Empire ottoman: Ebuzziya Tevfik (1849-1913) et son temps*, (Leiden : Brill, 2023), 458.

<sup>75</sup> Erdal Kaynar, "The Almighty Power of the Written Word: Political Conceptions of the Press at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," 160.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Erdal Kaynar, *L'héroïsme de la vie moderne: Ahmed Rıza (1858-1930) en son temps* (Paris: Peeters, 2021), 371.

<sup>78</sup> Erik-Jan Zürcher, "The Progressive Republican Party of 1924-25: Reactionaries, Conservatives, or Moderates?," 1-2.



Alekos Lamprou, dans son recherche sur les maisons du peuple, a montré comment la dichotomie entre la « majorité de la population » et les « élites » ou « intellectuels » était essentielle à l'« éducation du peuple »<sup>79</sup>. Doğan Gürpınar, dans sa *Petite histoire des intellectuels en Turquie*, a adopté une définition universaliste des « intellectuels » pour couvrir une longue période (1860-2000) sans prêter attention à l'évolution des catégories émiques utilisées pour les producteurs culturels participant à la politique<sup>80</sup>. Gürpınar identifie les Jeunes Ottomans comme le début de l'histoire des « intellectuels » dans l'Empire ottoman et souligne le rôle des débats dans la presse. Les recherches de Gürpınar étaient ambitieuses, mais les sources concernant le début de l'ère républicaine étaient limitées aux publications<sup>81</sup>. Malgré ces insuffisances, le travail de Gürpınar met en évidence une remarque cruciale, qui sera développée tout au long de cette thèse. La critique d'un « type idéal d'intellectuel » ou d'une « figure d'intellectuel » a joué un rôle essentiel dans divers types de mouvements politiques tout au long de l'histoire de la Turquie contemporaine<sup>82</sup>.

Les recherches d'Ali Dikici ont souligné le rôle central de la dichotomie *münevver-halk* dans l'élaboration et la légitimation des réformes républicaines, mais elles se sont principalement concentrées sur les perceptions du « peuple » (*halk*) par l'élite. Dikici considérait que l'autre extrémité de la dichotomie, *münevver* ou *aydın* – termes qu'il traduisait par « élites » ou « intellectuels » – allait de soi<sup>83</sup>. Alexandros Lamprou a qualifié le « peuple » (*halk*) de « l'autre collectif du CHP » (*CHP's collective other*), mais n'a pas commenté le terme « münevver »,

---

<sup>79</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 45.

<sup>80</sup> Néanmoins, il exclut une analyse systématique de ce milieu éditorial et reproduit les clichés datant des années formatrices de la république sur le caractère « apolitique » de l'une des revues intellectuelles les plus célèbres (*Servet-i Fünun*) de l'époque. Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye'de Aydın'ın Kısa Tarihi* (Istanbul: Nesil, 2013), 45-47. Daniel Kolland affirme que *Servet-i Fünun* n'était pas un magazine apolitique. "In a period when political discussion could not be held in public, such linguistic, literary, and artistic issues were proxies for larger, ideological and identity confrontations and ruptures within the late Ottoman society." Daniel Kolland, "Making and Universalizing New Time," 150.

<sup>81</sup> Gürpınar a limité ses recherches sur l'époque ottomane à des sources secondaires ou déjà translittérées. Son analyse de l'époque républicaine s'appuie principalement sur des livres édités, à l'exclusion des articles de presse et des archives non publiées. Les sources les plus mobilisées, publiées dans les années 1970, sont Berna Moran et Şerif Mardin. Doğan Gürpınar, *Türkiye'de Aydın'ın Kısa Tarihi*, 60-61.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-59.

<sup>83</sup> Ali Dikici, "Early Republican Reforms from the Perspective of Elite vs. the People with Particular Reference to Alphabet and Language Reforms" (MA Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1996), viii.

qui désigne un certain groupe au sein de la société<sup>84</sup>. Esin Ertürk Acar a souligné la primauté des « Lumières » dans le discours sur les enseignants en tant qu'« éclaireurs éclairés »<sup>85</sup>.

En ce qui concerne la recherche sur le « *münevver* », l'essai d'Azra Erhat, spécialiste de la traduction, publié en 1982, a été une source d'inspiration. Erhat a commenté un discours prononcé par Mustafa Kemal en 1925 sur le « *münevver* », mais a refusé de « traduire » le discours du turc ottoman au turc moderne<sup>86</sup>. Au lieu de cela, elle a fourni une translittération et un commentaire. Le thème principal du discours de Mustafa Kemal étant le rôle du « *münevver* », Erhat a fourni une analyse détaillée de ce concept spécifique et de son évolution entre l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie républicaine. Selon Erhat, « *münevver* » n'était pas exactement une traduction d'« intellectuels » mais un terme générique utilisé pour parler des « hommes d'influence ottomans, la classe dirigeante » (*Osmanlı devlet ricali, yönetici sınıfı*)<sup>87</sup>.

Au lieu « d'adopter une définition sociologique des intellectuels et de leur milieu, qui risque de reproduire des catégories sociales obsolètes », ma recherche veut comprendre la cristallisation de la catégorie de « *münevver* » en Turquie à l'époque du parti unique<sup>88</sup>. En se plongeant dans les archives de l'organisation provinciale du parti et de la presse des débuts de la république, Cette thèse interroge également dans quelle mesure les efforts du parti unique pour façonner les citoyens de la république naissante ont contribué à la cristallisation de la catégorie de « *münevver* ».

Sur la base d'études antérieures adoptant une approche de « l'État dans la société » pour les Maisons du Peuple, je passe des Maisons du Peuple en tant qu'« lieu de socialisation » à des lieu d'éducation et de distinction sociale. Les Prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple faisaient partie de la pédagogie populaire du régime républicain ciblant les adultes. Se plonger

---

<sup>84</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 12.

<sup>85</sup> Esin Ertürk Acar, "Poor Enlighteners: Pedagogy, Politics and Elementary School Teachers in the Early Republican Era" (Ph.D. Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2022), 154.

<sup>86</sup> Azra Erhat, *Osmanlı Münevverinden Türk Aydınına* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2023 [2002]), 3.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>88</sup> "Si l'historien veut adopter une définition sociologique des milieux intellectuels, il risque de reproduire des classements sociaux obsolètes (ce que les contemporains reconnaissent comme élite culturelle, soit, pour une large part, une élite académique), ou, en sens inverse, de renouer avec une vision purement individuelle de l'innovation culturelle et de privilégier excessivement les avant-gardes, comme l'on fait traditionnellement l'histoire littéraire ou l'histoire de l'art." Christophe Charle, "Intellectuels, Bildungsbürgertum et professions au XIXème siècle," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 106, no. 1 (1995): 86.

dans l'histoire des Prédicateurs du peuple nous permet d'étudier la pédagogie populaire du régime de parti unique visant à former et à éduquer politiquement les citoyens adultes afin de compléter l'éducation des « générations futures » à l'école. Les Prédicateurs du peuple et leurs conférences publiques nous éclairent sur la relation entre éducation et persuasion à cette époque en nous permettant de mieux comprendre les élites provinciales à une époque caractérisée par des transformations importantes dans un contexte post-impérial et révolutionnaire. Tout en explorant la pédagogie populaire du régime de parti unique, cette thèse vise à contribuer à l'histoire des catégorisations sociales.

### **Prêcher au lendemain d'une violence de masse**

L'historiographie sur la période du parti unique en Turquie s'est longtemps concentrée sur les projets de « modernisation » et d'« occidentalisation » qui soulignaient l'« importation des institutions et des normes européennes » dans la Turquie contemporaine par les élites modernisatrices<sup>89</sup>. L'histoire de la première République de Turquie a longtemps été racontée comme l'histoire d'élites politiques occidentalisées ou « super-occidentalisées » transformant une société « traditionnelle ». La perspective moderniste offrait un récit favorable au projet alors que le point de vue postmoderniste l'a abordé de manière critique<sup>90</sup>. Dans le sillage des analyses critiques du projet de modernisation, il y a eu des contributions sur les résistances, les rejets et les négociations avec la volonté de l'État central<sup>91</sup>. Dans les deux cas, les héritages et les séquelles de la décennie de guerre et du génocide qui ont précédé la formation de la république ont été négligés.

L'historiographie officielle elle-même a marqué le début de la « Turquie moderne » au début de la « guerre d'indépendance » turque, en mai 1919. La période antérieure à mai 1919 a été

---

<sup>89</sup> Marc Aymes, Benjamin Gourisse, and Élise Massicard, *L'art de l'État en Turquie : arrangements de l'action publique de la fin de l'Empire ottoman à nos jours*, 16.

<sup>90</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961); Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1964); Taha Parla, *Türk Siyasi Kültürünün Resmî Kaynakları: Kemalist Tek-Parti İdeolojisi ve CHP'nin Altı Ok'u*, (Istanbul: İletişim); Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Tek-Parti Yönetimi'nin Kurulması (1923-1931)*.

<sup>91</sup> Gavin D. Brockett, *How Happy to Call Oneself a Turk : Provincial Newspapers and the Negotiation of a Muslim National Identity*; Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People: Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); İlbey Özdemirci, *Fört Şapkalı Şih: Cumhuriyet Sekülerleşmesi ve Taşra* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2022).

négligée dans le célèbre discours (*Nutuk*) prononcé par Mustafa Kemal devant la Grande Assemblée nationale turque en octobre 1927. Jusqu'à la publication de *The Unionist Factor* d'Erik Jan Zürcher, il existait un consensus scientifique sur la rupture entre les mouvements libéraux et constitutionnels de la fin de la période ottomane et du début de la République, ainsi qu'un « monopole narratif » concernant l'histoire des années de formation de la République<sup>92</sup>. Zürcher a montré la continuité entre le Comité de l'Union et du Progrès (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti, CUP) et le CHP en termes de cadres et de valeurs politiques de 1905 à 1945. Néanmoins, il a également souligné la lutte entre les différentes opinions et factions politiques au sein d'un même mouvement politique et a situé Mustafa Kemal, connu comme le fondateur de la république, au sein de ces luttes<sup>93</sup>.

En étudiant l'histoire du début de l'ère républicaine comme une « histoire de l'après », je suis l'approche d'Erik Jan Zürcher en montrant la continuité entre le CUP et le CHP. La continuité entre l'unionisme et le kémalisme permet de mettre en évidence des traits communs entre les deux formations politiques, à savoir l'irréductibilité, le ressentiment à l'égard des minorités chrétiennes et le discours de revanche qui en découle, ainsi que la découverte de l'Anatolie comme véritable patrie turque<sup>94</sup>. Ce lien entre « unionistes » et « kémalistes » a fait de la gestion des populations non turques et non musulmanes d'Anatolie et de la gestion des répercussions du génocide des éléments centraux du mouvement de « lutte nationale » et du réformisme républicain à ses débuts.

Un article de revue historiographique récemment rédigé par İlker Aytürk a critiqué les historiens qui ont mis l'accent sur la continuité de la violence collective de l'État - entre autres - de la deuxième monarchie constitutionnelle au début de l'ère républicaine<sup>95</sup>. D'autres articles

---

<sup>92</sup> Hülya Adak, ““Ötekileştiremediğimiz Kendimizin Keşfi” 20. Yüzyıl Otobiyografik Anlatıları ve Ermeni Tehciri,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* Spring, no. 5 (2007): 242.

<sup>93</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 2023).

<sup>94</sup> Erik J. Zürcher, “Renewal and Silence: Post-war Unionist and Kemalist Rhetoric on the Armenian Genocide,” in *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation-Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010), 196.

<sup>95</sup> Aytürk a surtout mis l'accent sur l'historiographie de la sécularisation de l'État en se référant à des travaux tels que Şerif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) and Nilüfer Göle's Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). Il n'exclut cependant pas les travaux traitant de la

et travaux publiés dans le sillage de l'intervention d'Aytürk se sont concentrés sur deux axes principaux : d'une part, la question de la sécularisation mise en œuvre par le régime du parti unique et, d'autre part, les violences de masse principalement commises à l'encontre des populations non musulmanes d'Anatolie. Dans un numéro récent célébrant le centenaire de la république, Alp Yenen a publié un autre article intitulé « La malédiction de l'unionisme » (*İttihatçılığın Laneti*) commentant la continuité entre l'unionisme et le kémalisme et condamnant les chercheurs qui ont souligné la continuité de la violence de masse commanditée par l'État entre 1908 et 1945 comme étant du « post-kémalisme radical »<sup>96</sup>.

Ces efforts visant à relativiser le rôle de la violence de masse commanditée par l'État dans la construction de la Turquie moderne s'inscrivent dans le cadre d'une riposte au déclin de la négation des génocides par les chercheurs au cours des vingt dernières années<sup>97</sup>. La violence de masse organisée par l'État, y compris le génocide arménien, a été pendant longtemps « elephant in the room of Ottoman studies »<sup>98</sup>. La première vague d'études révisionnistes (au sein des études ottomanes) portait sur la préparation et la mise en œuvre de mesures génocidaires

---

violence d'État, telles que celles de Mete Tunçay et d'Erik Jan Zürcher. Il convient de noter qu'Aytürk ne fait aucune référence aux Kurdes, aux Arméniens ou à d'autres populations « subalternes », mais qu'il inclut les études subalternes dans le domaine des études « post-kémalistes ». İlker Aytürk, "Post-post Kemalizm: Yeni Bir Paradigmayı Beklerken," *Birikim* 319 (2015), 38.

<sup>96</sup> Yenen a affirmé que la violence de masse contre les « minorités » était un sous-produit naturel de toute lutte « anti-impérialiste » et a invité les chercheurs à explorer d'autres dimensions. Alp Yenen, "İttihatçılığın Laneti: İmparatorluk'tan Cumhuriyet'e Geçiş Döneminin Tarih yazımında Bazı Meseleler," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 164 (2023): 89. Les arguments de Yenen présentent des similarités avec ceux de Hakan Yavuz sur la classification des génocides. Le volume édité sur l'histoire de la Première Guerre mondiale, édité par Hakan Yavuz et Feroz Ahmad, a montré ces similarités. Dans ce même volume, publié à l'occasion du centenaire du génocide arménien, Yavuz critique l'utilisation du terme génocide pour désigner le massacre des Arméniens pendant la Première Guerre mondiale. Il utilise plutôt l'euphémisme « relocation » pour traduire « déportation » (tehcir). Voir Alp Yenen, "The "Young Turk Zeitgeist" in the Middle Eastern Uprisings in the Aftermath of World War I," in *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, ed. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmed (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015). Voir aussi Hakan Yavuz, "A Topography of Positions in the Turkish-Armenian Debate," in *War and Collapse: World War I and the Ottoman State*, ed. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015); Hakan Yavuz, "Self-hating Turks and the Genocide Debate," *Daily Sabah*, 7 February 2019, <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2019/02/07/self-hating-turks-and-the-genocide-debate>.

<sup>97</sup> Pour une revue intéressante des études ottomanes concernant le génocide arménien, voir Ariel Salzmann, "The Education of an Ottomanist: Donald Quataert and the Narrative Arc of Ottoman Historiography, 1985-2011," in *History From Below: A Tribute in Memory of Donald Quataert*, ed. Selim Karahasanoglu and Deniz Cenk Demir (Istanbul: Bilgi Universitesi Yayınları, 2016).

<sup>98</sup> Donald Quataert, "The Massacres of Ottoman Armenians and the Writing of Ottoman History," review of *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, Donald Bloxham, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, no. 2 (2006): 249.

pour contrer les récits négationnistes<sup>99</sup>. À partir des années 2000, les études sur la négation et la mémoire du génocide se sont multipliées<sup>100</sup>.

Les études sur la mémoire ont participé à ce tournant. Fethiye Çetin et Ayşegül Altınay ont écrit sur les grands-mères enlevées et turquifiées pendant le génocide arménien<sup>101</sup>. Fatma Müge Göçek a travaillé sur un large corpus de mémoires pour montrer différents épisodes de « déni de la violence » dans l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie moderne dans la longue durée, au sein desquels le Génocide arménien a joué un rôle central et structurant<sup>102</sup>. Duygu Tasalp a travaillé sur les mémoires d'éminents unionistes, dont certains ont été publiés à l'époque du parti unique, et a montré comment le génocide arménien, plus précisément sa justification, était une « question » qui structurait également les conflits entre les différents camps politiques au début de l'ère républicaine. Elle a également montré les « invariants majeurs » du traitement de la question du génocide avant et après la mort de Mustafa Kemal, qui a consisté à justifier le crime et à en refuser la responsabilité<sup>103</sup>.

Ce tournant a aussi impacté les recherches sur la Première guerre mondiale et ses répercussions. Des recherches florissantes ont donné de plus en plus d'espace aux particularités de l'expérience anatolienne, qui a aussi compris un génocide que Bernard Lewis avait appelé « the terrible Holocaust of 1915 »<sup>104</sup>. L'ouvrage collectif dirigé par Kerem Öktem, Hans-Lukas Kieser et Maurus Reinkowski, a assigné un rôle central aux politiques éradicationnistes contre les non-Musulmans et la mise en place économique du processus génocidaire dans l'histoire

---

<sup>99</sup> Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).

<sup>100</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>101</sup> Fethiye Çetin, *Le livre de ma grand-mère. Suivi de Les fontaines de Havav*, trans. Marguerite Demird (Paris: Paranthèses, 2006); Ayşe Gül Altınay and Fethiye Çetin, *Torunlar*, (İstanbul: Metis, 2009); See also Ayşe Gül Altınay, Arlene Avakian, and Fethiye Çetin, "The Space Between Us: Feminist Conversations on Genocide, Survival and Gender," in *Critical Approaches to Genocide: History, Politics, and Aesthetics of 1915*, ed. Hülya Adak, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Ronald Grigor Suny (London, New York: Routledge, 2024).

<sup>102</sup> Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009*.

<sup>103</sup> Duygu Tasalp, *Cent ans de négation : les régimes mémoriels en Turquie, de l'Unionisme à l'Islamisme* (Paris : Karthala, 2024), 242.

<sup>104</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 356; Cité par Ariel Salzmann, "The Education of an Ottomanist: Donald Quataert and the Narrative Arc of Ottoman Historiography, 1985-2011," 87.

de la Première guerre mondiale<sup>105</sup>. *When the War Came Home* de Yiğit Akın a considéré l'impact des « Arméniens de retour » pour la mobilisation militaire pour la « Guerre d'indépendance »<sup>106</sup>. Dernièrement, Raymond Kévorkian a montré les conséquences fatales de la lutte nationale (1918-1922) pour les Arméniens survivants dans toutes les provinces anatoliennes<sup>107</sup>. Ces contributions nous ont permis de voir les l'héritage du génocide dans la formation de la Turquie républicaine.

Concernant l'héritage et la continuation de la violence de masse contre les non-Musulmans dans les années formatrices de la république, Lerna Ekmekçiöglu et Talin Suciyan ont enquêté sur la vie des communautés arméniennes survivantes dans la Turquie républicaine. Ekmekçiöglu s'est penchée sur les dimensions genrées de la survie alors que Suciyan a montré comment le génocide a structuré la vie quotidienne des Arméniens aussi bien que les descendants des bourreaux (*perpetrators*)<sup>108</sup>. Les travaux des chercheurs comme Ümit Kurt, Mehmet Polatel et Ellinor Morack ont mis en lumière le rôle pivot joué par la transaction de la propriété dite « abandonnée » dans les années formatrices de la république<sup>109</sup>. Leurs recherches ont révélé que ces transactions n'étaient pas seulement les échanges économiques mais des actes cruciaux pour forger des alliances entre l'État central et les élites provinciales. En somme, elles ont été instrumentales pour la formation de l'État républicain enchevêtrant les destins des élites provinciales et le vision et l'autorité du gouvernement national.

Ma thèse s'appuie sur ces travaux récents, mais vise à démontrer que l'héritage de la violence de masse s'est étendu au-delà des transactions immobilières et de la vie quotidienne des communautés survivantes. La violence de masse a également influencé les modes de vie des

---

<sup>105</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, Kerem Öktem, and Maurus Reinkowski, eds., *World War I and the End of the Ottomans: From the Balkan Wars to the Armenian Genocide* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

<sup>106</sup> Yiğit Akın, *When the War Came Home : The Ottomans' Great War and the Devastation of an Empire* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018), 12.

<sup>107</sup> Raymond H. Kévorkian, *Parachever un génocide : Mustafa Kemal et l'élimination des rescapés arméniens et grecs (1918-1922)* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 2023).

