

MODERNISM AND THE PEASANTRY: THE CASE OF TURKEY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **MODERNISM AND THE PEASANTRY: THE CASE OF TURKEY**

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The Turkish Republican Revolution followed the National Struggle for the independence of the remaining Turkish-Moslem sections of the former Ottoman State. The radical nature and the sudden occurrence of the following revolution caused the periphery of the country to accept all novelties only with reluctance and resistance. Indeed, the Turkish peasant does possess some collective traits, which are possible to distinguish him from town and city and even town dwellers. Turkey has been considered an agrarian state until recent times, on one hand. But on the other hand the country with her young population and under new influences is undergoing fast transformations in the direction of urbanization. The roots embedded in traditions; in any case; continue to operate, sometimes openly and sometimes implicitly and come to surface whenever the occasion presents itself. The Peasant origins of the country must be grasped well if Turkey is to be understood properly in its entirety.

At the end of this thesis work, the starting hunch foreseeing a considerable decrease in the levels of modernity between the contemporary rural and urban sections of Turkey in average, with respect to the early years of the republic, appears to have been confirmed.

**Key Words:** Village, Peasant, Rural, Tradition, City-dweller .

## ÖZ

### MODERNİZM VE KÖYLÜLÜK: TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ

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Önceki Osmanlı Devleti'nin geri kalan Türk-Müslüman kesimlerinin bağımsızlığı yolunda verilen Millî Mücadele'yi, Türk İnkılâbı (devrimi) izledi. Devrimin köktenci niteliği ve hızla vuku buuşu, ülkenin çevre kesiminin, bütün yenilikleri ancak gönülsüzce ve dirençle karışık surette kabulüne sebebiyet verdi. Gerçekten Türk köylüsü, kendisini, şehirlilerden ve hattâ kasabalılardan ayırt etmeyi mümkün kılan bazı toplu özelliklere sahip bulunmaktadır. Türkiye; bir yandan, yakın zamanlara kadar, bir tarım ülkesi addedilmiştir; ancak öte yandan ülke, genç nüfusu ile ve yeni tesirler altında, kentleşme doğrultusunda hızlı dönüşümler kaydetmektedir. Her hâlükârda geleneklere bağlı kökler bazen örtülü bazen açık surette hayatîyetini sürdürmekte, icabında yüzeye vurmaktadır. Türkiye'nin bütünlüğünün lâıykıyla anlaşılabilmesi için ülkenin köylülük kökenlerinin iyi kavranması lâzım gelir.

Bu tez çalışmasının sonunda; hâlihazırda modernlik açısından, Türkiye'nin kırsal ve kentsel kesimlerinde mevcut ortalama düzey farkının, cumhuriyetin ilk senelerine nazaran kayda değer derecede azalmış olduğunu öngören başlangıçtaki sayıltı (\*) doğrulanmış gözükmeğdir.

**Anahtar Kelimer:** Köy, Yoksul Köylü, Kırsal, Gelenek / Anane, Kentsoylu / Şehirli.

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\* “Hipotez” yerine bu kelimeyi kullandığımız gibi; (köy çocuğı olmakla iftihar eden) merhum *Prof. Dr. H. Selâhattin Ertürk*’ün ihdas ettiğı “denence” kelimesini de kullanabilirdik. s.ç.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate rural Turkey as a whole and evaluate its cumulative success in the race of modernization. The study falls into the large scope of rural sociology.

*“Rural sociology is sociology as especially applied to the phenomena of rural society” (Anderson’s definition in Fairchild 1961: 303). It emerged after the Second World War (but in America in 1920’s) because of a necessity to recognize people involved in agriculture better. Moreover it is characterized more by its domain of action rather than its theoretical undertones (Boudon et al. 1997: 198).*

*It was Robert Redfield who first considered the original structure of peasant societies in 1956. But Alexander V. Chayanov [1888-1937] had distinguished the peasant economy from the capitalist economy in the beginning of the twentieth century. Peasant societies conserving their traits in Europe (\*) resisted to be incorporated by industrial capitalism until mid-twentieth century, whereas in the third world (\*\*) peasant population is continuing to grow (H.M. in Boudon et al. 2005: 175-176). Rural sociology owes its foundations to human geography (P. Georges in Borlandi et al. 2005: 614).*

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\* In America during the same years, the poverty-stricken Oklahoma farmers, too, were forced to move to California to work as wagers on strangers’ fruit gardens but they were different from industrial workers all the same, as depicted by *John Steinbeck* in his unforgettable work, *The Grapes of Wrath*. In his novel *The Tobacco Road* and other stories *Erskine Caldwell* also talks about farm owners in strict poverty who, nevertheless, stubbornly stay aloof from integration onto the capitalist urban world. s.ç.

\*\* As *Lacoste* (1965: 14) says so; the term “Third World” introduced by *A. Sauvy* eventually was to replace the former phrase “proletarian nations” of *A. J. Toynbee*. It is more meaningful basically because underdeveloped countries are not populated by exploited masses alone but also some very powerful exploiter circles themselves.

### 1.1. The Long Way to the Settlements

The first settlements of mankind were in small units equivalent to today's villages. Those came into being when the human groupings gave up their nomadic life style and took up a settled life style. Eventually some of those units, namely the distinguished ones, were to develop into towns and cities. Some did not grow, but on the contrary, declined in importance. Many disappeared from the earth's surface due to wars; massacres; natural disasters like epidemics, fires, earthquakes, floods, volcano eruptions, drought. New ones were continually established.

The world history was to witness a big revolutionary process after the establishment of the first settlements onwards. The means of production began to change from hunting-gathering and stock-raising to agriculture. This was a drastic move towards the building of higher civilizations. Along with a change in occupations for a living; new ideas, value systems and mentalities came into being.

[For instance] *the holiness of private property is one aspect of agrarian societies. Here the surrounding things one possesses, handles, and keeps at his disposal involve a moral responsibility and priority. This undisputable confirming and evaluation of property, along with a will for stability, which has a memory of centuries, and finally the eagerness of inferiority under a general high and impossible-to-affect order, crystallizes the order of law. In the previous hunting culture this concept had not formed yet. In the industrial culture it is not even challenged any more. So, as Heichelheim puts it, the order of law is the deciding policy of mankind since his passage into peasant life style* (paraphrased from Gehlen 1957: 72).

A movie about the Apache chief Geronimo is demonstrative about the importance attributed to certain concepts by nomadic and settled people, separately. Geronimo first reluctantly agrees to come to the reservation in custody of blue uniformed men. The white men praise the new environment where survivability is under the guarantee of the government. Food is simply given here.

There is no need to go after buffaloes endangering one's life for a chunk of meat, to begin with. But the chief shows his first reaction when the canteen attendant makes an ink mark in his palm, which indicates that he had received his first food ration here. He shouts that nobody can stamp him as if he were an animal. He quickly washes away the ink mark from his palm, defiantly.

Soon after, he runs into a former comrade who is married and seemingly content with the new conditions in his tent. The man seems enthusiastic about growing corn and tries to convey his hopes about farming, to his previous chief. Geronimo just gives him a disappointed cold look. Obviously dealing with land cultivation is not his business. It is a demeaning role for a warrior!

It turns out that the chief influences the new farmer rather than *vice versa*. They desert the camp together and put up a fight against "Mr. Washington".

For all his courage and charisma, he is an illiterate man and even unaware of the name of the big white chief — then Grover Cleveland (1837-1908)— attributing him the name of his dwelling, which he vaguely remembers from some hearsay.

{The resistance of the Taurus Turcoman *Avshar* nomads in early 1880s against *Derviş Paşa*'s army, resembles their case a lot. This was when the *rapsode* (epos-poet) *Dadaloğlu* cried "The decree (*ferman*) belongs to the Sultan; but the mountains belong to us!" They too opposed sedentary <sup>(\*)</sup> life in their time.

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\* The decision to settle the nomads was taken in order to tax them and recruit soldiers from among them, more easily. At the time the former professional armies were long obsolete just like in much of Europe and Tsarist Russia. The compulsory (draft) system was adapted, instead. An anonymous anecdote allegedly originating from the late Ottoman times, is very explanatory: When the gendarme officers (*zaptiye zâbitleri*) came to an eastern landlord for the third time to conscript a few of his numerous sons again, the man finally exploded: "Go tell your Sultan not to wage wars so often, relying on *my* phallic potency!" s.ç.

In his novel titled *The Lords of Akchasaz: Murder in the Ironsmiths Market*, author Yaşar Kemâl names the hero, the last genuinely feudal bey “Derviş”. *He landlord’s grandfather had given him the name of the hostile but nevertheless respected Ottoman general*}.

Nevertheless Geronimo is under the cast of a beautiful Indian girl he had spotted and talked to. The young girl is doing a teaching job on the reservation. She is literate! The heroic chief captures her in a raid and takes her with him. He tells her that their son should learn how to read and write. Being able to read is impressive for him too.