<sup>108</sup> Lerna Ekmekçiöglu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016); Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016).

<sup>109</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction : the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London, New York: Continuum, 2011); Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017); Ümit Kurt, *The Armenians of Aintab: The Economics of Genocide in an Ottoman Province* (London, New York: Harvard University Press, 2021).

élites provinciales républicaines précoces et leur discours sur la « révolution » en cours. Je m'appuie également sur les contributions de l'historiographie de la Turquie républicaine naissante en tant qu'histoire de la modernisation laïque et les mécontentements que cela a générés<sup>110</sup>. Cependant, je propose d'inclure la violence de masse dans la formation des citoyens républicains. Si les vingt premières années de la République de Turquie constituent une histoire de modernisation, la violence de masse dirigée par l'État en a fait partie intégrante. Si les Prédicateurs du Peuple et les Maisons du Peuple étaient des éléments clés de l'aspect « ingénierie sociale » du processus de « modernisation », leur histoire s'est croisée avec les conséquences du génocide.

Cette thèse vise à comprendre la relation entre la production du consentement, la persuasion et l'éducation par l'État et la violence étatique à travers l'étude de cas des Prédicateurs du Peuple. Alors que les Prédicateurs du Peuple se voyaient confier des rôles semblables à ceux des élites instruites, appelées « *münevver* », tels que guider les gens sur le bon chemin et les éduquer, ils les « disciplinaient » également (*tedip*) en normalisant et en légitimant la violence de l'État. Il est utile de rappeler l'article classique de Charles Tilly, qui compare l'État au crime organisé et réfléchit à la manière dont les mains douces et dures de l'État s'entrelacent pour créer le monopole de la violence<sup>111</sup>.

La protection fournie par les gouvernements, selon ce critère, s'apparente souvent à du racket. Dans la mesure où les menaces contre lesquelles un gouvernement donné protège ses citoyens sont imaginaires ou sont les conséquences de ses propres activités, le gouvernement a organisé un système de racket de protection. Puisque les gouvernements eux-mêmes simulent, stimulent ou même fabriquent fréquemment des menaces de guerre extérieure et puisque les activités répressives et extractives des gouvernements constituent souvent les plus grandes menaces actuelles pour la subsistance de leurs propres citoyens, de nombreux gouvernements fonctionnent essentiellement de la même manière que des racketteurs. Il y a, bien sûr, une différence. Les racketteurs, selon la définition conventionnelle, opèrent sans la sacralité des gouvernements<sup>112</sup>.

---

<sup>110</sup> Camilla T. Nereid, "Kemalism on the Catwalk: The Turkish Hat Law of 1925," *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 3 (2011); İlbey Özdemirci, *Fört Şapkalı Şih: Cumhuriyet Sekülerleşmesi ve Taşra*.

<sup>111</sup> Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschmayer and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 171.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.



L'analogie de Tilly entre l'État et le crime organisé est fructueuse pour comprendre le processus de construction de l'État-nation dans la Turquie républicaine et le rôle des Prédicateurs du Peuple dans ce processus. Tilly distingue les principales activités des agents de l'État en quatre catégories : la « guerre » contre les ennemis extérieurs, la « construction de l'État » contre les ennemis intérieurs, la « protection » des citoyens, considérés comme des « clients », contre leurs ennemis, et l'« extraction »<sup>113</sup>. Dans le même esprit, Siniša Malešević a réfléchi sur la création d'institutions et d'organisations chargées de la production du consentement parmi les étapes cruciales de la « bureaucratisation cumulative de la coercition »<sup>114</sup>.

Réfléchir à la persistance de la guerre et du génocide dans le cadre de cette dissertation implique de prêter une attention particulière à la plateforme sur laquelle les Prédicateurs du Peuple s'adressaient à leur public, en tenant compte de l'environnement bâti dans lequel les conférences étaient données, comme les Maisons du Peuple. Cela implique également de s'intéresser à leurs biographies avant la proclamation de la république pour examiner dans quelle mesure l'expérience de la guerre et du génocide a influencé leur vie. Enfin, cela signifie lire attentivement leurs discours pour y déceler les traces de ce qui s'est passé ou de ce qui se passe au moment où ils parlent.

Le génocide a rendu indiscernable la ville natale de la mère de Hasene Ilgaz (le prédicateur rencontré dans les premières pages). Pour en retracer la mémoire, je me suis inspirée des travaux en anthropologie de la violence, comme la « méthodologie négative » de Yael Navaro, qui permet de détecter un événement nié de violence de masse dans ses suites<sup>115</sup>. Pour les anthropologues, il s'agit de prêter attention à la manière dont le génocide « hante » la société actuelle et donne lieu à des activités singulières autour de sa mémoire, comme la chasse aux trésors arméniens dans les provinces kurdes paupérisées de la Turquie des années 2000 ou

---

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>114</sup> Siniša Malešević, « Organised Violence and Modernity, » in *The Sociology of War and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 143.

<sup>115</sup> Yael Navaro, « The Aftermath of Mass Violence : A Negative Methodology », *Annual Review of Anthropology* 49, no 1 (2020).

l'attribution de significations particulières aux maisons de pierre usurpées ayant appartenu à des populations décimées<sup>116</sup>.

Comme ma thèse se concentre principalement sur la manière dont les prédicateurs de peuple expliquent et légitiment le nouveau régime, ma méthode pour retracer la violence de masse était moins sophistiquée. En l'absence d'une terminologie claire pour ce que nous appelons aujourd'hui un « génocide » (c'est-à-dire le génocide arménien), j'ai cherché dans leurs discours des références à l'expérience longue de la guerre et des représentations de sa violence, des références à l'ordre social impérial, la figure de l'ennemi intérieur et des prescriptions pour le traitement nécessaire d'un ennemi intérieur.

Pour ce faire, je me suis largement inspiré des recherches de Talin Suciyan sur les Arméniens dans la Turquie moderne. Suciyan a utilisé le concept d'« habitus post-génocidaire » pour décrire comment la destruction systématique des Arméniens dans les dernières années de l'Empire ottoman a créé une structure qui a permis la poursuite de la persécution des Arméniens au début de l'ère républicaine. Cette persécution a évolué au cours de la période républicaine : Les femmes arméniennes continuèrent d'être enlevées, les Arméniens restants furent repoussés hors d'Asie mineure et du nord de la Mésopotamie, leurs droits garantis, tels que l'ouverture d'écoles en province, furent restreints, les confiscations de propriétés persistèrent, et les Arméniens furent confrontés à un harcèlement quotidien et à des agressions physiques tout au long des années 1930 et 1950<sup>117</sup>.

Le génocide arménien, en tant que structure sociale et mentale, a joué un rôle important dans l'élaboration des politiques publiques pendant la période du parti unique, notamment en ce qui concerne la langue officielle du pays (le turc) et son utilisation par les citoyens dont la langue primaire et maternelle n'était pas le turc, par le biais des campagnes « Citoyen, parle turc ! » (*Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş*). La brûlure publique des *Quarante jours de Musa Dagh*, un livre publié par le romancier juif autrichien Franz Werfel, dans le quartier arménien d'Istanbul

---

<sup>116</sup> Zerrin Ozlem Biner, « Acts of Defacement, Memories of Loss : Ghostly Effects of the Armenian Crisis in Mardin, Southeastern Turkey », *History and Memory* 22, no 2 (2010) ; Alice von Bieberstein, "Treasure/Fetish/Gift : Hunting for "Armenian Gold" in Post-genocide Turkish Kurdistan », *Subjectivity* 10, no 2 (2017). Voir aussi : Yael Navaro-Yashin et al, eds, *Reverberations : Violence Across Time and Space* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021).

<sup>117</sup> Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics, and History*, 200.

en décembre 1935, en tant que tactique d'intimidation contre les communautés arméniennes survivantes de la ville, peut également être interprétée comme une continuation du processus génocidaire pendant l'ère républicaine. Emmanuel Szurek a montré comment cette campagne a visé les Arméniens ainsi que les Juifs d'Istanbul quelques mois après les pogroms organisés contre les Juifs de Thrace. Même l'application de la loi sur le nom patronymique aux citoyens non musulmans et non turcs de Turquie a été marquée par les tensions d'un contexte post-génocidaire dans lequel l'homogénéisation de la population contredisait la volonté de démarquer ceux qui étaient considérés comme non-assimilables<sup>118</sup>. L'histoire du CHP peut être mieux comprise en reliant la persécution continue des citoyens non musulmans et non turcs pendant la période du parti unique. L'examen des prédicateurs du peuple à la lumière de ces événements peut contribuer à créer un récit plus approfondi en tenant compte de la violence de masse soutenue par l'État et des processus par lesquels ces actions ont été légitimées par les médias<sup>119</sup>.

### **Sources et méthodologie**

Cette thèse se concentre empiriquement sur les prédicateurs du peuple et les conférences organisées dans les maisons du peuple. Les archives du parti manquent de documents sur ces conférences après 1945, probablement en raison de l'annonce du Premier ministre İsmet İnönü de retourner à un régime multipartite, ce qui a eu un impact sur l'utilisation des ressources et de la main-d'œuvre du CHP. L'accent est mis sur la période entre 1931 et 1945, mais les recherches remontent parfois jusqu'aux années 1920 pour mettre en évidence les continuités entre le CUP et le CHP, et entre les foyers turcs (*Türk Ocakları*) et les maisons du peuple de la fin de l'époque ottomane. Cela inclut les efforts en matière d'éducation politique pendant la « guerre d'indépendance ».

Commencer l'analyse en 1918 permet d'examiner les développements qui ont conduit à l'institutionnalisation de la pédagogie populaire et de la communication politique. Ce cadre

---

<sup>118</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, « Autodafé à Istanbul. La première crise négationniste de la Turquie nationaliste (1935) », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, n° 105 (2022).

<sup>119</sup> Emmanuel Szurek, « »Yan, Of, Ef, Viç, İç, İs, Dis, Pulos ...« : the Surname Reform, the “Non-Muslims,” and the Politics of Uncertainty in Post-genocidal Turkey », in *Arabic and its Alternatives. Religious minorities and their Languages in the Emerging Nation States of the Middle East (1920-1950)*, ed. Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Karène Sanchez Summerer, and Tijmen Baarda (Brill, 2020).

temporel nous permet de comprendre les événements clés qui ont incité la direction du parti à créer l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. Alors que les années 1918-1931 sont centrées sur la communication politique à travers les discours publics et les rassemblements de masse, cette thèse met l'accent sur la vie de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple, fondée en septembre 1931 et disparue des archives vers 1945. En ce sens, la vie de l'« organisation » correspond à peu près à ce que Zürcher a appelé « l'apogée du kémalisme » (1926-1945)<sup>120</sup>.

Une grande partie des documents biographiques sur les prédicateurs du peuple étaient des dossiers de candidature envoyés au secrétaire général du CHP pour se présenter aux élections législatives sur les listes du parti. Par conséquent, de nombreux documents datant de 1950 ont été utilisés parce qu'ils éclairent les biographies des prédicateurs du peuple avant 1950, à l'époque du parti unique.

### **Aperçu des sources primaires**

Étant donné que cette thèse porte sur une organisation partisane, la plupart des sources proviennent des archives du CHP conservées dans les collections des partis politiques des archives républicaines des Archives d'État turques. J'ai privilégié les documents directement liés aux prédicateurs du peuple, notamment les conférences tenues dans les maisons du peuple et les rapports sur l'organisation des fêtes nationales et d'autres réunions importantes sur le plan politique. Ces rapports contiennent des exemples de discours prononcés occasionnellement par les prédicateurs du peuple et les membres des maisons du peuple.

En outre, les magazines mensuels et hebdomadaires publiés par les maisons du peuple, les journaux locaux et nationaux et les guides imprimés par le parti pour diriger et soutenir les activités des maisons du peuple et des prédicateurs populaires ont été largement utilisés pour la dissertation. Certains prédicateurs du peuple ont publié leurs mémoires dans les années 1930 ou plus tard. Ces mémoires ont également été utilisés comme sources primaires. Les livres publiés par le CHP dans la série *Speeches (Konuşmalar)* ont également été inclus dans l'analyse<sup>121</sup>.

---

<sup>120</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey : A Modern History*, 4. Cité par : Emmanuel Szurek, « Gouverner par les mots : une histoire linguistique de la Turquie nationaliste » (Ph.D. EHESS, 2013), 2.

<sup>121</sup> *Konuşmalar : Broşür 1*, (Ankara : C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, octobre 1940) ; *Konuşmalar : Broşür 2*, (Ankara : C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, juillet 1941) ; *Konuşmalar : Broşür 3*, (Ankara : C.H.P. Halkevleri Neşriyatı, octobre 1942).

La plupart des prédicateurs et des membres des maisons du peuple faisaient partie des élites locales éduquées, mais sont restés des personnages peu visibles. Ils ont rarement publié leurs mémoires ou fait don de leurs archives privées. Seule une prédicatrice du peuple, Hasene Ilgaz, est devenue plus tard députée et a déposé les documents qu'elle a collectés pendant ses années parlementaires à la bibliothèque de l'Œuvre des femmes. Parmi ces archives privées, il existe quelques sources, bien que limitées, de son époque en tant que prédicatrice du peuple. İffet Halim Oruz (1904-1993), assigné comme prédicateur du peuple à Istanbul, a publié ses discours entre 1927 et 1936 sous le titre *Mes amis*<sup>122</sup>. Cemile Aytaç (1909-2007), membre de la Maison du peuple d'Elazığ, a publié ses discours prononcés dans divers endroits (certains non datés) soixante ans plus tard<sup>123</sup>. Tous ces livres ont été utilisés à des degrés divers pour cette dissertation. La plupart des discours de Cemile Aytaç et Hasene Ilgaz n'étant pas datés, seuls les discours datés ou ceux dont la date pouvait être déduite du contexte du discours pertinent pour la thèse ont été examinés.

#### **b. Analyse de l'organisation des prédicateurs du peuple en tant que groupe**

Compte tenu de la rareté des documents d'identité, des archives privées, des publications et des mémoires, la seule source qui nous permet de comprendre l'« Organisation » des prédicateurs du peuple comme un groupe cohérent sont les listes des prédicateurs du peuple envoyées au secrétaire général du CHP en 1931 et en 1938. Ces listes indiquent le nombre total de prédicateurs chaque année et révèlent leur répartition professionnelle et sociale. Selon ces listes, environ 1 400 prédicateurs ont été sélectionnés en 1931 et environ 2 000 en 1938. La première liste a été établie avant la réforme des noms de famille de 1934. Les prédicateurs qui y figurent n'ont donc pas de nom de famille. La seconde liste contient des noms de famille. L'absence de patronymes avant la loi sur les noms de famille ne permet pas de savoir si ce sont les mêmes personnes qui ont été choisies comme prédicateurs dans les deux années. Beaucoup d'hommes et de femmes portaient les mêmes noms et les prédicateurs avaient le plus souvent des professions similaires. Comme la plupart des prédicateurs du peuple étaient des fonctionnaires travaillant pour différents ministères, ils ont été nommés dans différentes

---

<sup>122</sup> İffet Halim Oruz, *A rkadaşlar!* (İstanbul : Selâmet Basımevi, 1936).

<sup>123</sup> Cemile Aytaç, *Yürüyoruz : 95. Yıl* (İstanbul : Kap, 1996).

provinces au cours de leur carrière. Pour cette raison, il est également compliqué d'affirmer qu'Ahmet Bey à Sivas en 1931 et un autre Ahmet à Sivas en 1938 sont la même personne.

J'ai créé une base de données contenant les noms des prédicateurs documentés en 1931 et 1938. Cette base de données a servi de point de départ à la recherche des récits de vie et des discours des prédicateurs à l'aide des archives du parti et des documents de presse. J'ai pu obtenir de courtes autobiographies d'environ trente-cinq prédicateurs, comprenant leurs noms, prénoms, lieux de naissance, dates de naissance, professions, niveaux d'éducation, derniers diplômes, dates des diplômes, langues étrangères parlées, ouvrages publiés, adresses, et de brèves autobiographies détaillant leurs rôles dans l'administration de l'État et le parti. J'ai créé l'échantillon en croisant la base de données des prédicateurs avec les dossiers de candidature soumis au secrétaire du CHP dans toutes les provinces entre 1939 et 1950. En raison des changements de patronyme, il se peut que j'aie oublié des prédicateurs qui se sont également portés candidats aux élections législatives. L'échantillon comprend huit dossiers de candidature de Kars, cinq d'Istanbul et de Gaziantep, et trois d'Ankara. Les provinces restantes - Aydın, Bolu, Çanakkale, Edirne, Kastamonu, Malatya, Seyhan, Tokat et Yozgat - ont chacune un dossier de candidature d'un ancien prédicateur.

Cette thèse vise à utiliser une approche prosopographique des prédicateurs du peuple sélectionnés entre 1931 et 1938 en se basant sur les informations disponibles et sur le petit échantillon de prédicateurs. Ainsi, cette prosopographie ne repose pas sur des données sérielles, à l'exception de l'« identité » (*hüviyet*), le plus souvent entendue comme titre professionnelle. Ces ajustements ont été effectués parce que les prédicateurs du peuple et la plupart des membres des maisons du peuple étaient peu visibles dans les archives du CHP. Malgré leur militantisme actif pendant plus d'une décennie (1931-1945), le CHP n'a pas produit (ou collecté et conservé) de documents d'identité sérialisés ou sérialisables pour ses membres. Les documents d'identité appelés « dossiers de registres » (*sicil dosyası*) ou courtes autobiographies (*tercüme-i hal*) étaient produits lorsque les personnes occupaient un poste important (comme celui de chef de la Maison du Peuple) ou candidaient pour un poste (comme celui de député).

J'ai identifié les groupes sociaux et professionnels les plus importants d'un point de vue statistique dans la base de données des prédicateurs du peuple. Ensuite, j'ai recherché les biographies des prédicateurs de chaque groupe, tels que les enseignants et les fonctionnaires

de bas échelon, les propriétaires terriens, les fonctionnaires de haut échelon et les femmes. Cela m'a permis de dresser un « portrait social » des prédicateurs du peuple et d'avoir une idée générale de leur milieu social, de leurs trajectoires et des étapes habituelles d'une carrière politique sous le régime du parti unique<sup>124</sup>. Compte tenu de l'importance accordée au savoir et à la transmission des connaissances dans les documents fondateurs de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple, je me suis particulièrement intéressée à leur niveau d'études. J'ai également examiné d'autres sources potentielles de distinction sociale, telles que la propriété ou le « capital économique ». Lorsque les informations sur le niveau d'études n'étaient pas disponibles, je me suis appuyé sur d'autres sources. Par exemple, si je manquais de détails sur le niveau d'éducation d'un instituteur en 1931, j'ai examiné les lois concernant le recrutement des instituteurs.

Cette approche a ses limites, car elle néglige les différences potentielles dans les trajectoires scolaires et sociales de chaque prédicateur du peuple. Cependant, les listes étaient assez répétitives et il y avait des similarités dans la répartition professionnelle entre les provinces, les districts et les sous-districts. Il est pertinent d'examiner les prédicateurs du peuple en tant que groupe, car ils ont tous prononcé des discours publics au nom du parti simultanément dans toutes les régions de Turquie. Bien que cela ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'ils sont tous membres du parti, cela indique qu'ils sont tous associés d'une manière ou d'une autre au parti. L'organisation des prédicateurs du peuple constitue un échantillon représentatif de la manière dont l'organisation locale du parti républicain du peuple a été façonnée pendant la période du parti unique.

### **c. Constitution d'un corpus de discours**

Les prédicateurs du peuple ont prononcé des discours à diverses occasions. Certains discours ont été préparés pour des occasions solennelles et festives telles que les fêtes nationales et la célébration des premières réformes républicaines telles que la réforme de la langue et le droit de vote des femmes. Certains discours ont été prononcés à l'occasion de commémorations, comme l'occupation et la libération d'une ville ou la commémoration de la mort de Mustafa Kemal. D'autres visaient à informer la population sur le cadre général de la

---

<sup>124</sup> Claire Zalc, « Prosopographie, quel outil pour comparer ? », in *Dictionnaire historique de la comparaison*, ed. Nicolas Delalande et al. (Paris : Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2020).

révolution, comme ceux qui abordaient les concepts d'« indépendance et de révolution ». Le secrétaire général du CHP a demandé des transcriptions de discours dans la plupart des cas. Les sections locales ont envoyé des transcriptions de discours, des résumés ou ont publié des discours dans les journaux après les événements. Cependant, ces transcriptions de discours n'ont pas été systématiquement incluses dans les rapports.

Certains discours ont été publiés dans la presse locale et nationale. D'autres ont été publiés dans les magazines des Maisons du peuple. Dans la période initiale de cette recherche, j'ai cherché à développer un corpus numérisé de ces discours. J'ai numérisé environ 80 discours prononcés à différentes occasions, telles que le cadre général de la révolution et de la « guerre d'indépendance », les droits des femmes, le concept de « peuple » et d'« éducation populaire », les différentes étapes de la « guerre d'indépendance », la libération de certaines villes et les fêtes nationales. Je pourrais également inclure environ 200 transcriptions de discours prononcés entre 1934 et 1945 pour célébrer la révolution linguistique, numérisées par Emmanuel Szurek qui a aimablement partagé le corpus avec moi. Je fournirai un aperçu thématique de ce corpus dans la partie 2. Cependant, le corpus étant trop riche pour les discours prononcés à l'occasion de cette célébration particulière, il ne présente pas d'équilibre thématique. Il est possible de travailler sur le même corpus ou d'élargir celui que j'ai constitué en m'appuyant sur les publications des Maisons du Peuple et en incluant les discours prononcés entre 1939 et 1942 à propos de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. J'ai généralement exclu ces discours de ma thèse malgré leur collecte en raison de leur caractère technique, d'une part, et des délais d'accès à ces sources, d'autre part.

J'avais initialement pour objectif de travailler avec un logiciel d'analyse de données qualitatives appelé MAXQDA, qui permet également de réaliser des analyses lexicométriques de corpus. Cependant, ce logiciel ne peut pas lemmatiser les mots turcs, et mener une analyse lexicométrique sur un corpus manquant d'équilibre thématique ne semblait pas fructueux. Malgré cela, travailler avec MAXQDA a permis d'obtenir une vue d'ensemble du corpus collecté et de délimiter le champ de la recherche. Je n'ai pas procédé à un examen systématique de ce corpus, même si j'ai recueilli environ 280 discours numérisés. Je me suis plutôt concentrée sur les discours et les extraits thématiquement liés aux questions de recherche de cette thèse, qui se situent à l'intersection de l'hégémonie et de la coercition : l'éducation et la



transmission du savoir, d'une part, et la guerre, l'application de la loi, la contre-insurrection et la violence de masse orchestrée par l'État, d'autre part.

### **Structure de cette thèse**

Cette thèse est organisée en trois parties. La première partie traite de la mission pédagogique et des catégories sociales utilisées pour formuler des idées et des affirmations sur l'éducation du peuple. La deuxième partie est consacrée à une analyse sociographique des prédicateurs du peuple, de leurs critères de sélection, ainsi que des motivations et des rétributions liées à leur travail pour le parti. La troisième partie se concentre sur le rôle joué par la guerre et le génocide dans la manière dont les prédicateurs du peuple ont expliqué et légitimé les des réformes républicaines à travers deux études de cas. Ces études de cas visent à comparer la « mission civilisatrice » dans différentes provinces.

Il est largement reconnu que la société était largement dépourvue d'éducation dans les premières années de la république et que l'une des réalisations les plus remarquables des cadres fondateurs a été la mise en place d'un enseignement public malgré les contraintes imposées par les conditions économiques de l'après-guerre. La première partie examine les personnes impliquées dans l'éducation politique des citoyens adultes, leur perception de la population et les mécanismes par lesquels les segments éduqués de la population étaient tenus responsables de l'éducation des masses.

« Un État pédagogique », examine la manière dont la direction du parti et les auteurs d'articles d'opinion alignés sur le parti ont transformé la question du consentement en une question d'éducation. L'étude des publications et des rapports sur « l'éducation des masses populaires » (*Terbiye-i Avam*) et « l'éducation du peuple » (*Halk Terbiyesi*) remet en question le rôle des pédagogues et l'intersection entre l'éducation politique des adultes et la « propagande ». Le chapitre 1 réfléchit aux origines du discours intellectuel, en se concentrant sur la responsabilité des élites intellectuelles d'éduquer les masses, et examine les débats de presse de la fin de l'Empire ottoman et du début de la République. Il montre comment les significations politiques attribuées aux intellectuels sont apparues et comment les premiers efforts des républicains ont transformé cette catégorie.

#### **I. Un état pédagogique?**

Il est largement reconnu que la société était largement dépourvue d'éducation dans les premières années de la république et que l'une des réalisations les plus remarquables des cadres

fondateurs a été la mise en place d'un enseignement populaire en dépit des contraintes imposées par les conditions économiques de l'après-guerre. Cette section examine les personnes impliquées dans l'éducation politique des citoyens adultes, leur perception de la population et les mécanismes par lesquels les couches les plus instruites de la population étaient tenues responsables de l'éducation des masses. Le premier chapitre se penche sur les documents historiques et les archives de presse au-delà de la documentation du CHP, cherchant à comprendre l'évolution d'une catégorie sociale critique chargée d'éduquer les masses, à savoir les « *münevver* ». Cette catégorie, souvent présumée dans les documents du CHP et les récits des prédicateurs, est examinée à travers les débats de la presse des dernières années de l'Empire ottoman et des premières années de la Turquie républicaine. Le chapitre examine les discussions des années 1920 à 1940 pour retracer la généalogie du « *münevver* », un concept central de la pédagogie kémaliste. Le deuxième chapitre, parallèle au premier, explore les préoccupations de l'État concernant les « gens du peuple » (*halk*) et l'importance de la communication orale, qui ont incité le CHP à investir dans des porte-parole et des éducateurs locaux. Le troisième chapitre se concentre sur les éducateurs de masse qui ont joué un rôle déterminant dans la restructuration du système d'éducation publique sous le contrôle du ministère de l'éducation et dans l'élaboration de pratiques éducatives pour les citoyens adultes. Le quatrième chapitre, intitulé « Rhétorique et éducation politique », étudie les directives de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et des Maisons du peuple, en analysant l'interaction entre la pédagogie et la rhétorique. Enfin, le cinquième chapitre explore la manière dont le CHP a progressivement élargi la catégorie des « *münevver* » pour y inclure les prédicateurs du peuple et les membres des maisons du peuple, et la manière dont ces prédicateurs ont assumé les responsabilités associées au statut de « *münevver* ».

### **1. La question de « münevver »**

Le premier chapitre se penche sur les documents historiques et les archives de presse au-delà de la documentation du CHP, cherchant à comprendre l'évolution d'une catégorie sociale essentielle chargée d'éduquer les masses, à savoir le « *münevver* ». Cette catégorie, souvent présumée dans les documents du CHP et les récits des prédicateurs, est examinée à travers les débats de la presse des dernières années de l'Empire ottoman et des premières années de la

Turquie républicaine. Le chapitre examine les discussions des années 1920 à 1940 pour retracer la généalogie du « *münevver* », un concept central de la pédagogie kémaliste.

Le premier chapitre montre que pour devenir *münevver*, il fallait un certain niveau d'éducation, une visibilité publique, généralement grâce à l'imprimerie, et la distinction sociale qui en découlait. Les débats sur la *qualité de münevver* tournaient également autour de la signification et des répercussions politiques de leurs inclinations artistiques ou littéraires. Contrairement au cas de la France, le moment marquant que l'on peut considérer comme l'émergence des « *münevver* » en tant qu'intellectuels ne repose pas sur un débat polarisé dans lequel des camps bien définis s'opposent. Cette impressionnante production d'articles et de pamphlets sur les *münevver* donne l'impression d'observer une controverse. Pourtant, les parties opposées de cette controverse n'ont jamais été claires.

Comme mentionné tout au long du chapitre, la divergence la plus palpable dans cette presse était un appel à plus d'autonomie, exprimé avec beaucoup de précautions, face à la ferveur révolutionnaire des élites républicaines de la première heure (Mustafa Şekip). Le reste des interventions convergeait vers l'importance accrue de ce travail des « *münevver* » pour l'éducation de la population et pour la répression des révoltes. Les articles de presse se sont multipliés et se sont enflammés à chaque moment de crise politique, de la révolte de Cheikh Saïd à l'assassinat de l'instituteur républicain par les disciples d'un cheikh à Menemen. L'unification et la mobilisation quasi militaire des *münevver* sont considérées comme cruciales pour le maintien du nouveau régime et de l'ordre public. Dans le cas français, la catégorie d'« intellectuel » a émergé du conflit sur le sort d'Alfred Dreyfus, grâce à l'autonomie relative du champ intellectuel<sup>125</sup>; dans le cas ottoman-turc, le « *münevver* » a émergé d'un consensus révolutionnaire sur la nécessité d'unir et de mobiliser les élites intellectuelles autour d'une cause politique commune. En ce sens, les « *münevver* » républicains avaient plus de choses en commun avec les « cléricaux » de Julien Benda travaillant pour le bien de " l'ordre » qu'avec les dreyfusards<sup>126</sup>.

---

<sup>125</sup> Christophe Charle, *Naissance des intellectuels : 1880-1900*, 181.

<sup>126</sup> Julien Benda, *La trahison des clercs*, Classiques des sciences sociales, Chicoutimi, J.-M. Tremblay, 2006, 5, 128.

Le populisme faisait partie intégrante du discours révolutionnaire des élites politiques et intellectuelles des débuts de la République. En conséquence, la catégorie des « *münevver* » s'est construite par son opposition aux gens du peuple. La figure du *münevver* a contribué à placer le « *halk* » au centre de la scène, tout comme la figure du prédicateur, qui contribue à placer l'État au centre de la scène.

Ces débats menés par les *münevver* ne portaient pas vraiment sur les participants. Ils portaient plutôt sur la fabrique du « peuple », et tous les *münevver* s'accordaient à reconnaître que le « peuple » était plus ou moins distinct d'eux. La question était plutôt de savoir comment ces milieux intellectuellement supérieurs, éduqués et cultivés allaient contribuer à renforcer le nouveau régime. C'est pourquoi, dans certaines de ses utilisations, le terme « *münevver* » ne fait que désigner la distinction sociale d'un groupe plus large d'élites lettrées – non seulement les écrivains, les journalistes et les universitaires, mais aussi les maires, les gouverneurs, les administrateurs provinciaux, les députés et les ministres. Par conséquent, le « *münevver* » avait une relation plus étroite avec l'appareil d'État que l'« intellectuel ». Le « *münevver* » se situait quelque part entre les « *havas* » ottomans (les personnes distinguées) et les « *askeri* » (l'élite dirigeante).

Compte tenu de la prééminence des références intellectuelles internationales allant de Pascal à Daudet, « *münevver* » était une adaptation de l'« intellectuel » au contexte local dans le cadre de débats dans les journaux et d'articles d'opinion signés par des écrivains, des journalistes, des universitaires et des politiques. La direction du CHP a accéléré ses efforts pour mobiliser les « masses » en mobilisant les « éclairées » dans le contexte des discussions en cours sur « l'éducation du peuple » (*Halk Terbiyesi*) et la « responsabilité du *münevver* ». Les débats sur la responsabilité du *münevver* étaient plus orientés vers un engagement plus direct avec le reste de la population. Il s'agissait de « parler » plutôt que de « s'adresser » à la population par l'écrit.

Dans ce contexte, les dirigeants du CHP ont accéléré leurs efforts pour mobiliser les masses. Mais comme l'art oratoire était considéré comme une condition préalable à la mobilisation des masses, comme ce fut le cas autour de Fethi Okyar et Ahmet Ağaoğlu lors de leur rassemblement à Izmir ou autour de Cheikh Mehmet lors de la révolte de Menemen, le parti

avait besoin de ses propres *münevver* locaux. À cette fin, le Parti envoie à chaque province, en 1931, les consignes de l'« Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple » sous forme de livre<sup>127</sup>.

Comme le montrent les chapitres suivants, les origines sociales des prédicateurs du peuple et leurs perspectives de mobilité sociale étaient modestes par rapport aux chroniqueurs qui débattaient dans la presse de la véritable définition du « *münevver* ». Mais cela faisait également écho à la critique des premières républiques à l'égard des *münevver* « ottomans ». En ce sens, la direction du CHP a produit un modèle alternatif de *münevver* en établissant son appareil de communication. Contrairement aux *münevver* ottomans tardifs, les prédicateurs du peuple étaient proches des gens du peuple. La direction du parti a ordonné aux directions provinciales de sélectionner ses prédicateurs parmi ceux capables d'interagir avec les gens du peuple en parlant leur langue.

Les discussions sur les *münevver* dans la presse des années 1920 et 1930 fournissent des informations de fond sur les débats publics qui ont conduit les dirigeants du CHP à créer des organisations telles que les prédicateurs du peuple et les maisons du peuple. Les angoisses liées au pouvoir de la parole et au danger que représentent les gens du peuple constituaient un autre aspect de la question. La chapitre suivante analysera des documents sélectionnés dans les archives du parti et de l'État concernant cet aspect : le danger du bouche-à-oreille propagé par des acteurs allant des prédicateurs islamiques aux simples citoyens.

## **2. Le pouvoir de la parole**

Le chapitre 2, « Le pouvoir de la parole », analyse la correspondance entre le ministère de l'intérieur et la direction des affaires religieuses concernant la parole, les mots nuisibles et la propagande négative dans les espaces publics. Il met en lumière la diversité de l'opposition au régime de parti unique du CHP et présente ces documents comme le reflet de l'anxiété de l'État central.

Le CHP a créé l'Organisation des prédicateurs pour gagner en légitimité dans toute l'Anatolie. Le soutien croissant aux partis d'opposition de courte durée, aux insurrections, aux révoltes et à d'autres formes subtiles d'opposition a suscité l'inquiétude des responsables gouvernementaux quant à la susceptibilité du public à réagir aux messages politiques diffusés

---

<sup>127</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı.*

par la parole (*söz*). La direction du CHP et le ministère de l'Intérieur ont qualifié ces messages de « rumeurs » (*dedikodu*) et de « propagande ». Les rumeurs et la propagande sont devenues une question importante pour les membres du parti qui ont produit de nombreux documents conservés dans les archives du ministère de l'intérieur. Le secrétaire général du parti, qui était également ministre de l'intérieur, voulait s'assurer que ces questions étaient prises au sérieux et que les responsables étaient punis. La documentation sur les « rumeurs et la propagande » concernant des individus apparemment quelconques peut être considérée comme un moyen de surveiller « l'opinion publique », au sens où l'entendent Arlette Farge et, plus tard, Sophie Wahnich<sup>128</sup>.

L'un des aspects les plus remarquables du document fondateur de l'Organisation du prédicateur du peuple était l'accent mis sur la parole ou le bouche-à-oreille. Les termes utilisés pour désigner le danger de la parole dans les archives sont « *dedikodu* », littéralement traduit par « dit et entendu », mais signifiant « ragots » ou « rumeurs ». Les « commères » étaient souvent issues des couches sociales inférieures, des pêcheurs de Galata, un groupe de femmes jeunes et âgées de Mersin, des chômeurs discutant dans les cafés, mais aussi des prédicateurs islamiques et des imams de mosquée dans diverses villes et localités figurant dans les archives du ministère.

La direction du parti et le gouvernement central ont mis l'accent sur le bouche-à-oreille car ils considéraient le « peuple » ordinaire comme un troupeau peu instruit et facilement manipulable par des propos dangereux. Le titre de l'organisation et ses directives détaillées (*talimat*) témoignent de cette préoccupation à l'égard de la communication orale. Les directives soulignent que les voyages en train, les débats dans les cafés et les discussions dans les maisons d'hôtes sont des lieux potentiels pour faire entendre des paroles « mauvaises et nuisibles » (*yanlış ve zararlı*) ou des suggestions « défavorables et opposées » (*aleyhte ve aksi*)<sup>129</sup>. L'analyse du discours de l'État sur la parole nous aide à comprendre les motivations qui ont présidé à la création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple.

---

<sup>128</sup> Arlette Farge, *Dire et mal dire, l'opinion publique au XVIIIe siècle*, Seuil, Paris, 1982; Sophie Wahnich, « La patrie en danger, rumeur et loi », *Hypothèses* 4, n° 1 (2001).

<sup>129</sup> *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatıpları Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 12-13.

Le ministère de l'intérieur a identifié des lieux de sociabilité spécifiques susceptibles à la propagation de propos dangereux. Les cafés, en particulier, étaient déjà d'importants lieux d'opposition politique au début du XVIIIe siècle dans l'Empire ottoman en raison de leur organisation dans les centres urbains autour de mosquées importantes et de prédicateurs célèbres<sup>130</sup>. Leur rôle de centres d'expression de la dissidence politique a perduré jusqu'au XIXe siècle alors que les sultans successifs développaient des mécanismes pour surveiller les prédicateurs islamiques et les lieux de rencontre<sup>131</sup>.

Le secrétaire général du CHP et le ministère de l'Intérieur correspondaient fréquemment avec leurs sections provinciales au sujet de l'opposition politique exprimée par les prédicateurs islamiques, les membres des partis d'opposition (lorsqu'ils étaient légaux), d'autres groupes politiques soupçonnés d'opposition, des associations professionnelles non alignées sur le parti, et parfois des citoyens pris au hasard. Ces documents nous permettent d'examiner le rôle des prédicateurs islamiques et des cafés en tant que sources de paroles dissidentes dans la Turquie du début de la république. Ce chapitre est basé sur la recherche de mots-clés dans les Archives d'État en utilisant les termes suivants : *hatip*, *vaiz* (prédicateur), *hutbe* (sermon), *halk hatibi* (prédicateur du peuple), *söz* (mot), *söylev*, *nutuk* (discours), *konuşma* (parler, discussion), *dedikodu* (ragots), et *propagande*.

Le nom même de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple (*Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı*) évoque l'opposition islamique à travers le terme « *hatip* », qui fait référence aux prédicateurs islamiques (*va'iz* ou *hatip*) et signifie également « orateur », bien qu'avec une connotation religieuse largement oubliée. Traduire le mot « *hatip* » du turc moderne en un terme anglais laïque est un défi, car « orateur » et « prédicateur » ont tous deux des connotations religieuses et non religieuses. La traduction laïque la plus proche pourrait être « orateur », mais elle ne rend pas compte des processus de sélection, de formation et d'autorisation auxquels sont

---

<sup>130</sup> Cengiz Kırılı, « Coffeehouses : Public Opinion in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire », in *Public Islam and the Common Good*, ed. Armando Salvatore et Dale F. Eickelman (Leiden, Boston : Brill, 2004) ; Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire : Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2010), 124 ; Sümevra A. Gurbuzel, « Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan ».

<sup>131</sup> Pour les mécanismes de contrôle de la religion par l'État au début de la période moderne, voir Derin Terzioğlu, « Sunna-minded Sufi Preachers in Service of the Ottoman State : The Nasihatname of Hasan Addresses to Murad IV », *Archivum Ottomanicum* 27 (2010) ; Sümevra A. Gurbuzel, « Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan ».

soumis les prédicateurs religieux et les prédicateurs du peuple, et ne rend donc pas pleinement compte de la réalité de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. La dichotomie entre les prédicateurs du peuple et les prédicateurs des mosquées du Parti républicain du peuple est l'une des premières questions qui se posent lorsqu'on examine les documents relatifs à l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple.

Le document fondateur de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple, les directives, ne comporte aucune référence explicite aux prédicateurs islamiques. Cependant, je suggère que la généalogie de l'organisation révèle que les prédicateurs du peuple devaient travailler pour l'État et le parti contre leurs homologues religieux. En effet, la « réaction islamique » (*irtica*) était l'une des principales préoccupations de la direction du CHP depuis le début.

Le jeune gouvernement républicain a puni ces personnes critiques, mais son approche des institutions islamiques a été relativement clément. La Direction des affaires religieuses a été créée pour surveiller et contrôler les voix de l'opposition, en particulier celles des prédicateurs islamiques, plutôt que pour les abolir. Cette institution a donné l'ordre d'élargir les thèmes des sermons islamiques pour y inclure des questions politiques. La sécularisation de la Turquie républicaine par l'État était toujours en cours, avec des mesures telles que l'abolition de l'éducation et des tribunaux islamiques. Tout en renforçant le contrôle de leurs sermons, l'État républicain à ses débuts autorise les prédicateurs islamiques à commenter la vie sociale, comme ils le faisaient depuis des siècles<sup>[1]</sup>, et les encourage à aborder des questions favorables à l'État, en alignant leurs sermons sur les développements politiques en cours plutôt qu'en les interdisant complètement<sup>132</sup>.