Today the Indian, at least, if he / she is willing to integrate with the mainstream White-Protestant-Anglo-Saxon society, in a far more advantageous state than Blacks, Hispanics and Asians in the struggle for upper mobility. In a course I had attended in Texas, one of my Special English Teachers, Miss Sarah, was half-blood. Her father was a white naval officer and her mother a Cheyenne woman. (Her mother had chosen to become a social anthropologist, a very suitable education considering her tribe as a golden opportunity for her term papers). Miss Sarah was a serious, hard-working, self-disciplined teacher and before dismissing her Friday classes she always said “don’t bring shame on your name!” insinuating the necessity of proper behavior on weekend, downtown.

## **1.2. An Overview of Rural Sociology**

*“General sociology concerns itself with properties and interactional relationships common to all social phenomena, whereas special sociologies limit themselves to a special class of phenomena chosen for intensive study. Rural sociology can thus be classed as a special sociology. In its broadest definition, rural sociology is the study of human relationships in the rural environment. This definition correctly implies that it is no more and no less than sociology of life in a rural setting. This fact has led T. Lynn Smith to suggest that the systematized knowledge of rural social relationships could more aptly be called ‘the sociology of rural life’ ” (Bailey & Bertrand 1955: 9).*

*Traditional societies are, above all, agrarian societies, in which agricultural products are predominant in importance. They therefore are rural societies or peasant societies. City-people are in minority and peasants, who deal with agriculture, constitute the majority. Artisans, commerce, cities, intellectual activities in such a society concern only a minority of the population. In comparison to modern societies, traditional ones are also called “routine societies” since economic activities are very dependant on habits, customs and religion. Concepts like productivity or rationality are not of primary significance but are limited to the low level of available technology. Those societies are also considered “frozen societies” since change and evolution are too slow. A “dual society” is one on whose bosom modern and traditional sectors overlap (Baud et al. 2003: 397).*

*It is possible to say that rural sociology can be firstly considered as an auxiliary discipline of sociology concerned about the investigation of life in village. Secondly, it seems reasonable to regard rural sociology as a field of social ecology. Finally rural sociology is a discipline enabling us to analyze certain secondary social systems functioning outside urban centers (Kurtkan-Bilgiseven 1988: 5).*

#### **1.1.1. Rural Sociology in Turkey**

*Within two basic sociological trends represented by [Prince] Sabahattin Bey and Ziya Gökalp, the village occupies a special location as a topic of research. Though it is hard to claim that Gökalp wrote directly about villages, village plays an important role in grounding his theory which differentiates between culture and civilization. For Gökalp cities were Ottomanized while villages stayed far from this process of Ottomanization and continued to keep the Turkish culture (Ertürk 2008: 186).*

*Nurettin Şâzi Kösemihal gave the first courses under the name “Rural and Urban Sociology” in 1962-1963 academic year in Istanbul University (Ertürk 2008: 189).*

*Other scholars like Muzaffer Sencer, Oya Sencer, Cavit Orhan Tütengil, Mehmet Ali Şevki, Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Selâhattin Demirkan also busied themselves with rural sociology (Ertürk 2008: 191).*

*Behice Boran’s work titled “Researches on Social Structure” based on research in Manisa villages, Niyazi Berkes’ study titled “A Research About some Villages of Ankara”, some social psychology research carried out in Afyon region by Muzaffer Şerif Başoğlu as well as Pertev Naili Boratav’s collection of common folklore constitute efforts, which, though not referred to very often, preserved their influence for a long time (Kayalı 1994: 118).*

*Under the conditions prevailing after the Second World War, the village stopped being the unique support of the existence and the main source compelling the development, for Turkey. Instead, it came to be regarded as the unit of the society hindering participation in new developments (Ertürk 1997: 82).*

*According to Kemâl Karpat, the small town represents a social order which is grounded on top of the village and gains improvement by exploiting the village; so it is as individualistic and even as rebellious as it can ever be. In order to keep its established economic and social domination over the village, the small town is also excessively conservative. We indeed share this view (Tütengil 1983: 56-57).*

*Karpat's views are in parallel with those of an Italian scholar regarding the equivalent exploiters of the South Italian (Montegrano) peasantry:*

*“The real enemies of the peasant, according to Carlo Levi [he wrote his book based on observations in his exile in mid 1930's], are ‘those who cut them off from any hope of freedom and a decent existence; and those enemies are to be found among the middle class village tyrants. This morally degenerate class lives off bastardized traditions of feudal rights’” (Banfield 1958:28).*

*A sort of populism directed towards the village and its problems came to be known as the movement of devotion to peasantry (köycülük) (Tütengil 1983: 77).*

*In this context, some excitement was pumped into the movement like the march of agriculture written by Behçet Kemâ Çağlar: We plough, we plant and we harvest; all trustful for the future / All gains of the nation must go to the budget of the nation / We are gathered around the voice of the Chief Farmer<sup>(\*)</sup> Atatürk / At the Front of agriculture against a fight with the soil. (“Sürer eker biçeriz güvenip ötesine / Milletin her kazancı milletin kesesine / Toplandık Başçıftıçî'nin Atatürk'ün sesine / Toprakla savaş için ziraat cephesine”).*

*Intellectual interest in the lot of villagers is not excluded to scholarly works in rural sociology (and anthropology and some other close disciplines) but also pertain to literary works. The first novel dealing with the village is *Karabibik* by Nâbizade Nâzım. The plot occurs in a village of Antalya. Yakup Kadri's and*

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<sup>\*</sup> While establishing his own farm near Ankara (Gâzi Farm), Atatürk also assumed the title of Chief Farmer as a role model, in his very person. In late 1930's he donated this farm (along with some others elsewhere like Yalova) to the state. Those farms later lived on as “state production farms”. s. ç.

*Reşat Nuri's* novels are said to be somewhat superficial regarding the village themes. *Fakir Baykurt* and *Mahmut Makal* are prominent exclusive authors about village life along with other less famous writers.

Next to *Makal* and *Karaosmanoğlu*; Ülken (1950: 114) also mentions a book titled “*Küçük Paşa*”, written by a former minister of interior, *Ebubekir Hâzım*. Ülken praises the book as a strictly realistic literary description of the central Anatolian villages.

*Hacıeminoğlu* (March 1964: 22) says: *We witness a new era regarding villages, after the Second World War. In this social realistic trend, which is a reaction to the former romantic approach, it is again not possible to find the true village; because, this literature attempts to reflect the village under circumstances far worse than they are. We must nevertheless concede that even those exaggerations have served the purpose of bringing the village on the spotlight.*

## **1.2. Rural Vestiges are not Easy to Eradicate**

This work is an attempt to investigate the Turkish villages between early republican and contemporary times. The topic is interesting not only academically, but also for probable practical purposes regarding suggestions for rural development.

Turkey had over thirty-five thousand <sup>(\*)</sup> villages. The majority of people lived on the country side until recent times. Sometimes even contrasts between sheer provincial cities and metropolitan centers are also conspicuous enough to consider for academic purposes.

*Although the rural conditions that assign the family and child (as labor force) a special meaning are still valid in Turkey, it is also true that the social structure is quickly changing and attributing some new changes to the family. Turkish society has been undergoing a structural change in the last thirty years. Internal migrations and urbanization have caused the rural part to dissolve, and thus the urban population is becoming more active. The most*

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\* In december 2012 a new law instigated 13 more big city municipalities, whereby over seventeen thousand villages acquired the official status of neighborhoods (*mahalle*) of urban regions. (In March 2013 Ordu became the 30th big city by a further law).

*typical reflections of the structural changes are seen on the formations and functions regarding the family (Kabacalı 1999 10-11).*

*Certain research work about village societies constitute a part of social structure investigations, which in turn are defied as one of the basic topics in social sciences. Even if we assume that village societies will stepwise change and eventually disappear altogether; works on social structure in relation to big and small societies will continue to occupy a predominant place in academic interest. After all, the insistence of certain village-like traits even in the most industrialized countries is proof that small societies preserving such traits are destined to be ever present (Saran 1984: 7).*

It is a fact that Turks constitute a young nation, which is prone to very fast social changes. Villages had been diminishing ever since decades by literally pouring their inhabitants onto urban centers. This continuing process is causing many difficult problems to be coped with in the town centers.

This tremendous phenomenon of change by no means, however, reduces the importance of analyzing and understanding the villages and related social dynamics. On the contrary, the undergoing changes render it more necessary to pay attention to studies of rural sociology.

The impact of the countryside upon the urban world is vigorous and manifold. Firstly, the economic effects can never be negated. All raw materials go everywhere from the heart of the countryside: Food is produced on the rural section and delivered to the towns and cities.

As Prof. Dr. M. C. Ecevit put it during an interview, “the *lasagna* devoured at the most luxurious restaurants of the state capital are prepared from the wheat flours of the sown fields”. Many commodities like the leather of the shoes worn by the city-dwellers originate from the peasant’s livestock. Carpets covering house floors and hanging on house walls find their way there from the weaving looms of village females. Ornamental furniture decorating and facilitating life in apartment buildings merely represents the end results of forestry.



### 1.2.1. Conspicuous Cultural Imprints of Peasantry

All this account presents us only the material aspect of the game. As far as the social dimensions are concerned; the nation's collective conscience is uprooted in the verbal popular culture "molded" throughout centuries on the steps of Anatolia. Even the most elegant looking man or woman stepping into the elevator in a skyscraper in *Istanbul* preserves numerous traits of his / her soil-based origins.