Néanmoins, le cadre de l'opposition islamique n'était pas suffisant pour expliquer une telle entreprise. Limiter la « réaction » à l'opposition au parti unique du CHP à la résistance religieuse contre une « révolution » prétendument laïque est présentiste dans le sens où cela réduit les oppositions politiques dans la Turquie de l'entre-deux-guerres à celles entre « islamistes » et « kémalistes ». L'entre-deux-guerres a été marqué par l'émergence du socialisme d'État dans la Russie frontalière et par l'apparition de différents types de mouvements politiques ultranationalistes en Europe continentale, que la presse turque a suivis de près.

---

<sup>132</sup> Sümeyra A. Gurbuzel, « Teachers of the Public, Advisors to the Sultan ».



Le chapitre a fourni des exemples fragmentaires et ces lectures alternatives de documents, qui peuvent être interprétés comme des signes d'opposition islamique par les érudits, illustrent la diversité des menaces auxquelles était confronté le premier gouvernement républicain. Le pouvoir de la parole, qui a convaincu la direction du parti de prendre des mesures importantes pour organiser sa communication politique, n'était pas uniquement destiné à répondre à l'opposition islamique. Il ne s'agissait pas seulement de persuader les gens d'adopter un nouveau mode de vie laïque et occidentalisé. Il s'agissait également de susciter le consentement à un appareil d'État très contrôlant opérant dans une région marquée par d'importants changements démographiques dus au génocide, aux échanges de population et aux conflits en cours avec les mouvements insurgés kurdes.

Si certains responsables du parti ont pu croire que l'activité croissante d'institutions telles que les prédicateurs du peuple et les maisons du peuple pourrait réveiller cette population politiquement passive, d'autres étaient encore plus préoccupés par les activités d'autres partis institutionnalisés et par leur influence sur les citoyens républicains.

Ces exemples ont montré comment le premier gouvernement républicain surveillait et craignait l'opposition des gens ordinaires (*halk*) par le biais de la parole. Les dirigeants du parti produisaient des rapports et employaient la police civile pour surveiller les discussions dans les cafés, craignant la résistance et la réaction populaires à leurs réformes, créant ainsi des archives qui s'étendent avant et après la création des prédicateurs du peuple. En même temps, cela a conduit le parti à reconnaître que seule une parole disciplinée et omniprésente à son service pouvait contrer ce danger. Tout comme les prédicateurs agiraient comme des catalyseurs pour souligner les moments particuliers et les valeurs spéciales du parti, ils s'appuieraient sur les Maisons du peuple en tant que présence matérielle et persistante dans les provinces, une présence destinée à rappeler à la population les vertus du régime lorsqu'elle passait quotidiennement devant ces bâtiments<sup>133</sup>. Les prédicateurs du peuple étaient aux commérages ce que les maisons du peuple étaient aux cafés : une stratégie pour réguler,

---

<sup>133</sup> Voir les travaux de Murat Metinsoy sur les « médias informels » et le « bouche à oreille » dans les années 1930 et 1940. Murat Metinsoy, *The Power of the People : Everyday Resistance and Dissent in the Making of Modern Turkey, 1923-38*, 222-34.

discipliner et dynamiser les populations provinciales - leurs pensées et leurs activités quotidiennes - au nom d'une nouvelle idée de la légitimité de l'État »<sup>134</sup>.

### **3. Pédagogie de l'État**

Le chapitre 3 intitulé la «Pédagogie de l'État » explore les écrits et les récits de vie d'importants décideurs politiques dans le domaine de l'éducation, à savoir Nafi Atuf Kansu, İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu, et Falih Rıfkı Atay, montrant l'intersection entre la pédagogie d'État et la pédagogie populaire visant à former des citoyens adultes.

Cette intersection a concerné à la fois les acteurs majeurs des processus de prise de décision en matière de politiques éducatives comme Nafi Atuf et İsmail Hakkı tous les deux universitaires spécialistes de la pédagogie et les éminents politiciens et publicistes comme Falih Rıfkı. Le chapitre montre fournit une analyse critique de l'historiographie sur la pédagogie républicaine qui insiste sur la sécularisation de l'éducation et qui néglige les continuités entre l'Empire ottoman tardif et la Turquie républicaine en matières du monde référentiel en matière de la pensée sur la transmission des savoirs.

L'analyse des écrits et des discours de Nafi Atuf, İsmail Hakkı et Falih Rıfkı sur l'éducation du peuple révèle un consensus sur l'insuffisance d'une scolarité qui se limite à l'enseignement de la lecture, de l'écriture et des éléments rudimentaires des disciplines scientifiques telles que la physique, la biologie et les mathématiques. Ces élites politiques et intellectuelles de la fin de la période ottomane et du début de la période républicaine estimaient que le développement de l'éducation était essentiel pour résoudre les problèmes politiques. Toutefois, leur vision de l'éducation s'étendait au-delà de l'enseignement formel. Des institutions telles que les Foyers turcs et les Maisons du peuple complétaient l'éducation scolaire en formant des citoyens adultes et en offrant une expérience éducative plus large.

Le concept d'« éducation du peuple » a vu le jour au XIXe siècle et a évolué au cours de la deuxième monarchie constitutionnelle. Au cours de cette période, on s'est éloigné du projet « ottoman » de création d'un empire national plus inclusif. De nombreuses personnes impliquées dans les projets éducatifs républicains avaient déjà été actifs pendant la deuxième monarchie constitutionnelle, travaillant dans des institutions éducatives de première importance, dans des

---

<sup>134</sup> D'autres œuvres remarquent le rôle des Maisons du peuple dans la propagande : M. Asim Karaömerlioğlu, « The People's Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey », *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998).

cercles intellectuels et dans des réseaux associatifs. La dichotomie entre les « gens du peuple » (vulgaires) (*avam*) et les « gens distingués » (*havas*) a été réinterprétée et adaptée pour correspondre à l'ultra-nationalisme populiste.

La persistance des publications sur l'éducation populaire de 1913 jusqu'aux années 1940 souligne l'importance de l'éducation politique des citoyens adultes pour les projets politiques du CHP pendant son régime de parti unique. La section suivante analysera les documents réglementaires produits par le secrétaire général du CHP sur l'organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et les maisons du peuple afin de montrer comment les pédagogues républicains ont influencé la stratégie du parti dans ce domaine. Il se concentrera également sur le document fondateur des prédicateurs du peuple et des maisons du peuple pour retracer l'impact de ces idées éducatives sur le « peuple » : dans la Turquie des années 1930. Ces documents seront examinés en prêtant attention aux termes utilisés pour formuler la mission pédagogique des républicains et seront parfois croisés avec des articles de presse sur l'éloquence, la propagande et la pédagogie.

#### **4. Rhétorique et éducation politique**

Le chapitre 4 propose une analyse détaillée des directives de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple, soulignant le rôle de l'ethos et de la position sociale des prédicateurs du peuple. L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple était un jalon de la pédagogie populaire kémaliste. Leur travail était basé sur une directive de quinze pages divisée en six parties : objectif, thèmes de la prêche, « qualités des prédicateurs à choisir et à former », « classes des prédicateurs en fonction de leurs responsabilités », « comment les prédicateurs doivent remplir leurs obligations » et une dernière partie sur le nombre de prédicateurs à engager pour chaque province, chaque district et chaque sous-district. Les directives ont été diffusées quatre mois après le congrès du CHP de 1931, au cours duquel les préoccupations concernant l'éducation de la population ont été soulevées.

Le document fondateur des prédicateurs du peuple fait écho à ces préoccupations concernant la transmission des connaissances et met l'accent sur l'oralité. L'accent mis sur la communication orale soulignait la difficulté de transmettre les « principes, idées et idéaux » du parti par le seul biais de l'écrit. Le parti craignait que des voix dissidentes ne gagnent du terrain par le biais de la parole et cherchait donc à limiter le risque de « discours dangereux ». Partant du principe que les convictions fondamentales du parti n'étaient pas faciles à comprendre pour tout le monde, il a été jugé crucial d'éduquer les individus avec un certain niveau de compréhension, en les distinguant des gens du peuple. Par conséquent, les prédicateurs du peuple devaient être sélectionnés parmi un groupe de personnes bien formées, capables d'accéder au réservoir idéologique du parti.

La porosité entre le parti et les institutions de l'État a eu des répercussions sur l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et sur le contenu même de ses documents fondateurs. Les directives ne faisaient pas de distinction entre la communication politique de l'Etat et celle du parti. Les prédicateurs du peuple étaient à la fois les porte-parole du Parti républicain du peuple et des valeurs largement définies de la République turque établie en 1923.

Les directives énonçaient « trois principes » pour l'organisation des activités du prédicateur du peuple, chacun s'articulant autour de sujets plus précis. Le premier objectif concernait la communication sur des sujets tels que « les fondements de la révolution », « le programme et

les principes du parti », « les bienfaits de la république et l'amour de la nation ». La deuxième mettait l'accent sur la mission pédagogique en mentionnant « la civilisation, l'histoire, la bravoure et la culture turques » en termes généraux mais distincts de « l'instruction détaillée dans les écoles ». Le troisième était davantage lié à des événements spécifiques puisqu'il exhortait à monter sur scène lors des célébrations nationales et des campagnes électorales<sup>135</sup>. En résumé, expliquer les réformes républicaines, célébrer les fêtes nationales, participer aux campagnes électorales et former des citoyens adultes étaient les principaux objectifs des prédicateurs du peuple.

La tension entre l'écrit et l'oralité a joué un rôle clé dans la démarche des prédicateurs du peuple. À de multiples reprises, les directives soulignent l'importance de la communication orale. Cependant, cette transmission orale du savoir était toujours liée à des productions écrites. Le « programme du parti » élaboré lors du dernier congrès du parti a d'abord été rédigé sur la base des prédicateurs du peuple. La source d'information sur le « programme et les principes » était un corpus de textes régulièrement communiqués aux sections provinciales du parti par le secrétaire général. En outre, les prédicateurs étaient encouragés à rédiger un texte pour leurs discours afin de garantir la structure et le contrôle du contenu par le secrétaire général du CHP. Les textes étaient souvent basés sur des recommandations écrites telles que des exemples de discours, des brochures, des livres et des articles de presse envoyés par le secrétaire général du parti aux provinces. Malgré le texte, les directives recommandaient que les discours soient prononcés de manière conversationnelle, car la parole avait plus d'impact que la simple lecture à haute voix<sup>136</sup>.

---

<sup>135</sup> « Hatiplerimizin telkinatı üç esas dahilinde olacaktır. Birinci esas : Hatiplerimiz inkılâbın esaslarını Fırkamızın program ve prensiplerini, Cümhuriyetin faziletlerini veditiği, vereceği feyizli neticeleri, milliyetperverliği, esas meseleler olarak her söz vesilesinde münasebet getirerek söyleyeceklerdir. Les mots-clés sont. : Türk medeniyeti Türk tarihi Türk kahramanlıkları ve kısa tarifile Türk kültürün mekteplerdeki teferruatlı tedris şekline benzemiyen ve her zaman arzu ve hevesle dinlenebilecek olan bir mahiyette telkinine ehemmiyet verilecektir. Üçüncü esas : Fırkanın herhangi günde memleket dahilindeki vaziyete göre halkı tenvir için izah etmesi lâzım gelen ve gün icabuna göre değişen mevzulardır. Meselâ, zafer bayramı, cümhuriyet bayramı gibi muayyen günlerde birinci ve ikinci esaslara dair söz söylenip, nutuk maksadın icabına uyan bir netice ve temenni ifadesi ile bitirilebilir. Fakat meselâ mahallî muhalif bir cereyan veyahut bir intihap günü birinci ve ikinci esaslardan maksadı tenvir için istifade edilmekle beraber asıl sözün müessir ve hararetili kısımları ve neticeleri o günün meseleleri üzerinde teksif olunur. Fırkamızı uzaktan, yakından alâkadar eden cereyanlar mahsus olunca, hatiplerimiz herhangi bir vesileden ve toplanmadan istifade ederek bu cereyanlara karşı fıkramızın ana maksatlarını o yerdeki muhatapların anlayacağı lisan ile teşrih ederler. » Ibid. 6-7.

<sup>136</sup> Circulaire du secrétaire général du CHP aux maisons du peuple, 21 mars 1936, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-12-48.

« L'idéologie » est un concept récurrent utilisé dans les travaux sur l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple. Sefa Şimşek qualifie de « mobilisation idéologique » les efforts intenses déployés pour accroître le nombre et l'animation des maisons du peuple<sup>137</sup>. Dans *Créer un citoyen (Bir Yurttaş Yaratmak)*, Zafer Toprak parle de « l'idéologie officielle » de la république<sup>138</sup>. Néanmoins, l'« idéologie » en tant que cadre analytique a été progressivement abandonnée dans l'étude de l'histoire des premières années de la république. Cet abandon était également ancré dans une critique accrue basée sur l'affirmation que le régime de parti unique n'avait pas d'idéologie, que Mustafa Kemal « n'a jamais accepté cette appellation comme un terme qui décrirait une idéologie *sui generis* propre à la Turquie »<sup>139</sup>. Cette section soutiendra que l'« idéologie » est une catégorie fructueuse pour analyser la mission pédagogique kémaliste et qu'elle était, en fait, présente dans la grammaire des premiers dirigeants républicains par le biais d'autres termes.

Le débat sur la question de savoir si le CHP du régime du parti unique avait une « idéologie » est dominé par deux hypothèses clés sur les idéologies : les textes et le consensus sur la signification des textes. L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple ne disposait pas d'un programme d'études similaire à celui déterminé pour les écoles sous le contrôle du ministère de l'éducation. Les directives ne fournissaient pas un aperçu détaillé des sujets spécifiques devant être couverts par les prédicateurs du peuple. Au lieu de cela, elles définissaient vaguement leurs sujets comme étant les « fondements de la révolution », ce qui comprenait l'élaboration du programme et des principes du parti et l'éloge des « vertus de la république »<sup>140</sup>.

Leurs discours devaient s'aligner sur les principes fondamentaux et les valeurs de la révolution préconisés par ses dirigeants. L'accent mis sur la culture, l'histoire et les succès militaires étaient des éléments communs de la rhétorique politique nationaliste<sup>141</sup>, et comme

---

<sup>137</sup> Sefa Şimşek, *Bir İdeolojik Seferberlik Deneyimi : Halkevleri, 1932-1951*.

<sup>138</sup> Zafer Toprak, *Bir Yurttaş Yaratmak : Muâsır Bir Medeniyet İçin Seferberlik Bilgileri, 1923-1950* (İstanbul : Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 1998).

<sup>139</sup> Ahmet Kuyaş, « On "Post-Kemalism" or How to Stop Worrying about Politics and Love History », *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, no. 35 (2022) : §2.

<sup>140</sup> « Birinci esas : Hatiplerimiz inkılâbın esaslarını, Fırkamızın program veensiplerini, Cümhuriyetin faziletlerini vediti vereceği feyizli neticeleri, milliyetperverliği esas meseleler olarak her söz vesilesinde münasebet getirerek söyleyeceklerdir. » *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 6.

<sup>141</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales : Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècle*, Paris, Seuil, 2001.

ceux qui proclamaient la république étaient aussi les dirigeants du parti, les vertus de la république et le programme du parti étaient pour l'essentiel synonymes. Cette section particulière des directives du prédicateur du peuple montre l'intention du parti de produire et de diffuser un « discours idéologique dominant ». Selon Pierre Bourdieu et Luc Boltanski, une « idéologie » est une « philosophie sociale » capable de générer des « schémas de pensée » et d'orienter l'action des individus. Les lieux de rassemblement où des personnes partageant les mêmes convictions politiques se retrouvent pour parler entre elles sont essentiels pour « produire une idéologie dominante »<sup>142</sup>.

La « production d'une idéologie dominante » est un cadre conceptuel pertinent pour comprendre la logique qui a sous-tendu la création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. La mission pédagogique kémaliste visait à éduquer les prédicateurs du peuple, les individus déjà acquis à la cause et les couches plus larges de la population. L'éducation des membres du parti était à son tour un moyen de consolider les institutions provinciales du parti. Le manque de compréhension de ce programme et de ces principes par les membres du parti a été un problème soulevé lors du dernier congrès du CHP avant la fondation de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. L'une des principales fonctions de cette organisation consistait également à « prêcher les convertis »<sup>143</sup>. Les prédicateurs du peuple s'adressaient sans doute à ceux qui avaient déjà été gagnés à la cause.

Les directives de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple ont articulé leur mission autour d'un ensemble de concepts. Ces concepts méritent un examen plus approfondi car ils éclairent la mission pédagogique kémaliste, révélant l'interaction entre les principes éducatifs et l'effort persistant d'institutionnalisation de la propagande dans les pays européens. Ils font également partie des convictions et des modèles de pensée qui sont au cœur de l'idéologie du CHP. Si les directives ne reprennent pas explicitement des termes tels que « éducation du peuple » ou « éducation des gens du peuple », elles témoignent néanmoins d'un engagement profond en faveur de l'éthos du mouvement « Vers le peuple » (*Halka Dođru*) à travers d'autres concepts.

---

<sup>142</sup> Pierre Bourdieu et Luc Boltanski, « La production de l'idéologie dominante », *Actes de Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 2, 2, no. 3 (1976).

<sup>143</sup> *ibid.* 6.

En outre, les rapports sur les prédicateurs du peuple et les maisons du peuple ont régulièrement confirmé leur rôle dans l'éducation du peuple.

Les thèmes récurrents des directives des prédicateurs du peuple, des maisons du peuple, ainsi que de la correspondance et des documents publiés qui s'y rapportent, indiquent que, malgré la mission pédagogique des jeunes républicains, il existait également un effort concerté pour propager les valeurs du régime à l'aide des techniques rhétoriques traditionnelles. La diffusion de connaissances politiquement pertinentes était l'objectif principal des documents réglementaires de ces deux organisations.

Bien que le concept de propagande ait rarement été explicitement mentionné, la création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple est apparue comme un moyen d'analyser les institutions et les organisations des pays modèles d'Asie et d'Europe. Cette analyse visait à trouver un équilibre entre ces nouvelles institutions et les connaissances et outils rhétoriques traditionnels hérités du passé. Malgré l'absence du terme « propagande » dans les documents fondateurs, les destinataires de ces documents ont compris leurs actions comme de la propagande.

Un élément clé des documents fondateurs de l'organisation était le capital social et symbolique nécessaire pour garantir que le public écouterait ceux qui étaient chargés de l'éduquer. En plus d'obtenir le respect des auditeurs, l'organisation visait à établir une connexion émotionnelle et à créer un environnement qui résonnerait avec le public. Le chapitre suivant explorera les sources de distinction sociale pour les pédagogues et les propagandistes du CHP sous le régime du parti unique. Plus particulièrement, il examinera comment les prédicateurs du peuple eux-mêmes se sont appropriés la catégorie de « *münevver* » pour parler de leur mission pédagogique.

### **5. Les prédicateurs du peuple : Les enseignants du petit peuple**

Ce chapitre se concentre sur la façon dont le terme « *münevver* » désignait les enseignants et les petits fonctionnaires lorsque le CHP les a mobilisés pour sa mission pédagogique. Il examine les significations attribuées à cette catégorie sociale par la direction du parti et les prédicateurs du peuple eux-mêmes pour réfléchir à la mesure dans laquelle les efforts du début de l'ère républicaine pour centraliser et institutionnaliser l'éducation politique des adultes ont eu un impact sur la signification d'une catégorie sociopolitique cruciale du début de l'ère républicaine.



Les chapitres précédents sur la pédagogie kémaliste ont montré que le *münevver* était un concept central largement utilisé par les sources républicaines pour formuler leurs objectifs éducatifs. Cette notion revêtait une telle importance qu'elle figurait en bonne place dans les directives de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. Ces directives classent distinctement leur public cible en deux groupes : les « *münevver* » (éclairés) et les « masses populaires » résidant dans les zones urbaines, juxtaposés aux « personnes à l'esprit ordinaire » vivant dans les zones rurales. On obtient ainsi un premier marqueur de distinction, où les éléments sociaux et culturels se croisent avec la localisation des deux groupes : villes versus campagnes. Implicitement, cette classification positionne les prédicateurs du peuple dans les rangs de la couche « éclairée » de la société. Néanmoins, ils devaient s'engager auprès des « éclairés » et du reste de la population. L'opposition entre les « *münevver* » et les « autres » dans les directives indique une compréhension dichotomique de la société. Néanmoins, le groupe composé de « *münevvers* » était plus important qu'un petit groupe de producteurs intellectuels et culturels sous les feux de la rampe de la scène culturelle turque.