This is what I actually witnessed in the case of a friend of mine in a similar environment when he unexpectedly uttered an archaic proverb. As a former American Field Service exchange student he had formerly passed a year of his adolescence in California. He was the one whom acquaintances teased for becoming a snobby admirer of the United States. In short he was a complete city boy.

He had just lost his general manager position in a private company. The deadline for turning in the company's expensive car was pressing down. I, personally, was helpless and awfully sorry for my comrade from my university days. I also had a guilty conscious in comparison to him, feeling secure with my modest government salary. At the moment, the best I could do was to console his grief and build up his morale with heartening eloquent words.

We had just left the car, whose door he had slammed in fury. As we headed for the entrance of Hotel Hilton's reception hall (he had two invitation tickets and used one for me) he said: "He who mounts an entrusted horse should expect to dismount soon!" ("*emanet ata binen çabuk iner*").

There was the good old country boy of his grandparents' Anatolian origins, speaking up; disguised in a suit and a silk striped tie. My goodness! *Citadins* don't use such dictions full of old days' wisdom. (Thankfully, he found another job soon after, if only somewhat inferior to the previous one).

While on the verge of return from an instructor development course in Texas, we a few Turkish trainers had a meal in a restaurant. Our friend *Levent B.* was especially pensive that evening. He was a pure city boy brought up in *İzmir*. He had fed himself with pizza, hamburgers, sausage sandwiches and milkshake in his previous life. He had taken municipal buses to his downtown school, university and work place. He had listened to rock music. He had played basketball. Now, in the table he was sad and depressive and playing with his jelly soaked fashionable hair.

Finally he said “I hope we will all reach the fatherland safely and in good health. We looked at him, irritated and questioning. He added: “[Champion Wrestler] *Koca Yusuf* couldn’t make it to his fatherland, you know!” (The champion had left America in 1898 boarding a ship in destination to Europe; but the ship sunk in Atlantic ocean and he got drowned).

Then somebody toasted his beer glass to dissipate the sickly atmosphere. I was astonished about *Levent*’s knowledge about the wrestler. In the collective consciousness of the nation, I then noticed, the old values and historical evidences were always present, even if vaguely colored. Oil wrestlers are the heroic idols of peasants, if one comes to think of it!

Until a few decades ago, conservative newspapers used to publish their adventures on the grass field, in serials. Those serials were devoured by eager villagers and illiterate older generations were all ears to hear the read aloud episodes of *Aliço*, *Hergeleci İbrahim*, *Adalı Halil*. One very popular serial writer used the pen name “an old wrestler”.

Some years ago, the most urbanized boulevard, *İstiklâl Caddesi* was all dig up on one side (for laying down tram tracks). The other side was scorching under the July sun. While I was in my own dilemma considering which side I should stick to as I was walking by, two well-dressed youngish ladies looking like

bank employees were just having an argument before me over the same problem. Finally one said that it was a forty mules or forty cleavers issue (\*) and both began laughing. I immediately got responsive and the words were imbedded in my mind (which has some anthropological propensity).

Wasn't that phrase from long forgotten fairy tales (*Volkmärchen*)? And how could anyone associate those same fairy tales with those purely urban and fairly young ladies? Was this the way to express an either-or-situation in this environment? (Ironically the environment just then looked more like a dusty village street except for the fancy shop window displays).

Using sociology theorist Robert K. Merton's key word in those two case stories, the "*latent*" peasant in the Turkish soul is at play. In the case of the "*manifest*" peasant in the Turkish soul, he is everywhere and too obvious, anyhow. Many city-dwellers see only the rude dimension of it but the more human dimension of the villager is also there, waiting for some sort of recognition.

The city-dweller is individualistic and this trait lines closely with egoism whereas the peasant is much more altruistic. The villager is in possession of many more good attributes like a contented state of mind and a practical mentality, which the city-dweller *should* try to emulate. Even in slums usually

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\* Old tales usually end up with the good-hearted damsel or *Keloğlan* (bald boy, in fact he is bold as well as bald / courageous) winning and the jealous bad rival losing. The penalty for the criminal is severe but she / he can at least be given a choice by the *pahsa* or sultan: 40 Mules or 40 butcher hatchets.

The first mode of execution involves being tied to the tails of the mules and getting drifted away. The other mode of execution involves being chopped up by those 40 cutters simultaneously. In Turkish *katır* and *satır* rhyme and this contributes tremendously to the climax at the end of the tale. Turks love poetry and value poets. This is naturally compatible with their exclusively verbal nomadic original culture.

only the younger generations, having acquired urban values, try to compete with their city peers though they lack the necessary means.

This struggle in turn, leads them to severe identity crisis. In the search for some peace of mind and respite; the relatively stable and settled psychological profile of the more aged new-comers gain importance; buffering and guiding the youth energy, at least to some extent. The elderly ones, more peasant-like and thus less greedy, are better off even in slum suburb.

### **1.3.2. Peasants as Possible Role Models**

An equally important purpose or rather mission of this work is to help better understand the peasant so that the city-dweller can learn something from the peasant! The already automated, profit-driven, dissatisfied city man and woman have a lot to learn from the prototype peasant. The subject “prototype” is added here because, to tell the truth, peasantry is becoming spiritually contaminated or rather “polluted” with urban ways. This is unfortunately happening fast and threatening to make the authentic precious candid peasant character disappear altogether.

As Kündig-Steiner (1974: 103) registers it, *the social change in Turkey has its negative effects, which partly overlap with those in Europe. The protection provided by the traditional system for the feeble, orphans, sick, poor and the old decreases. The state’s official social system on the other hand is not accordingly improved or sufficient to compensate for this decrease.*

Indeed, the former high status and respect enjoyed by the elderly is weakening and the generation gap is getting wider. In a peripheral coffee shop frequented by peasants at the time of the weekly fair market in *Tekirdağ* I recently eavesdropped the complaint of a villager about his son. The *bastard* (he used the local word “*kopil*”) was a sheer good-for-nothing (again the local word “*panta*”) and needed *some sort of correction*.

Today, even in shanty towns the most contented people who can cope with poverty psychologically, are the first-comers. They are free from destructive non-satiable passions and can adjust to new conditions of scarcity, thanks to their memories of much worse conditions, back in the village.

What I learned from a village woman in my childhood was empathy directed even towards animals. I was commuting between the village and the school town. My mother was a village teacher and we were living in the village in a rented adobe house. Sometimes ox or horse carriages gave the students a hitchhike. An ox carriage took me as a hitchhiker once.

An elderly woman was controlling the oxen. I at a certain point took the nearby stick and gently slapped one of the oxen in a mischievous puerile manner. I wanted the carriage to speed up. The elderly woman said to me: “Suppose I took you out to the fields and made you work, all day long. On top of all this, now, further suppose that I beat you with a stick. How would you like it?”

### **1.3. Villages Share a Common Denominator Worldwide**

Scattered throughout the text of this work are references to certain countries like the United States, Germany, Corsica, Russia, Burma. Here in this section, however, the main intention is to verify the universally present aspects of villages. Some traits may not be shared at the same slice of time; there being shifts in development speeds among various countries but a cross-decades comparison usually gives us something equivalent. Such a comparison contains elements of ethnographic analogy besides rural sociology, too.

*“We can infer the use of an ancient tool by seeing how similar-looking tools are used in existing or recent societies. By analogy we can hypothesize the same use for the old tool [or custom, ritual etc.]. It is a lot like the analysis of fossils and the process is called ethnographic analogy” (Park 2003: 219).*

*Today even in developed countries like the United States, who carry on agriculture and industry in a balanced manner, rural ways live on. Children of*

*farmers nearby the cities display conspicuous differences in intelligence and job orientation tests. The income relying on village roots, encountering hardships in participation of urban mechanisms due to the influence of peasant-like vestiges in behavior and attitudes all indicate the survival of peasant ways within the city. This is a continuum rather than a dichotomy and American scholars call this phenomenon “rurbanity” (Türkdoğan March-April 2011 passim).*

As a matter of fact; Gans (1962: 4) says in his interesting book <sup>(\*)</sup> that *in most American cities just like in Boston two kinds of poor sections are to be found. One he calls the urban jungle, where all kinds of “disreputable people” offering “illegal-but-demanded services” live. The other he baptizes the urban village, where European immigrants as well as recently coming Blacks and Puerto Ricans are dense and “try to adapt their non-urban institutions and cultures to the urban milieu”.*

*“[Pitirim A.] Sorokin and [Carle C.] Zimmerman consider the principal criterion of difference between rural and urban societies to be occupational. From this basic difference a further series of differences can be developed, most of which are related in some way to the basic one. Eight characteristics in all are given as a means of comparing what are called the rural and urban worlds” (Mann 1970:7).*

*Those differences are occupation (cultivation versus a variety of professions); environment (in touch with nature versus isolation from it); community size (small versus big); population density (low versus high); population structure (homogeneity versus heterogeneity in racial, ethnical and psycho-social traits); stratification (as T.L. Smith suggests, “the caste principle being less rigid in rural than in urban societies”); social mobility (low versus high in territorial, occupational and other forms); system of interaction (few contacts per man versus numerous contacts per man) (abridged from Mann 1970: 7-24).*

Fully authentic American villages may have gotten transformed long before their third-world equivalents. In the beginning of the twentieth century, however, they used to exist and they resemble Turkish villages in many respects as it is described by the author *Harold Robbins* in a novel, *Memories*

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\* An original copy of that book of Gans’ with the title “The Urban Villagers” happens to be in my own possession. On the first page the honorable name and last name of *Doğu Ergil* is stamped and it is all the more precious to me for that reason. (The book had somehow found its way to a second-hand book dealer in Ankara, in whose shop I grabbed the opportunity to encounter and appropriate it). s.ç.