On pourrait dire que « *münevver* » a deux significations distinctes et non liées. La première concerne les producteurs intellectuels et culturels, également appelés intellectuels « élevés » et « urbains »<sup>144</sup>, tandis que la seconde concerne « l'intelligentsia plus humble en tant que vulgarisatrice des connaissances existantes », par opposition aux producteurs. D'où les intellectuels « modestes », « ruraux » ou, dans le contexte turco-anatolien hautement centralisé, « provinciaux »<sup>145</sup>. Pourtant, l'observation de Falih Rıfkı dans *Nouvelle Russie* et le discours d'Alâeddin Bey sur la pénurie de « *münevver* » dans l'Anatolie post-révolutionnaire ne font pas de distinction entre les intellectuels modestes et les intellectuels élevés. Ils parlaient plutôt des « *münevver* » en général. Par conséquent, il est difficile de diviser ces deux types de « *münevver* » en types précis et comparables. S'il existe deux courants de « *münevver* », ces deux courants n'ont de sens que par rapport à l'ensemble. Et les prédicateurs du peuple n'étaient qu'une facette de ce tout.

---

<sup>144</sup> Alessandro Olsaretti, « Beyond Class : The Many Facets of Gramsci's Theory of Intellectuals », *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 4 (2014) : 367.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

*Münevver* était un concept récurrent dans les écrits des prédicateurs du peuple, en particulier lorsqu'ils abordaient des sujets tels que l'éducation du peuple (*Halk Terbiyesi*) ou les réformes culturelles du début de la période républicaine, comme la réforme de la langue. Les efforts visant à établir un canon littéraire national étaient étroitement liés à la standardisation de la langue officielle. Par conséquent, les prédicateurs du peuple ont également abordé le concept de *münevver* dans leurs conférences sur la langue et la littérature. Ils ont également repris le vocabulaire utilisé par la direction du parti pour parler de leur mission pédagogique: éclairer, suggérer et mettre les gens sur la bonne voie (*tenvir, telkin, irşad*).

L'analyse des débats dans la presse présentée dans le premier chapitre a révélé que la presse utilisait la catégorie de « *münevver* » d'une manière très proche de la façon dont les intellectuels étaient considérés en termes sociologiques et universalistes. Les références de la direction du parti aux « *münevver* » dans les années 1930 reflètent les discussions dans la presse. De nombreux chroniqueurs participant à ces débats dans la presse étaient également activement impliqués dans les cercles du CHP. La création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et des Maisons du peuple a élargi la définition de « *münevver* » pour englober les fonctionnaires de haut et de bas rang qui étaient modestement impliqués dans les domaines éditoriaux et littéraires. L'importance accordée à l'élite intellectuelle s'explique par les efforts déployés par la direction du parti pour éduquer le public et contrer l'influence symbolique des élites intellectuelles religieuses.

## **II. Kémalisme de Province**

Cette partie traite du « kémalisme » dans le cadre du fonctionnement de l'appareil du parti-État à l'époque du parti unique. Par « kémalisme de province », j'entends les personnes, les valeurs, les idées et les actions des sections provinciales du Parti républicain du peuple, y compris les Maisons du peuple et les Organisations des prédicateurs du peuple, de 1931 à 1945. Le terme « kémalisme » ne sera pas utilisé de manière analytique, car il a été initialement inventé par des observateurs étrangers et n'a été adopté par le parti qu'en 1935. Le kémalisme de province, quant à lui, fait référence à la relation entre l'organisation centrale du parti, c'est-à-dire son secrétaire général et ses députés basés à Ankara, et ses branches provinciales. Cette partie examinera comment le secrétaire général du CHP a préparé le terrain pour les prédicateurs du peuple. Le chapitre 6 se penchera sur les préparatifs effectués par la direction du parti pour la scène, la mise en scène et la représentation des Prêcheurs du peuple. Il se

penchera également sur la perception qu'a le parti du public, à savoir les gens du peuple. Le chapitre 7 analysera quantitativement les listes préparées par les comités administratifs provinciaux afin d'examiner les caractéristiques sociales des prédicateurs du peuple et de déterminer qui était considéré comme un « *münevver* » dans la Turquie des années 1930. Le chapitre 8 explorera les motivations et les rétributions de la prédication pour le parti, qui a conduit des milliers d'individus à monter sur scène au nom du parti. Enfin, le chapitre 9 analysera les limites de ce vaste système de normalisation et de centralisation de la communication politique sur la base des rapports d'inspection produits par les membres du parlement.

## 6. Planter le décor

La création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple a été proclamée dans une lettre circulaire et dans une série de directives envoyées aux sections provinciales du CHP par le secrétaire général du parti en septembre 1931<sup>146</sup>. Les « directives » (*talimat*) étaient un document de onze pages qui expliquait les raisons de la création de cette organisation et les responsabilités des porte-parole du parti sélectionnés au niveau local. Des personnes du « centre du parti », c'est-à-dire le secrétaire général à Ankara, ont également été envoyées dans toute la Turquie pour prononcer des discours. Bien que les prédicateurs locaux et les fonctionnaires du parti central aient incarné la nouvelle mission basée sur la conviction du pouvoir de la parole, l'opposition entre le « centre » (*merkez*) et les « provinces » (*taşra*) était la clé de la stratégie du parti<sup>147</sup>.

L'organisation du Parti suivait le schéma administratif de l'État, divisé entre le « centre » (*merkez*) et la « province » (*taşra*)<sup>148</sup>. À cet égard, l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple

---

<sup>146</sup> La même ordonnance est publiée en janvier 1933 dans le quotidien *Vakit*. « C.H.F. Halk Hatıpları Talimatı : Semt, köy ve mahalle ocaklarımızın da bir iki hatibi olmak lazımdır. Fırka hatıpları için dersler açılacaktır », *Vakit*, 11 janvier.

<sup>147</sup> « Bu talimatta yazılı teşkilat Fırkanın halk hatıpları teşkilatıdır. Fırka liderlerinin her yerde, Fırka mebuslarının mecliste söz söylemeleri ve Fırka merkezinden ayrı vazifelerle gönderilecek olanların lüzumuna göre verecekleri nutuklar bu talimattaki esaslara tabi değildir. » *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatıpları Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 5.

<sup>148</sup> Au début de la république turque, l'administration publique était divisée entre le centre, la capitale et l'organisation provinciale (*taşra*). Les documents d'État divisaient diligemment ces organisations en ce qui concerne les nominations des fonctionnaires. Pour un exemple, voir les documents de nomination du ministère des Transports (*Nafia Vekaleti*), 31 mai 1934, BCA BTBD (Bakanlıklar Arası Tayinler Başkanlığı) 30-11-1-0/86-15-85.

n'était pas extraordinaire puisque chaque ministère avait une « organisation centrale » (*Merkez teşkilatı*) et une organisation provinciale (*taşra teşkilatı*). De même, le secrétaire général du parti était basé à Ankara, la capitale. Ankara, le « centre » du Parti, supervisait l'organisation provinciale dans chaque *vilayet*. Les comités administratifs provinciaux du Parti collaboraient étroitement avec le gouverneur provincial (*vali*), qui dépendait des ordres du « centre », c'est-à-dire officiellement du ministère de l'Intérieur. Jusqu'en 1939, le secrétaire général du parti était en même temps le ministre de l'Intérieur.

Pour le secrétaire général du parti, une organisation efficace du parti signifiait un nombre progressivement croissant de membres du parti et une présence et une activité continues dans les sections provinciales et de district. Après la création des maisons du peuple en 1932, le bon fonctionnement de l'organisation du parti nécessitait également une maison du peuple active dont les membres organisaient avec zèle des événements culturels tels que des conférences (*konferans*), des pièces de théâtre, des activités sportives, des visites de villages et bien d'autres choses encore. Les rapports internes considéraient le parti comme « faible » (*zayıf*) dans une région qui manquait de membres actifs et si les bureaux locaux du parti n'étaient pas régulièrement fréquentés<sup>149</sup>. En l'absence d'une organisation du parti puissante, avec de nombreux membres locaux du parti travaillant activement pour le parti, les gouverneurs de province et de district agissaient en tant que chefs de l'organisation provinciale du parti. Cette absence de différenciation entre les institutions de l'État et celles du parti, due à la mainmise d'un parti politique sur les institutions de l'État, faisait partie intégrante du fonctionnement de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et du régime de parti unique<sup>150</sup>.

Les fêtes nationales étaient les occasions les plus importantes pour les prédicateurs du peuple. La Turquie a institué de nombreuses fêtes nationales à différents moments de la « guerre d'indépendance turque ». Le départ de Mustafa Kemal pour Samsun en mai 1919, la réunion de la Grande Assemblée nationale en avril 1920, la victoire de Dumlupınar en août 1922 et la proclamation de la République en octobre 1923 ont tous été célébrés chaque année

---

<sup>149</sup> L'obsession du parti pour les chiffres et les statistiques concernant l'activité des Maisons du peuple peut être observée dans les rapports produits tout au long des années. *Halkevleri 1932-1935 : 103 Halkevi Geçen Yıllarda Nasıl Çalıştı*, (1935) ; *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Halkevleri ve Halkodaları 1932-1942*.

<sup>150</sup> Gilles Dorronsoro et Benjamin Gourisse, « Une clé de lecture du politique en Turquie : les rapports État-Partis », *Politix* 107, no. 3 (2014) : 201.

dans les écoles, sur les places publiques et dans les Maisons du peuple. Les directives font référence aux fêtes nationales, aux célébrations locales et aux commémorations telles que le jour de la libération ou de l'occupation d'une ville particulière. Après la mort de Mustafa Kemal, une autre commémoration annuelle a été instaurée, le 10 novembre<sup>151</sup>. Les célébrations et les commémorations ont constitué une grande partie des traces écrites des prédicateurs du peuple. Néanmoins, les occasions pour les prédicateurs du peuple de s'adresser aux foules ne se limitaient pas à ces événements.

La mobilisation des prédicateurs du peuple a été improvisée et spontanée car une institution similaire mais plus importante, les Maisons du peuple, a été créée peu de temps après. La documentation sur les Maisons du peuple a éclipsé celle des prédicateurs du peuple dans les archives du parti. Les traces écrites de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple se limitent à la circulaire de fondation, aux listes des prédicateurs envoyées en 1931-1932, à une liste mise à jour en 1938 et à quelques lettres circulaires sur la bonne conduite des prédicateurs du peuple<sup>152</sup>. Ces documents se raréfient encore après 1939. La mort de Mustafa Kemal en novembre 1938 et le début de la Seconde Guerre mondiale en septembre 1939 ont eu un impact sur les priorités du secrétaire général du parti. Les problèmes économiques survenus pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale ont sans doute eu pour conséquence que le parti disposait de moins de ressources pour initier et encadrer les célébrations politiques après 1939. Après l'éclatement de la guerre, les « prédicateurs du parti » ou « prédicateurs du peuple » n'apparaissent que lorsque le parti organisait des « conférences » sur le conflit en cours ou sur des questions apparentées. Néanmoins, les magazines des Maisons du peuple, les rapports et la presse nationale contiennent de nombreuses références aux « discours prononcés par les prédicateurs du peuple », aux « prédicateurs du parti » ou aux « conférences » organisées dans les Maisons du peuple.

---

<sup>151</sup> Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish : Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*; Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken : Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier-und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*.

<sup>152</sup> « Cumhuriyet Bayramı Programı Hazırlandı : Balıkesir üç gün, üç gece en büyük bayramı neşe ve sevinç içinde kutlayacak », *Türk Dili*, 27 octobre ; « Yurtta Bayram Heyecanla Kutlandı : Cumhuriyet ve yaratıcısı yurdun her yerinde candan alkışlandı », *Ulus*, 1er novembre.

L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple trouve son origine dans des tentatives antérieures de communication politique mises en œuvre par deux gouvernements concurrents de l'époque de l'armistice : le gouvernement d'Istanbul sous l'autorité du sultan et le gouvernement d'Ankara sous l'autorité de la milice nationaliste. En avril 1919, le gouvernement d'Istanbul crée les Comités de conseil (*Heyet-i Nasiha*) avec des orateurs voyageant en Anatolie<sup>153</sup>. Le premier Comité est plutôt restreint. Un ancien gouverneur de province, un notable local, un ancien député, deux anciens militaires de haut rang et deux muftis entreprennent de parcourir l'Anatolie pour rassurer la population locale sur les mesures à prendre par le gouvernement d'Istanbul pour contrer les conséquences de la Grande Guerre <sup>154</sup>.

L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple des années 1930 présente une différence cruciale qui reflète la consolidation d'un régime à parti unique. Contrairement aux initiatives précédentes, qui envoyaient des personnes d'Istanbul dans les provinces pour persuader les élites et les notables provinciaux de se joindre à la lutte nationale, les prédicateurs du peuple étaient sélectionnés localement. Les unités provinciales sont chargées d'organiser des sermons républicains selon des critères uniformes fixés par le secrétaire général du parti. En outre, bien que les unionistes aient organisé des manifestations publiques et de masse, la centralisation de la mobilisation par le bas n'existait pas à ce point avant le régime de parti unique du CHP<sup>155</sup>, mais il y avait une continuité car ils étaient recrutés parmi des types d'élites similaires en termes de profil et de compétences.

L'Organisation prédicateur du peuple a été la première tentative durable de sélection et de formation de représentants locaux et laïques du pouvoir administratif de l'État et du parti politique. Les sections provinciales du Parti sélectionnaient les prédicateurs du peuple parmi les membres du Parti en fonction de leur sympathie et de leurs qualités rhétoriques. Au-delà des liens organiques avec le parti, les prédicateurs devaient également être choisis parmi les personnes intéressées et capables d'assumer cette fonction. Le secrétaire général du CHP à Ankara surveillait leur sélection et leur militantisme en correspondant avec les sections

---

<sup>153</sup> Erkan Fincan, « Heyet-i Nasiha'dan İrsat Heyetlerine : Millî Mücadele'de Halkı İknâ Çalışmaları », 28.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Pour les utilisations politiques des mobilisations de masse telles que les mouvements de boycott sous la deuxième monarchie constitutionnelle, voir Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement : Nationalisme, protestation et classes ouvrières dans la formation de la Turquie moderne*, 39-58.

provinciales ou, en cas d'absence de sections provinciales - beaucoup étaient encore en train de se faire au début des années 1930 - avec les gouverneurs de province ou de district.

Les Maisons du peuple et l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple étaient étroitement liées. Leur création successive en l'espace de cinq mois indique l'attitude improvisée du Parti pour résoudre le problème de la parole. Les Maisons du peuple sont devenues la plate-forme des prédicateurs après leur fondation. Le CHP a d'abord créé l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple en 1931 et, quelques mois plus tard, le 19 février 1932, les Maisons du peuple. Ces institutions étaient un lieu de socialisation où les gens organisaient des mariages, des concerts, des pièces de théâtre, des émissions de radio et des projections de cinéma<sup>156</sup>. Les Maisons du peuple étaient avant tout une tentative d'institutionnalisation de la communication politique du parti. Elles étaient influencées par les centres culturels nationalistes existants, tels que les Foyers turcs (*Türk Ocakları*), qui, à l'époque ottomane, entretenaient des liens étroits avec le CUP<sup>157</sup>.

La matérialité des scènes où intervenaient les prédicateurs du peuple a également été étudiée dans le cadre de l'analyse du dispositif éducatif et communicationnel mis en place par le CHP durant la période du parti unique. Malgré l'ampleur des efforts de mobilisation des porte-voix locaux du régime pour éduquer les citoyens adultes à travers des conférences publiques et des cérémonies, le parti-État manquait de moyens dans une économie d'après-guerre. Les archives de cette période témoignent de l'insuffisance des salles de conférences et des problèmes de connexion radiophonique. En réponse à ces lacunes, des maisons du peuple ont été créées, parfois sur des propriétés ayant appartenu à des populations persécutées sous l'empire ottoman, telles que les Arméniens, les Roums et les Assyriens.

La maison du peuple de Gaziantep ainsi que Konya ont été construites sur des églises arméniennes construites à la fin du XIXe siècle. La conversion des églises en bâtiments du parti et en maisons du peuple n'était pas systématique. Dans le quartier de Harput à Elazığ, par exemple, les églises ont été laissées à l'abandon après la relocalisation du centre-ville loin du

---

<sup>156</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey*, 125-53.

<sup>157</sup> *ibid.* 28.

centre historique<sup>158</sup>. Cette absence de politique uniforme concernant les conséquences du génocide indique qu'il n'y a pas eu de décisions centrales concernant la gestion des biens abandonnés, mais des arrangements pour s'adapter au contexte local. L'utilisation d'églises comme maisons du peuple est intéressante car elle contraste avec le récit de « l'oubli et de l'effacement » concernant la destruction des chrétiens ottomans. Dans le cas d'Antep et de Kayseri, la reconversion d'espaces sacrés chrétiens en espaces de rassemblement républicains et laïques indique une forme de reconnaissance - et même de célébration - de la destruction des communautés chrétiennes locales plutôt que l'oubli et l'effacement du passé violent. Ces aspects matériels de la mise en scène des conférences publiques des prédicateurs du peuple a joué dans la décision d'interroger l'activité de la prêche républicaine comme une activité post-génocidaire.

La prise en compte de la matérialité de la scène sur laquelle les prédicateurs du peuple s'adressaient à leur public permet de comprendre les aspects non verbaux de leurs discours qui jouaient un rôle à part entière dans leurs références implicites et leur réception. Le secrétaire général du Parti supervisait également les performances des prédicateurs du peuple. Cette mise en scène déterminait le contenu des discours des prédicateurs, leur tenue vestimentaire, la disposition spatiale des orateurs et des participants, ainsi que la disposition matérielle de la scène (les « props ») sur laquelle les prédicateurs s'adressaient à leur public. En d'autres termes, la présentation de soi en tant que porte-parole du Parti fusionnait le contenu des conférences avec la performance visuelle visant à captiver l'auditoire. Ces détails visuels et matériels ont joué un rôle décisif dans la force illocutoire des sermons nationalistes<sup>159</sup>.

Les choix vestimentaires des prédicateurs du peuple faisaient partie intégrante de leur performance et pouvaient véhiculer des messages à leur public. Cependant, les sources disponibles sur les vêtements des prédicateurs du peuple sont limitées. Les instructions relatives à la tenue vestimentaire étaient notamment absentes. Les rapports envoyés par les comités administratifs provinciaux au secrétaire général du parti comprenaient parfois des

---

<sup>158</sup> Zeynep Kezer, « The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey : Spatializing Difference », *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>159</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, « Le langage autorisé », 183 ; Bruno Ambroise, « Une conception non scolastique de l'efficacité linguistique. Bourdieu lecteur d'Austin », dans *Pierre Bourdieu* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 2009).



photos des cérémonies organisées, mais de manière irrégulière. La nature sporadique de ces photos reflète à la fois les difficultés de documentation et les limites technologiques de l'époque. Néanmoins, l'inclusion sélective de ces images suggère des tentatives délibérées de mettre en valeur le succès et la grandeur d'événements spécifiques, indiquant le désir des comités administratifs provinciaux de démontrer leurs accomplissements au secrétaire général. L'irrégularité des sources visuelles concernant les prédicateurs du peuple introduit des biais, favorisant potentiellement les cas de réussite plutôt que de fournir une vue d'ensemble des provinces anatoliennes au début de la période républicaine. Malgré ces limites, un examen attentif de la trace photographique des prédicateurs du peuple fournit des indications précieuses sur leur distinction sociale et leur importance politique.

Alors que les instructions contenaient des recommandations concernant le cadre et l'objectif des conférences, au moment où les prédicateurs montaient sur leur plate-forme surélevée, une part importante de la performance reposait sur leur propre corps et leur propre voix. Les prédicateurs du peuple étaient censés tenir des carnets contenant les « principes » de leurs discours. Bien qu'ils soient libres d'écrire leurs discours (*nutuklar ve hitabeler*) ou de parler librement, le secrétaire général estimait que « dire de vive voix » (*ağızdan söylemek*) était plus efficace pour « toucher » les « émotions des gens » que de lire. Il était néanmoins important de disposer d'un plan avec la structure des discours sur papier, car les discours « sans sujet précis » risquaient d'avoir un impact « contraire ». En somme, les prédicateurs devaient mémoriser leurs discours et se produire devant leur auditoire<sup>160</sup>.

Consciente des risques liés à cette pratique, la direction du parti a prévu des mesures pour former les prédicateurs. La distinction sociale des prédicateurs du peuple et leur familiarité avec les différentes formes de savoir et les institutions éducatives étaient nécessaires mais pas suffisantes. Le CHP a créé un mécanisme de formation et de contrôle entre le secrétaire général du parti à Ankara et les sections provinciales du parti. Le secrétaire général envoyait des ordres

---

<sup>160</sup> « Fırkanın iyi hatiplerinin esasları kaydeden not defterleri bulunmalıdır. Nutuk ve hitabeler ya yazılı kağıttan okunur ve yahut ağızdan söylenir. Fakat halkın hisleri üzerinde tesir yapılmak istenen mevzuların okumaktan ziyade söylemek tarzında telkini muhakkaktır. Hatip bu tarzda söylerken madde başları yazılı bir nota bakabilir. Yazısız söylenen nutukların esassız ve mevzusuz olması çok fena ve mekûs bir tesir yapacağı daima akılda tutulmalı ve söylenenecek mühim esaslar ehemmiyetine göre ezberlenmelidir. » *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 9-10.

par le biais de circulaires pour la formation des prédicateurs, auxquelles étaient jointes des ressources textuelles telles que des programmes imprimés du parti, des brochures, des manuels et des pamphlets. Il contrôlait les abonnements à la presse dans les locaux de l'organisation provinciale du parti, y compris les maisons du peuple (*Halkevleri*). Parmi ces ouvrages, on trouve ceux publiés par les membres des Maisons du peuple eux-mêmes et les principaux membres du parti sur l'histoire, la littérature et des questions plus techniques<sup>161</sup>. Ces documents enseignaient aux prédicateurs du peuple les « concepts fondamentaux » qu'ils devaient transmettre à leur auditoire<sup>162</sup>. En outre, des cours d'art oratoire étaient prévus afin de préparer davantage les prédicateurs sélectionnés. Le siège du parti ou les directions provinciales désignaient les instructeurs de ces cours<sup>163</sup>.

Les prédicateurs du peuple ne lisaient pas les sermons tout faits envoyés par le secrétaire général. Bien que le parti ait envoyé de nombreuses ressources telles que des livres, des journaux, des magazines et des brochures pour fournir un aperçu général aux prédicateurs du peuple, ceux-ci voulaient des discours authentiques adaptés à chaque contexte local et à chaque public. C'est pourquoi, même lors des festivités les plus contrôlées quant au contenu des discours, comme la Journée de la langue, les discours envoyés au siège du parti sont loin d'être identiques. Ils partagent les points de discussion envoyés par le secrétaire général du parti, qui sont modifiés chaque année. Néanmoins, la présentation des principaux arguments varie considérablement d'un prédicateur à l'autre dans toutes les conférences organisées selon un ordre centralisé. Comme dans toute interaction communicative, cette diversité dépend des orateurs et de leurs destinataires.

La flexibilité limitée de cette situation fait du dossier documentaire des conférences données par les prédicateurs du peuple dans les maisons du peuple une source historique précieuse, bien que répétitive, pour comprendre comment différents acteurs intermédiaires ont justifié l'ère

---

<sup>161</sup> Livres envoyés aux Maisons du peuple, 19 décembre 1935, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/3-11-19.

<sup>162</sup> « Merkezce hatiplere esas olacak bazı mefhumlar tanzim edilip göndereceğimiz gibi Fırka programımızın şerh ve izahı için de broşürler yapıp bunları da göndereceğiz. » *Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Halk Hatipleri Teşkilatı Talimatı*, 10.

<sup>163</sup> « Bu kurslar evvelâ mühimlerinden başlanarak birkaç Vilâyetten ve sonraları tedricen diğer vilâyetlerimizden kendileri tarafınan seçilen veyahut merkezce uzaktan » tanılıp tesbit edilen istidatlı zatlardan ve bu vazifeyi filen yaparken mahallerince liyakat ile temayüz eden arkadaşlar celb olunarak umumî bir surette yetiştirileceklerdir. » *Ibid*, 14-15.

révolutionnaire et le régime de parti unique établi par le CHP dans divers contextes locaux. Si les archives du CHP fournissent de riches informations sur l'état et la mise en scène des conférences, la taille et le caractère du public restent sans réponse. Qui constitue le public de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple ? Quelles informations peut-on obtenir sur les participants en examinant les traces écrites associées à l'organisation, y compris la taille et la composition du public lors de ses conférences ?

### **7. La distinction sociale des prédicateurs du peuple**

Les archives du CHP contiennent un nombre limité de documents concernant directement l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. Cette absence de documents sur l'organisation est attribuée à la création des Maisons du peuple, qui ont essentiellement remplacé l'organisation en assumant des responsabilités similaires, telles que s'adresser aux foules lors de célébrations politiques ou de conférences. Les directives de l'Organisation prédicateur du peuple, diffusées en septembre 1931 pour la première fois et analysées dans les chapitres précédents, ont fourni des informations précieuses sur leurs critères de sélection. Ces informations ont permis de comprendre comment les dirigeants du CHP envisageaient les hiérarchies sociales « en province » et quels atouts sociaux étaient perçus comme conférant l'autorité et la légitimité pour prendre la parole en public. Cependant, une analyse quantitative des listes de prédicateurs sélectionnés envoyées au siège du parti à Ankara peut nous permettre de mieux comprendre les caractéristiques sociales qui rendent une personne respectable, persuasive et potentiellement « intellectuelle ».

Ce chapitre analyse la base de données constituée à partir des listes des prédicateurs du peuple envoyées en 1931 et 1938 respectivement. Après avoir discuté les problèmes méthodologiques liés à l'identification des prédicateurs sélectionnés, il examine les variations du nombre de prédicateurs au sein de chaque groupe professionnel et social, ainsi que les différences observées entre les diverses régions.

En termes de modalités d'identification, la profession était la plus courante, permettant de situer socialement une grande partie des prédicateurs du peuple. Le groupe professionnel dominant parmi eux était constitué d'enseignants du primaire, du collège et du lycée, suivis par d'autres cadres administratifs du Ministère de l'Éducation. Les autres professions majoritaires étaient celles de la fonction publique, notamment les fonctionnaires de petit et moyen échelon travaillant pour l'administration provinciale. On retrouvait également des médecins, avocats et

pharmaciens, professions nécessitant des titres scolaires relativement inaccessibles durant la période du parti unique en Turquie. Cette répartition professionnelle souligne l'importance du niveau d'éducation parmi les critères implicites de sélection pour l'organisation des prédicateurs du peuple.

Toutefois, les enseignants et autres fonctionnaires ne constituaient pas l'intégralité de l'organisation. Un nombre non négligeable de prédicateurs avaient été identifiés en 1931 par leur nom patronymique ou en tant que « marchand », « agriculteur », « propriétaire terrien » ou « *esraf* » (notables), ce qui révèle une forte présence de détenteurs de capital économique plutôt qu'intellectuel au sein du corps des prédicateurs du peuple.

Ce chapitre est consacré aux listes de prédicateurs du peuple envoyées par les comités administratifs provinciaux et de district du CHP au secrétaire général du parti à Ankara entre 1931 et 1938. L'analyse quantitative de ces listes s'est limitée à la colonne « identité » (*hüviyet*) et visait à étudier les sources de distinction sociale qui ont joué un rôle dans le processus de sélection. En outre, le chapitre a cherché à contrebalancer les limites de l'analyse quantitative des listes de prédicateurs en compilant les documents d'identité trouvés dans les archives du parti pour un nombre limité d'individus qui se sont portés candidats aux élections législatives sur les listes du parti ou qui sont devenus directeurs de la Maison du peuple. Cette analyse croisée a démontré l'importance du niveau d'éducation dans le processus de recrutement des prédicateurs du peuple. Si le niveau d'éducation est généralement important pour la sélection des enseignants de la république, il n'est pas comparable à ce que l'on attend des « *münevvers* » étudiés dans la section précédente.

L'Organisation prédicateur du peuple comprenait des individus ayant un niveau d'éducation relativement élevé qui n'était pas toujours formalisé et, par conséquent, n'aboutissait pas toujours à des diplômes. Si certains prédicateurs du peuple ont pu correspondre à la catégorie des *münevver* décrite par Reşat Feyzi en tant que diplômés d'écoles prestigieuses, beaucoup ont occupé des postes, notamment dans l'administration publique<sup>164</sup> Une forme d'éducation « privée », fréquente chez les descendants de notables provinciaux, permettait aux individus nés à la fin du XIXe siècle d'accéder à certains postes administratifs. Le cas des prédicateurs du

---

<sup>164</sup> Reşat Feyzi [Yüzüncü], « Münevver Kime Denir ? ».

peuple illustre également comment l'accès à l'alphabétisation, permettant aux individus de lire la presse et les brochures du parti, a parfois suffi pour qu'ils deviennent des porte-parole locaux. L'étude de cas de l'Organisation prédicateur du peuple met en lumière la domination des fonctionnaires au sein du CHP à l'époque du parti unique. Malgré les restrictions légales sur les activités militantes des fonctionnaires, qui seront examinées plus en détail dans le chapitre suivant, les fonctionnaires des sections provinciales de divers ministères ont constitué en grande majorité l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple.

Le croisement d'une analyse quantitative de l'Organisation prédicateur du peuple avec des études de cas biographiques, y compris les parcours éducatifs et professionnels des anciens prédicateurs, révèle l'interconnexion et la fluidité entre les titres sociaux et professionnels. La cohorte des prédicateurs du peuple regroupe des notables traditionnels enracinés dans l'éducation religieuse et, de manière significative, dans la propriété foncière en transition par rapport au contrôle agricole. À l'inverse, elle comprenait également des personnes ayant reçu une éducation laïque et ayant servi dans l'État. Dans l'ensemble, le parti sélectionnait les prédicateurs du peuple principalement dans leurs cercles sociaux locaux, souvent composés d'élites ayant des liens inhérents avec l'État. Les instituteurs occupaient généralement des postes dans la fonction publique, tandis que les administrateurs provinciaux occupaient des postes élus ou nommés au sein de l'administration de l'État. Pour l'essentiel, la plupart des prédicateurs occupaient probablement des postes de haut niveau au sein des hiérarchies sociales locales, soit en tant que membres de l'élite administrative, soit en tant que membres de l'élite éduquée, qui se distinguaient par leur niveau d'éducation. L'Organisation comprenait à la fois des « hommes d'État » et des « hommes du lieu ». Elle comprend de nombreux fonctionnaires et notables locaux, dont les échanges entre l'enseignement, l'administration publique et l'entreprise privée illustrent la fluidité des frontières entre ces catégories à l'époque du parti unique.

## **8. Motivations et rétributions de la prêcherie**

Ce chapitre se concentre sur les lettres de candidature et les documents d'identité afin d'examiner les récits de soi et les « carrières politiques » des prédicateurs du peuple. Il étudiera le rôle du prédicateur du peuple dans la trajectoire typique des membres du parti, tout en réfléchissant aux motivations qui ont poussé de nombreux individus à s'engager dans une activité partisane. L'examen des trajectoires sociales et politiques des prédicateurs du peuple

apportera un éclairage supplémentaire sur les relations entre l'État et la société au début de l'ère républicaine, caractérisée par des frontières floues entre le parti et l'appareil d'État.

Au-delà de ses résultats quantitatifs, la base de données des prédicateurs du peuple, examinée dans le chapitre précédent, nous permet de retracer les acteurs individuels. Les listes préparées en 1931, avant la loi sur les noms de famille, ne comprennent pas les noms de famille des prédicateurs. Les listes suivantes (1938) contiennent les noms de famille et des informations supplémentaires sur leur profession et leurs titres sociaux. Si un prédicateur n'a pas changé de résidence entre 1931 et 1938, il figure dans les deux listes. Leur titre professionnel et leur ville de militantisme nous permettent d'identifier plusieurs prédicateurs et de retracer leur biographie à travers les archives du parti.

Ce chapitre utilise des documents d'identité provenant de trois contextes distincts pour étudier les motivations et les récompenses de la prêche pour le CHP pendant son règne de parti unique. La première source de ces documents provient du processus de candidature préparatoire au sein de la structure du parti. D'anciens prédicateurs ont soumis des lettres de candidature au secrétaire général du parti pour se présenter aux élections législatives entre 1939 et 1950. Plus précisément, les candidatures de 1939 et 1943 visaient à participer aux élections législatives, tandis que les candidatures des autres années visaient à pourvoir les sièges vacants à la suite du décès ou de la démission d'un membre du parlement. Ces dossiers de candidature sont conservés dans les archives du parti, classés séparément par province pour les élections législatives et collectivement pour les sièges vacants. Chaque dossier comprend généralement entre 5 et 150 documents.

Les notables locaux qui collaboraient avec l'État et le parti dirigeaient souvent les sections provinciales du parti, accédaient à des postes dans l'administration provinciale ou locale, tels que des postes de gouverneur ou de maire, et travaillaient dans les assemblées provinciales en échange de leur collaboration. Les fruits de leur alliance avec le parti se sont également traduits par une grande mobilité au sein du CHP. De nombreux notables devenus prédicateurs du peuple ont été nommés sur les listes du CHP lors des élections législatives et ont terminé leur carrière politique en tant que députés à la Grande Assemblée nationale turque.

La direction du parti s'est appuyée sur les élites provinciales issues de professions savantes, percevant l'acceptation ou le refus de ses réformes comme une question d'éducation et d'« illumination » (chapitre 5). À leur tour, les élites éduquées attendaient davantage des

transformations sociales apportées par le régime de parti unique que d'autres groupes sociaux, tels que les ouvriers et la paysannerie. À l'instar des membres des maisons du peuple, de nombreux prédicateurs issus de ces groupes professionnels aspiraient à gravir les échelons de la hiérarchie du parti et à atteindre le parlement. Comme l'a remarqué Alexandros Lamprou à propos des directeurs des Maisons du peuple, c'était « un secret de polichinelle » que l'activité partisane à travers les branches provinciales du parti (Organisation prédicateur du peuple) et les sections culturelles était « un tremplin vers le Parlement »<sup>165</sup>. L'accession au Parlement était la dernière étape de la carrière partisane, qui avait commencé dans les sections provinciales.

De nombreux fonctionnaires ont activement travaillé pour des associations et des institutions affiliées au parti, telles que les Maisons du peuple, l'Association aéronautique turque (*Türk Tayyare Cemiyeti*), l'Agence de protection de l'enfance (*Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu*) et le Croissant-Rouge turc (*Kızılay*), se considérant comme membres du parti. Lorsque d'anciens prédicateurs ont posé leur candidature aux élections législatives sur les listes du CHP, ils ont mentionné leur travail dans ces associations comme un signe d'engagement envers le parti et ont donné l'année où ils ont commencé à travailler, par exemple, pour les Maisons du peuple, comme l'année où ils se sont inscrits au parti. Étant donné que la direction du CHP considérait les fonctionnaires comme des « membres naturels du parti », il est possible qu'ils aient été encouragés de manière informelle à participer aux activités culturelles du parti.

Compte tenu de la responsabilité d'intellectuels qui leur est assignée, les prédicateurs du peuple sont actifs dans des domaines allant de la propagande partisane ou du militantisme à la transmission des savoirs, voire à la production de connaissances. Même si leurs origines sociales et leurs trajectoires ne correspondent pas à la représentation du *münevver* observée dans les controverses de la presse, ils deviennent progressivement des intellectuels dans tous les sens du terme. Alors que leur rôle se limitait initialement à la transmission du savoir politique et à son adaptation à différents publics, les campagnes de production de connaissances sur la langue, la littérature et l'histoire nationales soutenues par l'État ont transformé les prédicateurs du peuple en « intellectuels » au sens de producteurs de

---

<sup>165</sup> Alexandros Lamprou, « Local Politics and State-Society Relations : State Officials, Local Elites, and Political Networks in Provincial Urban Centres in the 1930s and 1940s in Turkey », *Turkish Historical Review* 10, no. 02-03 (2020) : 263.

connaissances. Ils prononçaient des discours pour les campagnes électorales, écrivaient des poèmes sur la valeur de la révolution, expliquaient les nouvelles lois et réformes à leur public, enseignaient l'histoire et publiaient leurs discours et articles d'opinion dans la presse locale et les magazines des Maisons du Peuple.

### **9. Les coulisses**

Il y avait un fossé entre l'intention du CHP de mobiliser et de contrôler les prédicateurs du peuple et ses possibilités financières et infrastructurelles pour le faire. Les documents d'inspection produits par le CHP et le ministre de l'intérieur après la création de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple révèlent les graves difficultés du parti à gérer ses sections provinciales. Ces documents comprennent des résumés des rapports préparés par les candidats du CHP avant les élections de 1935 dans chaque province, des correspondances entre le secrétaire général du CHP et diverses maisons du peuple, et le ministre de l'Intérieur avec d'autres ministres sur l'attitude des populations locales à l'égard de l'État et sur les rumeurs qui circulent. L'analyse croisée des documents d'inspection avec l'analyse quantitative du nombre de prédicateurs et des rapports de conférences nous permet de mieux saisir les défis et les limites auxquels les organisations provinciales du parti étaient confrontées derrière la scène.

L'infrastructure est l'une des principales raisons pour lesquelles l'efficacité des sections provinciales du parti varie d'une région à l'autre. L'infrastructure était l'un des problèmes les plus soulignés dans les rapports d'inspection du CHP. La rareté des routes, des bâtiments et des systèmes de communication dans l'économie d'après-guerre de la Turquie républicaine a eu un impact sur l'organisation du CHP dans les régions reculées. Les rapports d'inspection mentionnent fréquemment l'insuffisance des budgets alloués aux Maisons du Peuple par rapport aux attentes du siège du parti. Pour les conférences ou les cérémonies organisées simultanément dans toutes les provinces, le secrétaire général attendait souvent des Maisons qu'elles diffusent la transmission radio depuis Ankara. Cependant, des problèmes de connexion et des radios cassées ont été signalés à plusieurs reprises dans les provinces. À Samsun, par exemple, les membres de la Maison du peuple n'ont pas pu écouter la radio d'Istanbul comme ils en avaient reçu l'ordre en raison d'interférences radio.

Le sous-développement de l'infrastructure des transports dans la Turquie des années 1930 a mis à mal le fonctionnement de la structure du parti-État. Cela a retardé l'arrivée des lettres circulaires contenant l'ordre d'organiser des conférences dans certaines provinces et a empêché



les individus de voyager entre les villes. Ces problèmes d'infrastructure ont entraîné des retards dans la création de facto de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple. De nombreuses provinces n'ont pas envoyé à temps la liste des prédicateurs sélectionnés. Il y avait un décalage entre les ambitions de la direction du parti et ce qui était possible dans les provinces. Même lorsque les sections provinciales du parti se sont conformées aux directives de son secrétaire général, les déficiences infrastructurelles ont eu un impact sur le déroulement des conférences. Le parti a investi dans des haut-parleurs et des radios pour diffuser les conférences au-delà des maisons du peuple et des locaux du parti dans les provinces. Le fonctionnement et la réparation des radios et des haut-parleurs nécessitant des connaissances techniques spécifiques et des ressources financières, leur entretien a perturbé les conférences organisées dans les centres culturels et entravé leur diffusion dans les villes.

Les problèmes d'infrastructure étaient généralisés mais variaient dans le temps et entre les régions. Le niveau d'intégration des Maisons du Peuple avec le reste du pays n'était pas le même dans toutes les provinces. Malgré les rappels de préparer et de mettre à jour les listes de prédicateurs du peuple, certaines provinces et certains districts étaient notablement absents de la documentation de l'Organisation prédicateur du peuple.

Des divergences sont apparues non seulement entre les provinces, mais aussi entre les différents districts d'une même province. Au niveau provincial, certains districts étaient moins militants que d'autres. Le succès ou l'échec d'une section provinciale n'est pas toujours permanent. La plupart des membres étaient des fonctionnaires, et chaque fois qu'un membre actif était nommé dans une autre région et quittait la ville, la Maison du Peuple connaissait un manque d'activité.