*of Another Day*. The novel talks about a labor union leader named Big Dan, who had started his life as a country boy in a crowded mountain family in West Virginia.

He is an adolescent during the First World War. His father, a poverty-stricken farmer, brews whisky —as some Anatolian peasants prepare homemade *Schnaps* (*boğma rakı*) secretly for their own consumption— from corn and sells it to a bootlegger (dry years, dry state). The buyer comes on occasion on a mule driven cart to get the *squeezinn*'s. He is a hard man and a horrible bargainer:

[After the rabbit stew feast] *this was no longer Mr. Fitch the nice man, who had sat down to the dinner table; this was Mr. Fitch the trader, who kept half the sharecroppers in the valley in his debt with the credit he ran for them at his general store and the prices he paid them for their moonshine [homemade whiskey] and whatever else they had to sell* (Robbins 1979: 45).

*“Ever think of comin’ down to work?” Mr. Fitch asked. Jeb [Dan’s father] shook his head. “I’m not a city man. Never will be. If I cain’t git up in the mornin’ an’ look out over my land, I’d rather be dead. Besides, what kin I do there? All I know is farmin’ ”* (Robbins 1979: 47).

*Each year they seemed to fall deeper into debt. “I didn’t have no shoes until I was goin’ on sixteen,” Jeb said. “An’ it didn’t hurt me none.” “You didn’t go to school, neither,” she [his wife] said* (Robbins 1979: 47).

*She stared at his hands as he touched the money [paid by the bootlegger]. “Mebbe we could git some chickens, a sow or two, mebbe even a cow. The little ones could sure do with some fresh milk ”* (Robbins 1979: 52).

*Molly Ann [Dan’s sister who is nearly his peer] had once explained it to him. His father and mother didn’t want no more babies. Did they mean they weren’t going to have any more pleasure with each other? Why couldn’t they? Sex was no mystery to him. It was always around him. Farmyard animals were always at it* (Robbins 1979: 54).

Peasant elements linger in the union leader long after boyhood. At middle age Big Dan takes a second wife. She gets pregnant. His first son is yet a grown-up.

They talk: *"She's young, Father". Daniel smiled. "I guess she is; but I'm still a mountain man at heart; we pick 'em young"* (Robbins 1979: 456).

While burying his first wife it was he who grabbed the shovel from the grave diggers and covered the coffin with earth: *"I'll do it," Daniel said, stepping forward. In answer to the questioning looks: "Back home, we always buried our own"* (Robbins 1979: 349).

A British scholar concerned with the education of the countryman notifies the reader about the literacy in rural England in comparison over time:

*"Before 1914 any child who looked at a cheap daily paper (admittedly there were relatively few who did) found little mention of any event outside his own country. To-day [he means the year of 1944] there are far more children reading the paper every day, and every day a far greater portion of the news reflects diplomatic, military or political activity abroad"* (Burton 1944:233).

An author giving a profile of Near Eastern villages [in a footnote he explains Near East as "the Arab heartlands and their North African, Turkish and Iranian extensions"] provides the following knowledge about building activities: *"Villages are not planned; they grow — or decay, as the case may be. Buildings are set up according to no visible plan. Paths —and roads, if any— simply go where no houses block the traffic; even between villages, they tend to be the trodden paths in the most literal sense of the term. A rather high density of buildings in the built-up area is fairly common. People live together, rather than each on or near his land"* (van Nieuwenhuijze 1977: 17).

An anthropologist talks about the familial solidarity on the fields in an Arab village *"in the denuded [bare] eastern foothills of the Jordan valley"*:

*"The ploughing [with either nail plough or steel plough] and planting is a task which a single individual can handle. But wives and daughters often accompany their menfolk to the fields, bring them tea, hoe behind the plough for winter crops, and may even plant the seed for summer crops. Cooperation does not usually stretch beyond the extended parental family"* (Antoun 1972: 9).

This is similar to the Turkish rural scenery; but, here in certain regions like Rize on the Black Sea (which Chris Hann likes to denote as *Lazistan*) even outdoor production activities encumber the females: *"It is women who have had to take prime responsibility for the harvesting of a very labor-intensive*



*cash crop. Most of the labor expended in tea plucking as I observed it in the 1980s was indeed female labor, and it was comparatively unusual to see men old enough to have completed military service doing this work. Women carried the tea in baskets or sacks to the collection points, and they carried heavy (50 kilogram) sacks of fertilizer to the gardens every spring. At the same time female labor remained dominant in the home (Hann 1993: 131).*

Female labor is not an exception to be associated with the Black Sea region. As described by Morvaridi in the uttermost eastern village of *Ak, Iğdır, Kars*, it is mainly women who do the hoeing and weeding:

*“During hoeing women are relieved of some of their domestic work. For example, bread may not be made in the home, but bought from the village shop. In 1983 the population of active women in Ak was 185; 1,295 decares could have been weeded and harvested by the total female labor force in the village. Additional female labor was required from nearby villages to finish the sugar-beet and cotton<sup>(\*)</sup> crop fields (Morvaridi 1993: 86-87).*

Carrying water from the public fountain is mostly a female occupation, too, as it is recorded by two authors in the village of *Alahan* on the southern slopes of the Taurus mountains.

“Fetching water for use in the houses is a job for the girls and women, and some of them can always be seen clustered round the fountain, waiting their turn to fill an earthenware pitcher or copper-spouted can. The mountain water is cold and delicious and very clean; Turkish villagers are scrupulously careful about their water supply and take great care in that it should always be fresh and pure” (Gough & Ambrus 1985: 6).

A graphic-novel (comic-strip) in black and white, *Silence* (1980), by Didier Comès, which I read long ago, has as setting a small French village near *Ardennes* after World War Two. The hero is a deaf-mute young man. Many traits of the countryside, including witchcraft by a female *sorcière* are depicted and illustrated in the thrilling plot.

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\* Just like the region of *Çukurova*; the small, cosy, eastern (!) plain of *Iğdır*; surrounded by mountains; has a climate suitable for planting cotton. S.Ç.

*“In [A.V.] Chayanov’s view peasant motivations are different from those of the capitalist, they aim at securing for the needs of the family rather than to make a profit” (Kerblay 1984: 150).*

*A peculiar balance is achieved between the family’s satisfaction and further unnecessary toil, or rather, drudgery. Beyond this equilibrium point, the load of subjectively unpleasant struggle makes the gain of further roubles meaningless (paraphrased from the Russian Theorist’s 1925-dated own words presented by Kerblay 1984: 153).*

*Peasants are depicted as resigned to their fate and passive in front of prospects. Oscar Lewis (1960) attaches this to a rigid upbringing system. More direct explanations may go into the uncertainties of climate and probable damage of crops by pests, rodents, animals etc. A study of [D.T.] Myren quotes farmers’ future plans with expressions like “what God wishes”. Holmberg (1967) associates such attitudes as mere results of long bad experiences. Not only disasters and illnesses wiped them off in haciendas [large Latin American estates] but also landlords inflicted corporal punishment or sent them off to be executed by security forces (abridged and paraphrased from Ortiz 1984: 330-331).*

In the far eastern part of the globe, too, villagers resemble their counterparts elsewhere. A Japanese author gives their historical adventure as follows:

*During feudalism Japanese lords’ closed door policy kept villages segregated and tied to their own territories. Until twentieth century transportation modes had not been developed, either. As for marriage, most young people found their spouses within their community. Generally the “buraku” or village was small and isolated. All dwellers were farmers except a few carpenters, blacksmiths, Shinto priests and shrine-guardians. They talked in their common dialect and sang their own songs. Farmers had to till and irrigate the land. They built ditches and canals for rice production. All those factors are disappearing recently and giving way to opposite formations (abridged and paraphrased from Usui 1952: 196-198).*

Finally two British refer to the peasantry’s lot in the third world in the face of the green revolution:

*The so-called ‘green revolution’ of 1970s in Asia and Latin America designates agrarian changes like imported wheat, maize, rice seeds; better irrigation techniques and agrochemicals. The output did increase but mostly for rich and resourceful peasants. General benefits are doubtful (abridged and paraphrased from Harriss & Harriss 1952: 265).*

James A. Mitchener, in his second (partially autobiographical) novel mentions about an influential literature instructor in Dedham College in mid 1920s.(Doc Chisholms plays folk songs; defies the overwhelming British impact in American intellectual circles; promotes their national geniuses like Melville, Frank Norris, Upton Sinclair; Dreiser, Mark Twain etc.). In one episode (Mitchener 1971: 269) says to his students that he grew up in a ranch. He says that he had seen also the miserable cities in Europe and found them as repulsive as the American cities. But he confesses that the future lies in cities.