L'éloignement de certaines provinces et leur contexte politique spécifique ont ajouté à ces différences. Cette situation était courante en Anatolie orientale et sud-orientale kurde, où le parti avait d'autres priorités, telles que la facilitation de la pénétration de l'État. Le parti a eu du mal à s'organiser dans certaines provinces. Les données figurant dans les rapports de conférence sont incomplètes, ne couvrant que certaines provinces selon les divisions administratives en constante évolution de la Turquie des années 1930. Malgré cela, les rapports révèlent une différence significative entre l'Est et l'Ouest. Il existe notamment des Maisons du peuple actives dans les régions méditerranéennes (Seyhan, Mersin) et dans les régions de la mer Noire (Samsun, Trabzon et Zonguldak). Cette disparité est liée au conflit et à la négligence

à l'égard des populations kurdes de l'Anatolie orientale et du sud-est. La correspondance du parti décrit souvent l'organisation dans ces régions à prédominance kurde comme « inexistante » ou « faible ». Cette situation perdure dans les années 1940. Par exemple, en 1941, la correspondance du parti décrit son organisation à Elaziğ comme « inexistante ».

Ces exemples de rapports dénonçant la mauvaise conduite et la corruption font sans doute partie de toute administration publique. Que ce soit parce qu'ils sont convaincus de faire partie d'une mission politique visant à améliorer la société, ou parce qu'ils intériorisent une disposition bureaucratique tendant à dénoncer les défauts ou les irrégularités, ou encore parce qu'ils sont poussés par des motifs personnels à dénoncer d'autres fonctionnaires, les représentants de l'État dans des types d'États et de régimes très divers se plaignent souvent du mauvais fonctionnement de l'appareil d'État auprès de son administration centrale. Toutefois, dans le cas de la Turquie, le sentiment même d'éloignement - à la fois infrastructurel et idéologique - palpable dans plusieurs contextes anatoliens faisait partie de l'équation.

Malgré le nombre important de prédicateurs sélectionnés dans chaque province et district pour prononcer des discours publics et des conférences dans toute la Turquie, il existe des différences notables entre les régions et entre les districts d'une même province. Les conseils d'administration provinciaux et le secrétaire général du CHP communiquaient fréquemment au sujet des conférences données dans les maisons du peuple. Toutefois, les activités n'ont pas toujours été exécutées de manière adéquate. La situation s'est aggravée au Kurdistan en raison du manque de volonté de la direction du parti d'investir dans des méthodes de construction de l'État plus inclusives et pacifiques en Anatolie orientale et du sud-est. Les restrictions financières ont entraîné des problèmes d'infrastructure et une pénurie de main-d'œuvre qualifiée et volontaire. L'autoritarisme du parti unique a contrasté avec son manque d'implication dans certaines provinces, en particulier en Anatolie orientale. En fin de compte, l'analyse des rapports sur les Maisons du peuple et les sections provinciales du parti a montré que les prédicateurs du peuple étaient sélectionnés parmi ceux qui n'étaient que partiellement capables et partiellement désireux de travailler pour le parti. Même dans ce cas, ils n'ont pas toujours répondu aux exigences du parti.

### III. Enseigner le passé, expliquer le présent

Cette section comprend trois chapitres qui approfondissent l'impact des expériences de guerre sur les biographies et les récits des prédicateurs du peuple. Ces derniers ont souvent parlé de la guerre pour interpréter les réformes transformatrices et souvent radicales du début de l'ère républicaine. En tissant des documents biographiques et des transcriptions de discours envoyés au secrétaire général du parti ou publiés dans la presse locale, y compris le magazine *People's House*, ces chapitres explorent la manière dont les prédicateurs ont navigué et articulé les changements radicaux de l'époque.

Le chapitre 10 nous invite à reconsidérer le début de l'ère républicaine non seulement comme une période de nouveaux départs, mais aussi comme une histoire profondément liée aux conséquences de la guerre et du génocide. Ce chapitre révèle comment l'expérience de la guerre est cruciale dans les récits de vie des prédicateurs du peuple, leur politisation et leurs modes d'explication et de légitimation des profondes transformations politiques et sociales inaugurées par la république. L'examen des lettres de candidature et d'autres documents biographiques des anciens prédicateurs du peuple met en lumière la façon dont leurs trajectoires de vie sont liées à la violence de masse, que ce soit en tant qu'auteurs, spectateurs ou témoins. Pour ce faire, le chapitre présente le cadre analytique qui intègre le passé de la guerre et la violence de masse commanditée par l'État dans les trajectoires sociales et politiques des prédicateurs du peuple. Il examine également les expériences de certains prédicateurs à la fin de l'époque ottomane, y compris leur participation aux efforts de guerre, ce qui permet de mettre en perspective leurs rôles ultérieurs dans la république.

Le chapitre 11 s'intéresse aux prédicateurs d'une région frontalière annexée par l'Empire russe après la guerre russo-ottomane de 1877-1878, qui a changé de mains pendant la guerre turco-arménienne, également appelée front oriental de la « guerre d'indépendance turque ». L'analyse croisée des récits de vie des prédicateurs de Kars et de deux discours sur « l'indépendance et la révolution » (*İstiklal ve İnkılap*) prononcés à Erzurum permettra de réfléchir au rôle de la violence de masse dirigée par l'État dans l'histoire républicaine à ses débuts.

Enfin, le chapitre 12 passe au crible les activités de la Maison du peuple d'Elazığ, en se concentrant sur les conférences prononcées avant et pendant les massacres de Dersim, de mars 1937 à septembre 1938. Ces massacres visaient une population présentée comme indisciplinée

et incompatible avec l'idéal républicain de citoyenneté. Ce chapitre s'interroge sur la signification de prêcher pour le parti et de l'État dans un contexte de violence de masse sponsorisé par l'État. Ce faisant, il révèle les liens entre l'éducation, la discipline, l'intimidation et la persécution dans le cadre de la mission pédagogique du CHP sous le régime du parti unique en Turquie.

Après avoir démontré la proximité corporelle, biographique et intellectuelle des prédicateurs du peuple avec la guerre, le génocide et la violence d'État permanente des débuts de la république, ce chapitre explore la manière dont leurs rôles dans la défense du parti, l'élucidation des valeurs du nouveau régime et la formation de « citoyens acceptables », qui se conformaient à l'idéologie et aux politiques du parti, sont intrinsèquement liés à la violence d'État<sup>166</sup>. Plutôt que de périodiser la transition de la persuasion à la répression, le chapitre révèle comment l'éducation et la persuasion ont convergé avec la répression pour établir et maintenir l'État.

### **10. Prêcher dans la Turquie post-guerre et post-génocidaire**

Ce chapitre part de l'hypothèse que des événements majeurs tels que la Première Guerre mondiale, les génocides reconnus commis par les unionistes (comme le génocide arménien) et d'autres formes de violence de masse dirigée par l'État contre les sujets ottomans pendant et après la guerre sont devenus des structures sociales. Il suggère que les « valeurs et principes » de la république, que les prédicateurs du peuple étaient censés communiquer et enseigner, ne peuvent être transmis sans mentionner ces événements. Il recherche des traces du « génocide » dans les biographies et les militantismes des prédicateurs du peuple afin de relier le « passé sombre » de la Turquie républicaine à sa naissance « lumineuse » et « éclairée ».

Le chapitre 10 débute par une discussion sur le concept de génocide, appliqué à l'étude de la violence de masse avant, pendant et après la Première Guerre mondiale dans l'Empire ottoman. Après avoir évalué diverses approches concernant la qualification du génocide, il propose une définition large, inspirée des études sociologiques et anthropologiques de Martin Shaw et Alexander Hinton. Cette définition est utilisée pour explorer le génocide et ses répercussions. Le chapitre offre une lecture croisée des travaux conceptuels sur le génocide et

---

<sup>166</sup> Füsün Üstel, "Makbul Vatandaş"ın Peşinde : II. Meşrutiyet'ten Bugüne Türkiye'de Vatandaş Eğitimi.

une application pratique de ce concept, perçu comme une « structure » par Talin Suciyan, en mobilisant les travaux de Pierre Bourdieu sur le concept d'habitus.

Cette discussion conceptuelle et méthodologique est suivie d'une analyse visant à démontrer la proximité temporelle des prédicateurs du peuple avec la violence de masse perpétrée durant la Première Guerre mondiale contre les Arméniens, les Assyriens, les Roums et d'autres groupes. La première sous-partie présente plusieurs extraits de lettres de motivation soumises par ces prédicateurs pour faire progresser leur carrière au sein du parti. Ces lettres contiennent des références explicites à leur engagement pour « sauver la patrie » ou pour maintenir l'ordre, souvent au détriment de la vie des Arméniens, Yézidis ou Assyriens.

Le chapitre poursuit en présentant des récits autobiographiques de certains prédicateurs pour démontrer que, bien que ceux-ci aient été trop jeunes pour être des acteurs ou des témoins directs de la violence perpétrée pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, leur socialisation politique au sein d'organisations partisans telles que les prédicateurs du peuple, les maisons du peuple, et les directions provinciales du parti a joué un rôle crucial dans la formation de leurs récits et opinions. Ces récits incluent des réflexions sur le sort de certaines populations et les vertus politiques de décideurs comme Talaat, souvent considéré comme l'architecte du génocide des Arméniens.

Enfin, le chapitre s'intéresse aux extraits des discours prononcés par les prédicateurs du peuple, dans lesquels on peut retracer la mémoire de la guerre et de la violence de masse perpétrée au nom du sauvetage de la patrie ou du maintien de l'ordre. Les exemples tirés des discours de divers prédicateurs, lors de différentes occasions, sont utilisés pour illustrer l'ambiguïté entre les ennemis intérieurs et extérieurs lorsqu'il s'agit de la violence annihilatrice dirigée contre eux.

### **11. La mémoire dans les zones frontalières**

Les exemples fournis jusqu'à présent donnent un aperçu de vagues réminiscences d'expériences de guerre violentes, sans début ni fin clairs et sans ennemis explicitement nommés. Dans ces discours, la figure de l'ennemi intérieur passe des fondamentalistes religieux (« fanatiques ») aux communistes (« ceux qui attisent la lutte des classes ») et à ceux qui menacent l'unité territoriale de la Turquie. La section suivante se concentre sur une province qui a connu des expériences particulièrement violentes pendant la Première Guerre mondiale

et la « guerre d'indépendance », illustrant comment les ennemis à détruire deviennent moins ambigus lorsque l'on se concentre sur une région spécifique et ses acteurs.

Dans ce chapitre, nous nous concentrerons sur la région de Kars et ses prédicateurs afin d'explorer comment les prédicateurs du peuple ont contribué à la transmission de la mémoire et des récits historiques liés à la guerre et au génocide. Nous examinerons également le lien entre la légitimation du nouveau régime et le débat sur la violence de masse, en nous concentrant plus particulièrement sur le cas extrême de Kars. Kars était à l'origine une région frontalière entre les empires ottoman et russe jusqu'à la guerre russo-ottomane de 1877-1878. Après la guerre, la ville a été cédée à la Russie, ce qui a eu un impact considérable sur la population de la région. Par la suite, la province frontalière devint Erzurum et eut un consul russe. Les populations musulmanes des territoires cédés pouvaient émigrer vers l'Empire ottoman ou rester dans leurs villes d'origine<sup>167</sup>.

La première section examinera les biographies de certains prédicateurs de Kars. Les deuxième, troisième et quatrième sections analyseront deux discours prononcés à Erzurum par un prédicateur de Kars, devenu par la suite député de Kars, afin d'explorer plus avant la relation entre la prédication de la république et la prédication du génocide.

Après avoir mis en évidence le caractère trans-impérial des trajectoires des prédicateurs sélectionnés à Kars et leur engagement dans les luttes armées et les conflits territoriaux entre les empires russe et ottoman, puis entre les républiques turque et arménienne, le chapitre se concentre sur deux discours prononcés par Zihni Orhon, un prédicateur de Kars. Ancien membre des Régiments Hamidiye et militaire de haut rang, Orhon a passé sa retraite dans la section provinciale de Kars avant de devenir député du CHP.

Les éléments de la trajectoire sociale d'Orhon permettent de comprendre les aspects ordinaires et exceptionnels de ses conférences. Si ses conférences contiennent des séquences étonnamment violentes concernant le traitement des « gangs » bulgares et arméniens et de ceux qui revendiquent la nationalité kurde, elles ne sont pas complètement déconnectées de l'idiome

---

<sup>167</sup> İlber Ortaylı, « Çarlık Rusyası Yönetiminde Kars », *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 9 (1978) ; Masha Cerovic, « Une Anatolie russe : appropriation, sédentarisation, colonisation de la frontière russo-ottomane après 1877 » (Esperience de l'espace, espace de l'expérience dans les sociétés (post-)ottomanes, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 13 février 2024).

politique ottoman concernant le maintien de la « loi et de l'ordre » à partir du milieu du dix-neuvième siècle. La conférence d'Orhon est plus violente que le reste du corpus. Mais Orhon lui-même a suivi une trajectoire plutôt classique en tant qu'agent militaire et de maintien de l'ordre de la fin de l'Empire ottoman et du début de la Turquie républicaine en Anatolie orientale. Il était l'un des nombreux *anciens combattants* ayant fait carrière dans les sections provinciales du CHP à l'époque du parti unique. Si tel est le cas, pourquoi les autres anciens combattants, dont nous savons qu'il y en a parmi les prédicateurs du peuple, n'ont-ils pas fait preuve de la même franchise dans leurs discours ?

Zihni Orhon s'est trouvé profondément enraciné dans des régions géographiques comme Erzurum et Kars, qui portaient les cicatrices indélébiles de la déportation et du massacre des Arméniens ottomans. En outre, ses liens se sont étendus à des établissements militaires tels que les unités de cavalerie légère, qui ont joué un rôle déterminant dans la répression des insurrections, y compris celles menées par les organisations révolutionnaires arméniennes. Kars, la ville où il a passé ses années de formation pendant les premiers temps de la république, se trouve à cheval sur la frontière avec l'Arménie soviétique. C'est là que l'administration d'après-guerre s'est trouvée confrontée aux questions litigieuses de la gestion ou de la perpétuation du génocide par la disposition des propriétés abandonnées (*emlak-ı metrûke*), de la réinstallation des *muhacirs* (migrants musulmans), et du conflit persistant et de l'intimidation auxquels la population kurde était confrontée.

L'engagement direct de Zihni Orhon sur le front de l'Est pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, ainsi que son service dans les régiments Hamidiye à la fin du XIXe siècle et au début du XXe siècle, augmentent la probabilité de son implication dans la persécution des Arméniens ottomans et la répression brutale des activités de l'Organisation révolutionnaire arménienne, éventuellement en tant qu'auteur. Dans ce contexte, ses souvenirs de l'histoire de la fin de l'Empire ottoman, présentés sous l'angle des ennemis intérieurs, tels que les « bandes bulgares » et les « rebelles arméniens », reflètent le point de vue d'un auteur de crimes.

Les réflexions d'Orhon sur des événements locaux (comme l'incident du « magasin de bouteilles ») et sur l'histoire impériale au sens large (comme le soulèvement d'Ilinden) ont mis en lumière diverses facettes de la manière dont le passé tumultueux a été commémoré dans la République de Turquie. Il a souligné la facilité avec laquelle le passé peut échapper à la mémoire, mais aussi le fait que des aspects cruciaux subsistent si l'on reste attentif. Le récit

qu'il a présenté pour illustrer ce qu'il faut retenir va à l'encontre de la notion dominante de « silence » concernant l'histoire génocidaire de la Turquie et les premières années turbulentes de la république. Comme beaucoup d'autres de son entourage, Orhon a rationalisé et minimisé l'élimination des ennemis politiques et l'a considérée comme une condition nécessaire à l'obtention de l'« indépendance ».

L'accent mis par Zihni Orhon sur les « rebelles » de l'histoire ottomane tardive souligne le fait que le « cadre du terrorisme », souvent examiné dans le contexte du discours négationniste, n'est pas né uniquement des attentats de l'ASALA dans les années 1970. Au contraire, ses racines remontent à des périodes antérieures de l'histoire ottomane et républicaine. Contrairement à ce qu'affirment certains historiens du négationnisme, le génocide arménien n'a pas été une question négligée au cours des premières années de la république.

En reliant les insurgés du passé aux menaces perçues dans la Turquie des années 1930, les souvenirs d'Orhon sur le génocide arménien trouvent un contexte plus approprié dans le cadre d'un « habitus génocidaire » plutôt que dans celui d'un « habitus post-génocidaire ». En effet, la présence imminente de menaces internes et la dévastation et l'anéantissement qui en découlent ne se limitent pas au passé, mais résonnent dans le présent. Le chapitre suivant examinera comment les prédicateurs du peuple ont fait face à la violence permanente lors d'un autre épisode de violence de masse au début de l'ère républicaine, à savoir les massacres de Dersim qui ont eu lieu entre mars 1937 et septembre 1938.

## **12. La guerre sans fin à Dersim**

Les chapitres précédents visaient à réfléchir sur les processus de construction de sens au lendemain de violences massives et ont tenté de montrer comment l'expérience du génocide a influé sur le discours politique transmis par les prédicateurs du peuple. L'expérience de longue durée de la guerre, associée à un génocide et suivie d'un échange violent de populations, a affecté la manière dont les individus affiliés à l'État qui s'identifiaient davantage à la « loi et à l'ordre » de l'État qu'aux pertes civiles, ont perçu ces événements. Ce chapitre se penchera sur la manière dont la violence orchestré par l'État à l'encontre des civils peut influencer la vie et les activités des prédicateurs du peuple sur le terrain.

Ce chapitre se concentrera sur la trace archivistique des conférences publiques organisées sur ordre du CHP dans la province d'Elâziz (alors Elaziğ) pour examiner quels rôles ont été



joués par les prédicateurs du peuple dans un contexte de conflit entre l'État et d'autres groupes armés et de violence extrême perpétrée par l'État au nom de la « loi et de l'ordre. »

### **Conclusion**

Après le début de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, les conférences organisées dans les Maisons du Peuple par les Prédicateurs du peuple ont pris une autre tournure. Bien que l'engagement de l'organisation pour sa cause soit resté inébranlable, il s'est déplacé vers des questions pratiques liées à une éventuelle entrée en guerre ou à une occupation par une puissance étrangère. L'accent mis sur la protection contre des dangers tels que les attaques chimiques contre les soldats existait depuis la Première Guerre mondiale. Cependant, les conférences se concentraient désormais davantage sur la protection des civils et sur la crainte de voir des espions militaires traverser le sol turc en parachute.

La trace archivistique des prédicateurs et des Maisons du peuple commence à se réduire considérablement après 1943, en pleine Seconde Guerre mondiale. En novembre 1945, le président de la République İsmet İnönü annonce le retour au multipartisme. Cela explique le désinvestissement du parti dans les prédicateurs et les maisons du peuple. Les Prédicateurs du peuple disparaissent de la correspondance du parti à partir de 1943. Néanmoins, le secrétaire général annonce la création des « comités de propagande » en mars 1950. Deux mois avant les élections législatives qui conduisent à la fin du régime du parti unique, le parti tente une dernière fois de faire revivre le pouvoir de la parole.

Les comités de propagande, issus des sections locales du parti, avaient beaucoup en commun avec les Prédicateurs du peuple. Chaque comité était composé de trois à cinq personnes. Les personnes sélectionnées devaient être « fougueuses, lucides, capables de s'exprimer librement en public, [celles] qui ont gagné l'amour et le respect de la population et qui peuvent être écoutées ».<sup>168</sup> Le secrétaire général prévoyait d'envoyer « des livres, des brochures, des déclarations, des slogans, des peintures ».<sup>169</sup> A leur tour, les sections locales du

---

<sup>168</sup> « Komite azalarının girgin, uyanık, halk arasında serbest konuşabilen ve bilhassa halkın sevgisini ve saygısını kazanmış, sözü dinlenir üyelere seçilmesine dikkat edilmelidir. » Circulaire du secrétaire général du CHP, 27 mars 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/10-51-14.

<sup>169</sup> « Propaganda de Komitelere işlerinde nasıl hareket olunacağı hakkındaki talimatı ayrıca bildireceğiz. Mahalli teşkilâta propaganda da faydalanılmak üzere risale, kitap, beyanname, vecize, resim

parti envoyait au secrétaire général des listes similaires avec les noms et les identités des propagandistes sélectionnés.

Néanmoins, les comités de propagande se concentraient principalement sur la politique du parti. Leur objectif principal était d'expliquer le programme du parti avant les élections. Les Prédicateurs du peuple jouaient un rôle beaucoup plus large. Il s'agissait notamment de propager les valeurs de la République et les principes de la Révolution. Ils étaient donc des agents de l'État nouvellement fondé et non de simples militants de parti.