## CHAPTER II

### MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is different from a monograph concentrating in detail on a single village somewhere in Turkey. A monograph is a very valuable study which quite impresses me and monograph researchers are very much admired by me.

For quite obvious reasons, the nature of a research comprising the peasantry as a whole would have been inappropriate for a monograph technique.

The “materials” of this dissertation in the macro sense are constituted by the countryside of Turkey, in its entirety. Moreover; not only the contemporary situation of the villages in general but also a retrospective look back into their past is in question here.

Indeed, as paraphrased from Bailey and Bertrand (1958: 8), *Lowry Nelson's delineating the scope of rural sociology involves along with breadth (associations of rural man) and depth (the individual with his needs, drives, attitudes etc.) also the dimension of length in the sense that it can not be satisfied with the investigation of community as it is at the present; rather it takes into consideration time as well as space; that is, the community has a cultural history of evolution.*

As for the “materials” in the micro, or better, “minute” sense, they consist of the visual materials like the shot photographs and collected and scanned artifacts, as well as various other sources of information, written and verbal; all contributing to a deep understanding of the peasantry.

## 2.1. Contribution from an Author not Fully Appreciated Yet

Works about social history and education were also deeply involved with rural themes. One such work is the book titled “*Köyde Okul*” (Schooling in Villages) written by an education inspector, Şaban Sunar. Though his main concern is regular attendance to school in villages, he refers to numerous other aspects of rural life, on occasion.

First of all, he is aware of the potential brains of some peasant children:  
*We are chatting with an American scholar doing social investigations in Turkey.*

— *Did you visit the villages?*

— *Yes, many of them.*

— *What are your impressions?*

— *I liked many aspects of your villages, but most of all the stars!*

— *The stars?*

— *There are many talented students in your villages. If they are provided with proper education, you will have world-famous figures from among their ranks!* (Sunar 1961: 3).

Sunar (1961: 7-8) also makes comparisons among certain villages: *When entering a village of Bolu I could not spot a single male on the fields and gardens. When they migrated to cities as cooks, all the tasks remained for females. On another occasion in a village of Hazro near Diyarbakır, I could not spot a feminine figure. Here customarily womenfolk were confined solely to housework. Still on another occasion, while entering a village of Ergani I noticed moving bundles of branches and twigs ahead of me. I speeded up my horse and saw young girls crushed under the weights, climbing uphill! Pitying them I asked:*

— *You must all be tired!*

— *This fatigue is not even good enough!*

— *But how come?*

— *The tradition of our village! According to our custom, we can not get married unless we do manual work. She who carries most twigs gets sold [for a bride price] the soonest.*

*On the eve of a new year, inspecting an Edirne village school, we wanted to buy a turkey and talked about our intention in the village coffee shop. None of the men could not decide to sell a turkey. Then we learned that in this village all affairs of the poultry fall into the domain of women and if they are sold the income goes to them.*

Sunar has another work, a collection of riddles compiled in a book. On the foreword page *Şaban Sunar* wrote that riddles develop the memory and association powers in the child.

As early as in mid-1960s Sunar had preferred the respective words “*bellek ve çağrışım*” for memory and association rather than “*hâfıza ve tedai*”, the latter too being more Ottoman in nature. He was my *enişte*, the husband of my mother’s elder sister —as a traditional nation’s language, Turkish differentiates among specific kinship relations and possesses a rich related vocabulary as opposed to a lump-some of *uncle* or *oncle* or *Onkel*— and had been an inspector of education (*maarif müfettişi*). This was a prestigious itinerant government job full of hardships. He was a tall, handsome man resembling the actor *Spencer Tracy* in his facial features and in his untimely-bleached white hair.

We had hundreds of issues of his books in my maternal grandfather’s house. (Books of knowledge did not sell easily). Rural-Greece-immigrated grandparents were using the product of their son-in-law’s copyright sweat as filling materials <sup>(\*)</sup> or for other purposes for their *face-value*. My younger

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\* This is what the world famous author and villager village teacher *Mahmut Makal* (himself a graduate of the village institutions) wrote in his novel as I recall from a previous reading, now. Peasants were enthusiastic to ask for journals and magazines. He rejoiced over this, fetching them from a two hour distanced mid Anatolian center. Especially the big sized ones like the literature journal *Varlık* were in demand. He wrote something roughly like “*my goodness, I discovered that they were being used as a substitute for missing window panes!*”

I think, though shocking at first, it also shows the practical mind of the peasant, which is far superior to that of the city-dweller. Many poor peasant dwellings do not even have glass on the window, to begin with. An opening is provided and a rectangular cloth is hung over it. s.ç.

Villages were poverty-stricken in the early republican era. Based on *Yusuf Ziya Yörükan*’s research before 1930’s, *Turhan Yörükan* (1998: 440) relates that Yörük peasant men

brother at the pre-school age drew pictures on the plain and fractionally plain pages. (In the future he would become a teacher of painting in secondary schools).

## 2.2. Aid of Some Knowledge of History

Some history is inserted to this work in order to understand the background of the agrarian situation better. History is a wonderful tool for sociology. The converse is equally true but not as appreciated and as easily done. In the foreword of a book, Braudel (1980 ix), as a historian, says that *the most difficult point in restructuring social sciences is for history to capture its relationship with that marvelous-sociology*.

Elias (1983: 7-8) asserts that *since historical events are unique (each event happened just once), historiography undergoes difficulty when putting pieces together, while the pieces themselves (true documents) are all real. The historian, he goes on, for instance, ignores the architecture of a palace, whereas the sociologist is enlightened by the architecture in many ways*.

Some trends are also interpreted based on historical view even in some social anthropology tainted sections. Leach (1977: 282) writes that history is too difficult for British anthropologists to put on paper and this is why they proclaim the belief in its irrelevance. *“We functionalist are not really ‘anti-historical’ by principle; it is simply that we do not know how to fit historical materials into our framework of concepts”* he writes.

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around Ankara used to wear trousers, jackets and coats from the flea market: *“To observe that village men choose their clothing from second-hand stands, one just needs to visit the Old Bazaar (Eski Bedesten) quartier of Ankara or the peddlers around. One can not spot a single underwear or shirt without a patch on those miserable villagers”*.

Immigration to Germany and to cities gave considerable economic impetus to those staying beyond. *“Household ties are maintained with urban and overseas migrants whose remittances add to the family income and enable them to purchase land and to acquire or rent machinery”* (Pevsner 1984: 14).

### **2.3. Interrelation with Other Fields of Sociology as well as Anthropology and Ethnography**

While handling the miscellaneous topics about peasantry under certain subtitles; sheer rural sociology, though the dominant special sociology at hand, would not suffice either.

Touching other specialties of the discipline like political sociology (partisanship in villages), educational sociology (why the villagers have a low level of formal education), linguistic sociology (folk ballads), sociology of literature (peasantry in Turkish novels), economic sociology (the autarchic village economy) and even sociology of family (particularly as regarding allusions to my own family on certain occasions) proved to be indispensable.

An anthropological and even ethnographic tinting of the dissertation is also to be recognized, undeniably. My mother's teaching job in a village for three successive years; my father's peasant roots; my summer-season apprenticeship in a town-tailor- shop where the customers exclusively had been from the nearby villages; my employment for a time for a state-owned pulp plant near *Çay-Afyon* in the wilderness, where company houses were provided and where my dealings with subordinates originating overwhelmingly from among peasants took a lot of time; occasional visits to official funeral ceremonies of fallen soldiers during my military service in *Çankırı* all made me gain a lot of first-hand information about the peasantry, along the years.

Now, as Anderson (1972: 84) puts it; “*applied anthropology, as much an art as a science at the present, draws upon a fortuitous [of accident or chance] but growing body of documentation in which systematic analysis is combined with simple experience and fact finding*”.



In Appendix C at the end, many artifacts collected over field trips are to be seen, associating our efforts with those of ethnographers:

“Many ethnographers bring back from the field an assortment of artifacts which illustrate the arts and crafts of the society they have studied” (Bock 1969: 327).

## **2.4. The Background of the Researcher**

A researcher most suitable for rural sociology, I would say, is one who stems not from a village but from middle class circles, instead.

Universally this social class possesses certain peculiarities. For example, American scholars point out that the new cults recruit members mostly from the middle classes. Middle class people are more gullible, believing promises of eternal happiness more easily. They also usually crave for integration with a closely-knit group. The street smart lower classes are too worldly and too cunning to be tempted by cult leaders. As for the higher classes, they are too cautious. Since childhood they have been indoctrinated with suspicion and raised with warnings like “be careful, they may kidnap (\*) you!”

The middle class also represents an honest impartiality when it comes to probe into delicate matters. Lower classes would not indulge in matters which would

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\* In early 1960's a small Istanbul girl got lost. Her well-to-do family kept giving announcements with promised prize offerings. The theory went that she got kidnapped by itinerant Gypsy groups. Her picture was visible in municipal bulletin-boards in towns with the caption “Lost Child *Aylâ Özakar*” just below. She occupied the media for many months but was never found, dead or alive. The event, well-publicized, caused a mass craze and city children were horrified at the thought of getting lost. One of my mother's younger acquaintances was named after that girl. *Aylâ Hanım*, aged 48, is married to a construction bidder. s.ç.

put their fellow people at stake either. They would feel like traitors. In his unforgettable play *Pygmalion*, George Bernard Shaw uses the father of the heroin (Cockney flower girl *Eliza Doolittle*) to emphasize the conspicuous English middle class morality. When the dustman undergoes an upward mobility, feels himself constraint to grab that middle class morality, now that he is *Mr. Doolittle*. (The play was later adapted to a movie released under the title *My Fair Lady*).

I have a feeling that it is my relation to the peasantry as a middle-class person which enabled me to put this work on paper. After all; I was close enough to take the peasantry seriously while at the same time aloof enough to have a perspective view.

I am the son of a retired army major. (My father in turn comes from a village. He sort of escaped from harsh conditions onto the military school. My mother comes from a big town). The middle-middle class imparts to a young person the impression of a very unstable, precarious place in the general society. Appointments of the father from place to place makes the feeling worse. Emotional attachments to peers break up and re-form continually.

On vacations we visited my mother's town and my father's village. Upon my father's forced retirement following the 1960-coup, we first came to the small Thracian town *Alpullu*. *Atatürk* had built one of the three first sugar plants here (along with *Turhal* and *Uşak*). There weren't houses for rent. All plant employees and regular workers had lodgings of some sort depending on their positions Some commuted from villages. We rented a "flood" (*seylâb*) house in a suburb. The houses were all alike, all state-built after the river *Ergene* had spilled over the plain some years before our arrival.

Running water and electricity was absent. Grass used to cover the yard and was reaped off with scythes to prevent snake danger. Soon after; my parents broke up. My mother; a terrific feminist for her times (but reputed to be very

beautiful in her youth, unlike a lot of feminist females); succeeded the necessary external examinations in not-far-away *Kepirtepe* Teacher Training School (transformed from a previous Village Institution).

She obtained a teaching post at the village of *Sinanlı* (the name was in accordance with my first name), where we were to stay for three years. This is a village of indigenous habitants as opposed to many other Thracian villages where the population consists of Balkan immigrants. I continued attending the last two years of primary school in *Alpullu*, commuting on foot between the small town and the village.

I was a studious student and my teacher *Nurcihan Hanım*, too reluctant to loose me, convinced my mother not to transfer me to the village school. One day I reached the classroom all soaked up from rain and my teacher put me near the burning stove for drying up, despite my shameful protestations. Along with me, other boys and even a few girls were coming to the small town for their junior high school education. This too, I did for another year.

#### **2.4.1. A “Lifer” in Data-Gleaning and Participant Observations**

During my early childhood officers had orderlies assigned to their home services (in principle on a voluntary basis but a *de facto* prerogative, compared to the alternative “hot” military training). They came and went. All were village youths. I noticed even as a child the differences of culture, speech, education between those soldiers and the fellow-officers around my father and other civilian neighbors, nearby.

Accents set aside, the orderlies would talk about the “paint” of a fountain pen instead of the ink. They would say (*duvara*) “*çalmak*” instead of “*vurmak*” (banging one’s head to walls). They would refer to “*tâze çarşaf*” but not “*yeni çarşaf*” (newly changed bed sheets). For them “*sidik*” or “*idrar*” was “*işemik*”

(urine). “*Af edersin!*” exclamation was “*af buyur!*” (excuse me). They employed many local words too.

Especially in my high school and undergraduate years I was always preoccupied with thoughts of social classes because I could place myself nowhere when income, education, culture, life style were considered all together. I personified the peasant and the city-dweller simultaneously and was very much upset about it. I admired the upper classes or even resented them. I also envied pure villagers’ relaxed and secure airs and feelings of belonging somewhere (\*).

When I once mentioned this to a left-wing classmate —his father was still in the army and held a colonel’s rank— he confessed the very same problem (for all his love of the proletariat) and came up with the diagnose. (*Levent S.* is now an associate professor at a private foundation university) “This is just the *shitty* nature of your *social class*. Your father had been an officer, too, just like mine!”.

This is why I had been a constant participant observer of especially individual villagers, especially in displaced situations: in the settings of towns and cities, whenever I had the opportunity. This opportunity I had very often. Quite an “adventurous character”, after graduation I changed a number of jobs and lived in *Eskişehir*, *Çay-Afyon*, *Adana*, *Kütahya*, *Pınarhisar-Kırklareli*, *Çankırı*, *Ankara* and *Istanbul* as a grown-up; besides paying short visits to many other places, extensively.

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\* Being from Thracian origins I was also somewhat jealous of the strong compatriot solidarity of Anatolians, which Thracians lack. A feudal vestige, it was even stronger in agrarian classes. s.ç.

Needless to say, for the outsiders, I was more peasant-like in Istanbul and Ankara but also more *citadin*-like in the provincial environments; as far as I could tell from my own *mirror image*, using Cooley's famous sociological phrase. (Interestingly; Dr. Vedat Fuat Belli, my former boss at the chair of Legal Medicine at Çukurova University, one day said that he was a "right-wing" supporter in the eyes of his Ankara associates but he was regarded as a "communist" in Erzurum, where he had worked for five years at the Faculty of Medicine's Chair of Psychiatry).

Another point worth mentioning about former data gleaned in my case is the following: In my junior high school summer vacations I used to work as a tailor apprentice / errand-boy in Lüleburgaz. (This summer-job <sup>(\*)</sup> prevented me from going swimming —tragic drowning incidents did occur from time to time— in the creeks, loafing around and getting involved in street fights etc. as my mother put it). The crushing majority of the customers were *villagers*. This, I suppose, my boss owed to the shabby appearance of his rented shop.

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\* When my wife gets angry with me, she teasingly uses this apprentice title of mine as a trump to demean me but I just laugh it off. I remember that my boss Dr. Belli once got angry with his colleague, late Pharmacology Professor Firuz Bey. He relied on his psychiatric interpretations when he said behind his back in fury "in his childhood in Menemen he had worked for a restaurant, inviting customers to hot delicious beans and rice at the door of the shop; this is why he is still misbehaving in his social relationships! Pure inferiority complex !". s.ç.

I also remember the autobiographical novels of Elia Kazan, narrating his paternal uncle's immigration to America. To gain the ship fare, Stavros, after leaving Kayseri for Istanbul, had worked as a porter for a time in Tahtakale. In America he started as the errand boy of an Armenian carpet merchant. He kept coming and going to Anatolia, arranging shipments of carpets. When he made a mistake, the indignant boss always started the cables with an addressing formula like "*hamal*, listen to me and take the following order". (Stavros happened to be in İzmir just at the time of the rescue of the city by the Turkish forces. He squeezed himself into a passenger ship again as a porter, carrying the load of a foreign passenger. This was the best incremental way to safety, allowing him to take slow but impatient steps, *tuc tuc tuc*, in the direction of the ship). s.ç.

The villager is mistrusting and cautious in his dealings with the city-dwellers and anything modern looking scares him off more easily like a fancy shop, for instance. The tailor-shop I worked for was nearby *Sokullu* Mosque and considered to be lying in a historical section (*âsar-I atika*) of the big town. Even a repairing activity was subjected to official permission.

My Boss, Craft Master *İsmail*, was an elegant looking man resembling Lyndon Johnson in his face but his humble attitude served him well in not discouraging the villagers from coming. (He was an “inside-groom”, living in his dominating wife’s big house, which must have entrained him not to affect patronizing manners; he was a well-informed man, reading and even cutting off chronicles of *Çetin Altan* from his *Akşam* newspaper, at the time).

I still remember vividly the following incident at the tailor shop: One day a tired-looking young man came to us. He said he was a construction-laborer and his linen pants’ back seams had ripped. Our craftsman (shopkeeper-*Meister*) told the worker to take off his pants and stand behind the counter. Then he handed the pants over to his journeyman (*Gehilfe, Geselle*) at the sewing machine, whispered him to charge so many *piastres* for the service and left for the nearby *Sokullu* Mosque for the afternoon prayers.

Meanwhile the worker put on his newly-mended dirty pants with a pleased smile on his face; came off the counter into open space thanking the journeyman and just while stepping outside he notified us that his wages had accumulated without a penny being yet tossed into his hands by his bidder-boss.

The journeyman then burst into an almost hysterical laughter-fit, sporadically asking me for confirmation:

—”Now, what could you possibly charge from such a person? He sure is broke, man! What would you get from him? Perhaps his balls?”

I felt like replying that the worker had, in the first place, had picked this shop as a “free-service-victim” because the decrepit, run-down appearance of the place was not intimidating. (I was tactful enough not to utter the delicate sentence).

Moreover; I sensed (but did not tell the journeymen, either) that the worker had taken it for a higher probability that this shop would eventually prove to be generous and altruistic (unlike a luxurious-looking one), in case of a try on the part of an insistence on reimbursement for the repair work on his pants.

#### **2.4.2. Being Mostly Qualitative is Good Enough for a Researcher**

Many authors dealing with peasantry get submerged in unnecessary and boring figures and digits.