Les Maisons du peuple sont restées officiellement en activité jusqu'à ce que le Parti démocratique remporte les élections législatives du 14 mai 1950. Une loi promulguée le 8 août 1951 a transféré tous les biens donnés aux partis politiques à leurs propriétaires d'origine ou au Trésor public, mettant ainsi fin aux activités des Maisons du peuple.<sup>170</sup> Après cette loi, les Maisons du peuple ne pouvaient plus servir de lieu de rencontre principal pour les membres du CHP.

En ce sens, la fin du gouvernement du parti unique a marqué la fin d'un appareil de communication et d'éducation parti-état composé de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et des Maisons du peuple. La possibilité d'utiliser les biens, les ressources et la main-d'œuvre de l'État était vitale pour le CHP afin de maintenir ces deux organisations.

Compte tenu de la similitude de leurs objectifs et des ressources humaines mobilisées par les deux organisations, le processus décisionnel destiné aux Prédicateurs du peuple et aux Maisons du Peuple était assez improvisé et précipité. Néanmoins, tant les Prédicateurs du peuple que les Maisons du Peuple étaient essentiels au fonctionnement du parti « en province

---

ilh. Malzeme gönderilecektir.» Circulaire du secrétaire général du CHP, 27 mars 1950, BCA CHP 490-1-0-0/10-51-14.

<sup>170</sup> « Genel katma ve özel bütçeli dairelerle belediyeler, köyler ve iktisadi devlet teşekkülleri ve müesseseleri tarafından veya umumi menfaatlere hadim derneklerden siyasi partilere bedelsiz terkedilmiş olan gayrimenkul mallar evvelki kayıt sahiplerine iade ve tapu kayıtları bunlar adına resen tashih olunarak ilgililere yazı ile ibraz edilir. İkinci maddenin dışında kalıp da halkevi olarak inşa edilmiş veya inşa edilmekte bulunan veya 1 Mart 1950 tarihine kadar kısmen veya tamamen halkevi olarak kullanılmış veya herhangi bir sosyal maksat veya âmme hizmeti için kullanıma gavesiyle inşa edildiği halde bir siyasi parti namına tecil edilmiş bulunduğu il veya ilçe idare kurulları tarafından tesbit edilmiş olan gayrimenkullerin kayıtlar Devlet adına resen tashih olunarak ilgililere yazı ile haber edilir. » «Resmi daire ve müesseselerin siyasi partilere bedelsiz mal devredemeyeceklerine ve bu daire ve müesseselerle münfesh derneklere ait olup siyasi partilere terkedilmiş olan gayrimenkul mallarla bu partiler tarafından genel menfaatler için yaptırılmış olan binaların sahiplerine ve Hazineye iadesine dair kanun.» ed. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi (11 août 1951, Ankara : *Resmî Gazete*, 8 août 1951).

». Elles permettent au secrétaire général du parti d'encadrer les actions politiques des fonctionnaires circulant en Anatolie par le biais de leurs nominations régulières, d'une part, et de coopter les détenteurs du pouvoir local, d'autre part.

L'investissement accru du parti dans les efforts de communication et de pédagogie trouve son origine dans la crainte de la « réaction » ou de la « contre-révolution » (*irtica*). La direction du parti a défini les différents types d'expression de la dissidence, allant des manifestations de rue et des rumeurs aux organisations politiques, comme un risque de réaction. Ces préoccupations se sont concentrées sur le fait religieux par la surveillance des prédicateurs islamiques et des cafés autour des mosquées. Toutefois, les défis auxquels le parti a été confronté dans les grandes régions d'Anatolie, qui ont conduit à la création de lieux de sociabilités alternatives (Maisons du peuple) et d'orateurs publics alternatifs (Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple), ne peuvent être attribués uniquement à l'islam sunnite, qui est loin d'être la seule religion pratiquée en Turquie.

Les rapports d'inspection produits par le parti, le ministère de l'intérieur et la direction des affaires religieuses ont identifié les lieux de rassemblement religieux et d'autres lieux, tels que les cafés, comme des zones potentielles de préoccupation concernant l'impact de l'oralité. Ces sources ont révélé qu'avant de créer ces deux organisations, la direction du CHP avait pris des mesures importantes pour surveiller et supprimer l'opposition à son autorité en créant l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple. Ces documents montrent l'importance de la sécularisation de l'État, mais aussi ses limites. La direction du parti craignait une réaction à caractère islamique. Cependant, les expressions de nationalisme divergeant de la doctrine d'Atatürk, les mouvements politiques concurrents et les réactions généralisées contre la présence accrue de l'État par le biais de projets d'infrastructure, de recensements de la population et d'impôts constituaient également des sources d'inquiétude.

Il y a une continuité entre la surveillance du domaine religieux avec la création de la Direction des affaires religieuses - qui envoie des échantillons de sermons aux prédicateurs islamiques et réorganise les écoles de formation des prédicateurs islamiques dans les années 1920 - et la fondation de centres culturels qui permettent la mobilisation d'orateurs publics partisans. La logique commune aux mesures concernant les prédicateurs islamiques et des prédicateurs du peuple était l'accent mis sur l'oralité. Néanmoins, les prédicateurs du peuple ne peuvent pas être considérés uniquement comme des alternatives aux prédicateurs

islamiques. Ils constituaient également une alternative aux moyens de communication orale coûteux et moins accessibles, tels que la radio et la communication écrite, en raison de leur portée limitée due aux faibles taux d'alphabétisation. L'organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple et les maisons du peuple ont représenté des investissements financiers impressionnants, mais ont permis de réduire les coûts grâce à la vaste mobilisation des fonctionnaires.

Concernant les fêtes révolutionnaires et autres méthodes de propagande utilisées depuis la Révolution française, le « transfert de sacralité » est une thèse intéressante et souvent répétée.<sup>171</sup> La thèse du « transfert de sacralité » suggère que l'éducation politique par le biais de conférences publiques et de cérémonies nationales est un truisme. De nombreux termes utilisés pour discuter de la communication politique et des cérémonies, tels qu'orateur, prédicateur, rhétorique, éloquence, etc. Les termes orateur, prédicateur, rhétorique, éloquence, conférence, fête et festival ont des origines religieuses et sont liés au sacré. Par conséquent, la plupart des types d'éducation politique, de communication ou de liturgie peuvent être considérés comme une forme de transfert de sacralité. Toutefois, cette perspective ne nous aide pas à saisir le large éventail de questions qui ont incité la direction du parti à mobiliser un grand nombre d'individus pour l'éducation politique et populaire à ce moment précis de l'histoire républicaine. Au mieux, elle ne fait que reprendre les arguments de l'historiographie moderniste, qui réduit chaque réforme ou « révolution », ainsi que les réactions qu'elle a suscitées, à une question de sécularisation.

Parallèlement à la lutte contre les rumeurs et les suggestions dangereuses diffusées par des dignitaires religieux habiles en paroles, l'Organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple s'inscrivait dans une tendance transnationale plus large, puisqu'elle a été créée en observant les développements en Russie soviétique et en Italie fasciste dans les années 1920. Les tentatives turques d'institutionnaliser la propagande ont précédé celles des Nazis. Les tentatives turques d'institutionnalisation de la propagande ont précédé les tentatives nazies, que la presse nationale alignée sur le parti a ensuite célébrées comme des politiques judicieuses.

---

<sup>171</sup> Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire, 1789-1799*. Pour une critique de ce cadre, voir : Nicolas Mariot, « Qu'est-ce qu'un « enthousiasme civique » ? ». Pour l'utilisation du concept dans le cas de la Turquie républicaine, voir Sara-Marie Demiriz, *Vom Osmanen zum Türken : Nationale und staatsbürgerliche Erziehung durch Feier-und Gedentage in der Türkischen Republik (1923-1938)*.

L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple n'était pas l'adaptation de quelque chose qu'ils avaient observé à l'étranger (lire « l'Occident ») et qu'ils avaient adapté au contexte turc. Il s'agissait d'une tentative sincère de former des porte-parole locaux sur la base de l'expérience du Comité de l'Union et du Progrès (CUP), des Foyers turcs et des Comités directeurs réunis à l'époque de l'armistice. Cependant, la direction du parti a vérifié les nouveaux développements dans certains pays voisins en matière d'éducation populaire, d'organisations de jeunesse et de propagande.

Une périodisation plus nuancée permet d'analyser le régime de parti unique du CHP en identifiant le tournant de la révolte de Menemen et la brève existence du parti libéral. Ces événements ont conduit la direction du parti à investir davantage dans l'éducation et la persuasion des masses pour compléter des moyens de gouvernement moins inclusifs et moins pacifiques. L'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple et les Maisons du peuple étaient des projets ambitieux visant à cibler et à éduquer les adultes, complétant ainsi l'endoctrinement des futures générations de jeunes à l'école.

Les prédicateurs du peuple tenaient des discours publics sur des sujets allant de l'histoire nationale et littéraire aux concepts politiques, en passant par les droits des femmes, la santé publique, la photographie, la peinture, le théâtre et l'entraînement militaire. Les principaux responsables politiques des réformes éducatives du début de la République ont également joué un rôle important dans la formation de la pédagogie populaire. Ces réformes ont été présentées du point de vue de l'élite fondatrice de la Turquie, sur la base d'études sur les organisations de jeunesse, la formation des citoyens adultes et les mesures de propagande, principalement en Russie, en Allemagne et en Italie. Cependant, elles ont également tracé les traditions oratoires et rhétoriques existantes.

L'étude de cas des Prédicateurs du peuple et les conférences publiques tenues dans les Maisons du peuple montrent la relation entre la pédagogie et la rhétorique. En tant que pédagogues de la république, les Prédicateurs du peuple étaient souvent des enseignants au sens littéral du terme. Mais ils étaient aussi les conteurs traditionnels, les savants et les érudits qu'il fallait écouter parce qu'ils étaient « habiles en paroles » ou en « éloquence » (*lógios*).

Les talents oratoires des Prédicateurs du peuple étaient liés à leur statut social. Leurs compétences pédagogiques découlaient de l'éducation. Certaines professions, en particulier celles qui requièrent une éducation supérieure, étaient privilégiées par rapport à d'autres.

Néanmoins, les sections provinciales du parti ont coopté des personnes ayant un niveau d'éducation inférieur, comme les propriétaires terriens, ou des types d'éducation moins souhaitables, comme les prédicateurs islamiques et les muftis, afin d'atteindre le nombre nécessaire dans chaque province. L'inclusion de ces personnes résultait des difficultés rencontrées pour encourager les gens à consacrer leur temps libre à travailler pour le parti. Tout au long de la période du parti unique, de nombreux rapports ont souligné les problèmes liés à la revitalisation des sections provinciales. Les membres des familles notables locales (souvent des propriétaires terriens) ont assumé une grande responsabilité dans la gestion des sections provinciales du parti et ont pris la parole au nom du parti. Par ailleurs, les dignitaires religieux tels que les prédicateurs islamiques et les muftis n'apparaissaient que sur les listes. Leurs discours ne figuraient pas dans les rapports renvoyés au parti, à la presse locale ou aux publications de la maison du peuple.

Le groupe professionnel le plus important au sein des prédicateurs du peuple était constitué par les enseignants et les fonctionnaires de rang inférieur travaillant sous l'autorité des gouverneurs de province et de district, et des inspecteurs généraux en cas d'état d'exception. Ces petits fonctionnaires sont devenus des « intellectuels de province » (*taşra münevverleri*) grâce aux efforts des dirigeants républicains. Ils ont incarné l'idéal des « éclairés » (*münevverlik*) mis en avant par le secrétaire général du CHP et les rédacteurs d'opinion/députés/littérateurs alignés sur le parti en devenant plus visibles publiquement, en publiant dans la presse locale, en écrivant des romans et des nouvelles pour les concours littéraires organisés par le parti, et en prêchant la république dans les provinces.

Pour un intellectuel « de province », prendre la parole au nom du parti pour diffuser les valeurs du régime et éclairer la population était essentiel pour faire avancer sa carrière politique dans le cadre du régime de parti unique. Leurs candidatures à l'Assemblée nationale, qui retracent rétrospectivement leur expérience au sein de l'organisation du parti, montrent que beaucoup d'anciens prédicateurs ont mentionné leurs conférences et leur prise de parole partisane pour occuper une place plus importante au sein du parti. Certains ont mentionné les activités politiques qu'ils jugeaient particulièrement pertinentes, telles que l'appartenance au CUP, la participation à la Grande Guerre et, dans de rares cas, la perpétration de ce que l'on peut considérer comme des crimes de guerre pour, disaient-ils, « sauver la patrie ». Ces demandes ont montré que la continuité entre les « Unionistes » et les « Kémalistes » n'était pas

seulement une question de réseaux sociaux, politiques et intellectuels des dirigeants du parti, mais aussi des cadres inférieurs qui travaillent dans les provinces sans jouer un rôle considérable dans les processus d'élaboration des normes et de prise de décision.

Les avantages de la prédication au nom du parti dépendaient du point de départ de chaque individu, et donc de la source de distinction sociale qui conduisait les conseils administratifs provinciaux du parti à les sélectionner. Le genre, le niveau d'éducation, les titres scolaires, la propriété foncière et les autres liens locaux qui découlent souvent de la propriété foncière étaient les sources les plus perceptibles de distinction sociale pour les prédicateurs du peuple.

Dans la plupart des provinces, il existait une continuité palpable entre la cooptation des détenteurs du pouvoir provincial par la fin de l'Empire ottoman et le début de la Turquie républicaine. Toutefois, certaines provinces ont connu une discontinuité. Les provinces kurdes, marquées par un conflit accru avec l'État républicain, ont nommé moins de notables locaux. En suivant la logique observée par Michael Meeker, les notables locaux ont obtenu des postes administratifs locaux en guise de récompense politique. Ils ont également obtenu un accès facilité à l'usurpation de biens à la suite des processus éradicationnistes en Anatolie.

Les récompenses ne sont pas automatiques. D'anciennes alliances, comme la proximité avec Enver Pacha, risquent d'entraver la carrière de certains fiers héros nationaux, comme Hüseyin Talınlı et Fahrettin Erdoğan à Kars. Les occasions manquées en raison de problèmes familiaux peuvent bloquer quelqu'un qui a déjà eu la chance de siéger à l'Assemblée nationale dans les murs des maisons du peuple (Ahmet Muhtar Göğüş).

La visibilité publique accrue des femmes et les droits politiques nouvellement obtenus ont eu un impact sur la composition des Prédicateurs du peuple, car la création de l'Organisation des Prédicateurs du peuple a favorisé la carrière politique de certaines femmes. Malgré leur pourcentage relativement faible au sein de l'Organisation des prédicateurs du peuple, les femmes semblent avoir une plus grande mobilité sociale qui peut être plus facilement liée à leurs activités pour le parti dans les provinces.

L'évaluation de l'histoire des prédicateurs du peuple et des conférences tenues dans les maisons du peuple dans une perspective d'après-génocide et d'après-guerre a apporté de nouvelles perspectives à l'historiographie de la Turquie républicaine. Il n'était pas surprenant de trouver des traces du génocide et de la guerre prolongée dans les premières années de la République, pas plus qu'il n'était inattendu que ces traces influencent le discours politique

expliquant les réformes du régime nouvellement établi. Toutefois, les traces du génocide et de la violence d'État permanente pendant les années de fondation de la République et les deux décennies de régime à parti unique ont souvent été considérées séparément des approches plus « douces », plus inclusives de l'État. Par exemple, les études sur le Kurdistan turc ont mis l'accent sur la violence d'État, tandis que les recherches sur les régions où le parti unique du CHP était mieux accepté se sont concentrées sur la construction culturelle de la nation. Cette thèse vise à faire le lien entre ces deux aspects de la construction de l'État-nation.

L'examen de la manière dont les prédicateurs du peuple ont transmis la république au public révèle que les hypothèses de silence sur le génocide dans les premières années de la république, ou la croyance que le génocide n'était pas un problème, étaient erronées. La violence de masse commanditée par l'État a influencé tous les aspects de la vie des prédicateurs du peuple, depuis les salles de conférence et les chaires qu'ils ont utilisées jusqu'à leurs trajectoires individuelles. Le concept d'indépendance, souligné par Recep Peker et les conférences sur l'indépendance et la révolution organisées dans les maisons du peuple, ne peut être compris sans aborder la lutte contre les ennemis intérieurs et extérieurs. Ce thème est si central que les prédicateurs du peuple expliquent même les réformes qui n'ont pas de lien apparent avec la guerre par des métaphores guerrières.

Le langage des prédicateurs du peuple reflétait la violence destructrice à l'encontre de certains citoyens au début de la période républicaine. Zihni Orhon, prédicateur basé à Kars, a parlé de vengeance alors qu'il discutait d'un sujet sans rapport avec le sujet. Il n'a pas pu s'empêcher de menacer les Kurdes dès qu'il a prononcé le mot « Kurde ». Le langage de Zihni Orhon portait les traces de la violence destructrice du passé récent. Orhon lisait les réformes et les innovations du début de la république à travers le filtre de l'ordre public et de la sécurité. Comme il a été un agent important de la violence étatique sous l'Empire ottoman et dans le nouveau régime établi par la République de Turquie, l'histoire de sa vie mêlée à la violence d'État peut expliquer la violence et la brutalité de son discours.

Cependant, les autres prédicateurs du peuple, ceux qui sont beaucoup plus jeunes que Zihni Orhon et qui ne sont pas des cadres militaires de haut rang, poursuivaient le discours politique qui a contaminé leur langue contre les « autres » de la République turque. L'inspection générale a préparé les membres de la Maison du peuple d'Elazığ au massacre de Dersim, qui s'est déroulé sous leurs yeux, par le biais de conférences publiques. Les membres de la maison du peuple et



les prédicateurs du peuple ont été protégés contre la violence exterminatrice perpétrée contre d'autres civils. Ils ont assisté au massacre et commémoré les « martyrs » de l'État. Ils se sont fait la leçon sur ce que signifiait défier l'État. Ils ont posé avec des « rebelles » capturés devant le buste d'Atatürk. En faisant tout cela, les intellectuels « de province » ont participé à la violence de l'État.

Maurus Reinkowski a examiné l'évolution des politiques de cooptation (*istimalet*) en répression (*tedip, tenkil, imha*) au XIXe siècle dans l'empire ottoman.<sup>172</sup> D'une part, cette historicisation peut être interprétée à travers le prisme des prédicateurs du peuple comme la disparition de la cooptation et son remplacement par la répression, l'État ayant abandonné les stratégies de persuasion et de cooptation d'une population spécifique à partir d'un certain seuil. Le champ d'activité des prédicateurs du peuple au début de la période républicaine est précieux pour montrer que l'appropriation, la répression et, le cas échéant, la persécution et l'extermination, allaient de pair.

En raison de leur nature redondante et probablement peu attrayante, les traces écrites des discours publics et des conférences prononcés pendant le régime du parti unique ont souvent été négligées malgré leur présence remarquable dans les archives du Parti républicain du peuple. Cette thèse avait pour but de classer ces conférences et d'en donner une vue d'ensemble thématique. Néanmoins, certains choix ont dû être faits pour délimiter les discours et les extraits de discours à étudier. Puisque l'objectif principal de la thèse était l'intersection entre l'éducation-persuasion et la coercition-la violence physique dans la construction de la République de Turquie, de nombreuses conférences intéressantes trouvées dans les archives et les publications du parti ont été laissées de côté. Cette thèse s'est uniquement concentrée sur les conférences, les célébrations et les discours de commémoration de l'histoire nationale, les concepts politiques liés à l'histoire nationale, tels que l'« indépendance » et la « révolution », et les concepts sociopolitiques liés à l'histoire nationale, tels que l'éducation, la persuasion et la contrainte et les catégories sociopolitiques telles que les « éclairés » (*münevver*) et le « peuple » (*halk*). Ces mêmes sources pourraient faire l'objet de recherches futures sur l'évolution des

---

<sup>172</sup> Maurus Reinkowski, « The State's Security and the Subjects' Prosperity : Notions of Order in Ottoman Bureaucratic Correspondance (19th Century) », 210.

droits des femmes, la relation entre la représentation de la masculinité et le nationalisme, l'histoire littéraire, la santé publique ou l'éducation militaire, pour n'en citer que quelques-unes.