A monumental figure in Turkish rural sociology, *Paul Stirling*, (the advisor of my advisor, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ecevit) does not give many numbers in his investigation of the villages *Sakaltutan* and *Elbaşı* near *Kayseri*. He does not need to do so, since he captures the essence of the entire village life, through sheer *qualitative* research. Carol Delaney, in her research of a village near Ankara, does not “splash about” within complicated statistical information, either.

Let us also point out that, regarding numbers and statistics and so forth in Sociological work in general, it is a good approach the way *Georges Gurvitch* approaches sociology:

*“In many ways he was the French [version of] Sorokin [both are Russians; while Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968) emigrated to America, Gurvitch (1894-1965) chose France for better opportunities of study], learned and erudite, combative, perceiving the role of sociology to be explanatory, for he abhorred the obsession with technical matters related to what he was pleased to call, with*

marked pejorative overtones, ‘testomania’ and ‘quantophrenia’ ” (Mitchell 1979: 93).

*“While quantitative research is appropriate for large samples, it does not offer great depth and detail on a topic. That is why researchers also make use of qualitative research, which relies on what scientists see in field and naturalistic settings. Qualitative research often focuses on small groups and communities rather than on large groups or whole nations”* (Schaefer 2008: 26).

Indeed, on occasion a nation-wide overview of a topic may come handy with numbers if available. For instance, a quick glimpse at some piece of information comprising statistics regarding the 1973 face of the countryside reveals horrible facts as follows:

*22 % of Turkish villages are devoid of drinking water. 48.5 % of Villagers live in adobe / clay (Lehm) dwellings consisting of two rooms where about 6 persons sleep together. Mostly cooking is carried out also in those rooms, 55 % of families owning no kitchen. Around 45 % of village families burn dried dung <sup>(\*)</sup> for heating. For nearly 75 % of all peasants the unique nourishment consists of plain tough brown bread* (Heinrich & Roth 1973: 72).

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\* While animal excrement used to be widely employed as fuel, human excrement was not wasted either. Rather, it was used as fertilizer in vegetable gardens. A specific example is mentioned for the village of *Karataş* near *Antalya* half a century ago:

*Toilets are outside and about 30 to 40 meters away from the houses; when the cesspools get filled, the contents are shoveled away and thrown into gardens* (Ülken, Kösemihal & Tanyol 1950: 101).

In 1970’s artificial fertilizers seem to be introduced as we learn from Kiray’s research in *Çukurova*:

*“The decline of animal husbandry and therefore the disappearance of ‘spontaneous manuring’ through grazing is recently substituted in a modest way by strewing artificial fertilizers [in the village of *Oruçlu*]”* (Kiray 1977: 130).

Little by little improvements went on whereby the needle plough also got replaced by the steel plough. s.ç.



## 2.5. Field Trips

In July 2009 I indulged in some travels in the countryside of Eastern Thrace in order to get some new impressions. I tried to collect some artifacts and other objects peculiar to peasants. Those transactions facilitated my interaction with villagers. But the artifacts were worth the trouble *per se*. (Some are scanned and put to the appendix at the end of this dissertation).

When the occasion presented itself, I also took photographs. Many photograph shots were bad mainly due to inconvenient light effects but some succeeded. (They also take place at the appendix). Taking pictures of people is a difficult task by itself. For a sheer foreigner it would have been easier. People wouldn't much care and they would be more accepting.

A person does not even like to be stared at as if he / she were an authentic representative "sample" of some sort of "getting-extinct-species". It is also embarrassing on the part of the photographer. I sometimes got permission and sometimes did not even dare to ask. I took a few group pictures and let it go unnoticed. People are more disturbed if they are pictured individually.

Taking pictures of non-living things proved to be easier. Cooperation from people were possible then. On one occasion a young villager displaced himself from his sitting position on a tractor-towed hoe to enable me to picture the machine. On another occasion a villager explained to me the uses of the agricultural machines I pictured. One was used for spreading artificial fertilizers and the other was used for planting the seeds into the soil.

An elderly villager sitting in front of his house and spotting a stranger with a photograph machine hung around his neck exclaimed: "I understand you are after something. You must be a researcher. Come over sit by me and let us talk!" I confirmed to being a researcher and said that I had little time, thanking for his hospitality.

At the time I was seriously considering taking up hunting as an outdoor activity and had previously informed myself about hunting and hunters in general, including the special jargon. This was to provide good excuse for me in investigations.

Even asking about the existence of a hunters' coffee-house somewhere around proved to be a warm-up for further talk and interaction, on occasion, even if the reply could be "no, there is none". (Eventually, especially affecting stories about the misfortunes falling upon some hunters due to the curse of the poor hunted animals, softened my heart and made me give up the idea, for good).

Getting into coffee houses and intently pricking my ears made me grab valuable relevant information in many respects through "voluntary" eavesdropping.

Indeed, Chang (2008: 47-48) (by citation from Ellis & Bochner 2000: 739-740) tells us that *a wide array of labels indicating an auto-ethnographic (\*) orientation includes (among others like auto-observation, literary tales, ethnographic poetics —in our case made use of in the section under the subtitle "4.3.1. Local Naïve Poetry"— lived experience etc.) items like first-person accounts, impressionistic accounts and even opportunistic research* [as long as complying with ethics, as I feel to add].

In August of the same year I also took a trip to the Aegean region, concentrating around *Aydın* and *Denizli* districts. Not owning a car (and not being able to drive) was a handicap. I took minibuses or trains to reach or pass by villages.

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\* *The explanation of auto-ethnography makes it transcend autobiography by connecting the personal to the cultural. The importance of linking the self [nowadays connoting ethnographer himself, but formerly, rather, informants] and the social is also affirmed in Reed-Danahay's influential book, Auto / Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social, 1997 (paraphrased from Chang 2008: 46).*

While in the Aegean region, driven by a certain obsession, I deliberately searched for peasant men with plaid towels wrapped around their heads as a remnant of the former *zeybek* culture. This head attire is resembling to but different from the *poşu* worn on the head in southeastern rural regions. Unfortunately I could not spot a single one. I had seen a few, previously, as late as in 1990s around *Manisa* and had stared at them in utter fascination.

### **2.5.1. A Long “Diguised” and Precious Interview in “Captive Audience” Format**

An “unaware” informant (whom I consider my friend for life) had contributed a lot to this work. There presented itself the possibility of concealed interview in the form of sheer conversation on equal footing, as a fellow passenger. Lucky, I was, in this respect, indeed! In certain sections, extracts from this interview are to be found.

“For most applied anthropological studies (like on street children or local health facilities etc.) there is no substitute for directly collecting information and opinions at the grass-roots level. It makes much more sense to go directly to those whose opinions matter the most rather than relying on prominent citizens or gatekeepers as key informants. Informants may emerge more or less automatically as a result of knowledge gained during participant observation or ‘snowballing’ effect, whereby informants identify other likely informants. The interview should be largely a one-way conversation, in which the informant does most of the talking. As Bernard (2002:9) notes: “The rule is: Get him / her onto a topic of interest and get out of the way”. Similarly, it is essential to record the responses in the local idiom as much as possible” (Ervin 2005: 170-171).

“Interview merely covers the topics an interviewer means to include; it provides flexibility in the manner, order and language of the questions” (Labovitz & Hagedorn 1976: 75).

Returning from *Denizli* to *Edirne* by bus, I was pleased to discover a villager next to me. He had got on the bus in *Isparta*, before me. The forty-seven-year-old, mustached, partly bald, stoutly-built man was from a village in Thrace. I got friendly with him and we became travel comrades for fourteen hours.

A former farmer, he later worked for a town bakery and then set up his own small roll bread furnace in his own village. In his village he is known as *Ahmet* the Roll-Bread (*Sesamkringel*) Baker. The man's wife died under a collapsing wall four years ago. His daughter is married to a tea-house owner in the nearby town.

His son has just graduated as an engineer from *Süleyman Demirel* University. All villagers have connections to cities and urban ways and a "hundred percent" peasant is almost impossible to locate on our day. *Ahmet*'s son found an engineering job in private sector in *Çorlu*. Already too busy he gave a proxy petition to his father for him to get the diploma.

*Ahmet* got it and put it on his chest in a case underneath his shirt. He was proud to be fetching that precious document, the results of years of sweat and energy. I said he got his son's "*şahadetname*" and explained the obsolete Ottoman word. It is derived from "*şahit*" (witness) and witnesses that his son is a learned man now. He remarked that it is a more meaningful word than "diploma".

Upon my inquiry he said he had done his military service in the Air Force. I said this was an honor which only few lucky men could share. I also pointed out that his nickname should have been Air-Force-*Ahmet* in the village. This is parallel to a nickname like Corporal so and so, which is convention, anyhow. He got pleased and said unfortunately such a nickname was not assigned to him in the village.

At first, the villager-traveler could not give a meaning to my cordial approach and friendly inquiries but soon he accepted me as a travel friend. I could not explain my extra bit of zeal as a Ph.D. candidate working on the theme of peasantry. I was afraid he would not understand my being a student at my age. I then remembered a play by Anton Chekhov, the *Cherry Orchard*. The plot is

about a noble Russian family who sell their estate to a former serf's son, now a successful merchant.

A secondary character, *Trofimov* is a perpetual student getting in and out of the university and the merchant *Lophakin* always teases him for being a student. On one episode he introduces him to somebody with the exaggerated words: "He will soon be fifty but he is still a student!"

I thought about revealing my student identity in a humorous manner, saying "next to you sits a student at the age of a long dead donkey" (*ölmüş eşek yaşında bir talebe*). But I somehow said I was a teacher and that was it. (I intend to visit *Ahmet* later in his very village just as a pure friend).

## **2.6. The Starting Hypothesis (Hunch)**

"Change is more likely to take place in a complex society than in a simple one. The more complex a culture is, the more likely it will be to produce innovations, which depend upon combinations of previously existing patterns. Cultural evolution is cumulative. Cultural change within a society may be brought about either by internal invention and development or through contact with other societies" (Barnouw 1975: 355).

Now, Turkey has long had a certain place in the world which euphemistically is among the "developing" countries, implying that she, by no means, is yet thoroughly developed, on one hand. A disproportionately big struggle to improve the countryside had been going on since the beginning of the Republic, on the other hand. Turkey's relative seclusion from the entire world until very recent times, moreover, is a general acceptance and a ground for complaints in liberal circles, too.

In *résumé* the country has not advanced excessively fast in its entirety (which pertains mostly to urban centers); while villages were given a steady boost by successive administrations. The information and communication revolution has been taken up by the provinces fairly early and with much ease, thanks to the

large younger generation of the country. Nowadays; even on the countryside and especially in Thrace and other western regions, internet cafés are propping up like mushrooms. Even the shepherds are carrying cell phones.

Therefore; the initial hypothesis was that by the year 2013 Turkish peasantry had elapsed most of the gap separating it from the urban version of the country with respect to the former days of the Republic, as far as modernization is concerned; even though a discernable lag still continues to exist. In other words; the inequality between rural and urban Turkey is, though not quite eliminated, substantially diminished to a level expected in any modern country.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PAST OF THE AGRARIAN CHARACTER OF TURKEY

#### 3.1. The Ottoman Fief System

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

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

As an exception, the head of the religious affairs (*şeyhülislâm*) was not distributed any fief at all. While a high school student we read all this knowledge from *Emin Oktay's* history textbooks. On an April first day our history teacher *Recep Ülke* (an immigrant boy and so an expert in Greek history thanks to his knowledge of the Greek language as well as a contributor of related articles to encyclopedias) got disappointed with the spoiled behavior and horse play of the students.

What upset him specially was the ringleader-like zealousness of a certain studious classmate, *Selim*. The next day, the teacher introduced some

Arithmetic into the history course and set up a trap for this boy. He specified the number of *akçe*-income per *sipahi* and required the reply for some land pieces accordingly.

“For a land piece which brings an annual revenue of so many *akçes*, the required number of mounted soldiers demanded by the Palace is what?” *Selim*’s anxiousness to obtain a pardon and achieve reconciliation with the teacher as the former favored student was only too conspicuous.

*Recep Bey* noticed this during the warming up questions and pointed out to his arithmetical talent. Then he directed a problem to him specifically (as an *overhead* question as they call it in *educational studies*): “Well, now, a *şeyhülislâm* obtaining a land piece of so many *akçes* is obliged to provide how many soldiers?” he feigned to ask.

The poor boy made a quick mental calculation but alas, he only received a disapproving look. “Didn’t I just say in the beginning of this class that a *şeyhülislâm* is not liable to receive any fiefs whatsoever? Isn’t it written in your textbook, besides?” (Indeed it was). *So, your mind is not working so well, I suppose?*” A common laughter broke out as an immediate scapegoat was pinpointed by the hilarious class.

As *Selim* blushed with embarrassment, confirmations poured out: “He is always absent-minded, sir!”; “He only thinks he is careful!” etc. Our history teacher got his intellectual revenge in a very subtle way in decorum and got even with the student he had resented. (Anyway, let us return to our main topic).

The later era notables (*eşraf ve âyân*) were to emerge mainly after the deterioration and degeneration of this formerly perfect fief system.

Keskin (1981: 12 with reference to Barkan & S. Aksoy) points out that *there were also provinces in the Ottoman state which were like personal belongings*



*of local feudal lords much before the other âyân emerged. Most European and (Kurd-populated) eastern provinces are given as examples.*

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

The first written contract in the Ottoman history was made in 1808 between those provincial notables (*âyân*) and *Mahmud the Second*, at *Kâğıthane*:

“According to this Document of Agreement (*sened-i İttifak*) the provincial governors confirmed their loyalty to the sultan and in return the sultan promised to levy taxes justly and fairly” (Shaw & Shaw 1992: 2). In the opinion of *Üçok* (1978: 57) *some Turkish Law scholars accept this document as the first (primitive) constitutional text.*

One consequence (good or bad?) of the *ağalik* system may be the hindrance of further division of land as an asset. Weddings and other transactions and measures are arranged accordingly. It is a worry to think about the division of land. Similar practices ensuring the wholeness of property are deliberately enforced by the civil law in some European countries.

In America, *primogeniture* [the right of the firstborn son to inherit the entire property] *is outlawed and in most states customarily the property or the income from it is distributed to surviving close relatives;* but “if a farm can not be divided without serious impairment of its value, a court may rule that it be sold as a unit and the proceeds divided” (Robertson w. date p. 49).

The Ottoman dynasty had distinguished little if any between the Anatolians and the other Muslim subjects (mainly Arabs and some Balkan people) indigenous to lands farther away from the palace. Moreover; like any cosmopolitan empirical power-holders, they also had to extend their caring and protecting hands out to the non-Muslims under their rules.

Accordingly; building bridges, caravansaries, pious foundations, mosques etc. did not pertain to Anatolia and Eastern Thrace alone. Once those places broke

off, the substructure investments were also lost to new countries. One reason for the backwardness of Anatolia is this neglect by the Dynasty or the alternative overanxious attitude towards other places to the detriment of Anatolia.

Realistic-*Mustafa Kemâl Pasha* was the first to proclaim this recognition. Before the disaster of the First World War was over and the imminent disintegration came about, he overtly expressed the importance of yielding non-Turkish regions honorably and profitably and saving the futile waste of Turkish blood. For the triumvirs (*Enver, Talât* and *Cemâl* ) and other Union and Progress men holding the palace in their grip, this concept was equivalent to treachery.

Being patriotic meant clinging to the non-Turkish regions and especially to Moslem regions, at all cost. The occasion arose and *Mustafa Kemâl Pasha* personally advised the heir to the throne on a train trip to Germany as his aid-de-camp. When Sultan *Reshad* died and the advanced-aged *shehzadé* took the throne as *Mehmet* the Sixth, he wrote and advised the new *padishah* to act at least at the very last moment. During the days of truce (*mütareke*) he ascended the palace and renewed his insistence before everything was lost.

### **3.2. The Republican Era**

Once the proclaimed national boundaries (*Misak-ı Millî*) were saved through the war of independence under the leadership of *Mustafa Kemâl Pasha*, it was this ruined and worn out peninsula which was still in hand. The radical reforms or rather, revolutions followed. Any revolution is a drastic change enforced by a leader and his close followers onto a people. Unlike a social evolution, it is by no means a slowly-“digested”, incremental trend towards change.

In fact, as *Tarık Zafer Tunaya* said *the revolutionist* [sometimes] *resembles a child hitting his mother with his fist!* But; after all; a novelty, even if carried out

in a small organization comprising well-educated staff, is bound to meet resistance.

The traditional countryside was slow to accept the later political and social developments, which even some associates of the national hero (Navy Officer *Rauf Bey*; *Karabekir*, *Cebesoy*, *Bele* pashas; Dr. *Adıvar* and his wife *Hâlide Edip Hanım*) considered too hasty and extreme.

The reforms and renovations introduced by now-Atatürk (hat and western attire; western calendar, weights, measures; secular jurisprudence and education, improvements in agriculture, health and industry; renouncing a pure fatalist and lethargic world outlook to acquire a mundane opinion etc.) meant to compensate for centuries' losses.

As Toynbee (1954: 2) put it, *their sum was equivalent to squeezing the Renaissance, the Reform, the Illumination and the Industrial Revolution into a decade!*

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

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

Feelings of gratitude prevented it they mean to express. In any case the important men were mostly landlords. Except for few artisans a social layer of bourgeois was non-existent. (The commerce had been mainly in the hands of

the non-Muslim minorities. It has been said that a Turk becomes either a farmer or a soldier or a clergy man and nothing else).

Some scholars also couple the reluctance of the new regime to divide the lands with the previous general nonchalance of the peasants to take arms. A desire for penalizing the villagers' customary indifference, they mean to say. (The official simplified version of everyone's voluntarily pooling their efforts came late if at all. Deserters from the newly-formed regular army were many and had to be prosecuted through the courts of independence).

Despite a relative improvement in agriculture during 1923-1929 period, the constant property ownership relations impeded a fast product increase and modernization. In east and southeast, villagers are under the burden of drudgery and informal taxes for the *agha*.

Even after the deportation <sup>(\*)</sup> of some landowners did not change the situation and their remaining relatives and henchmen kept gathering such revenues. In west and mid Anatolia, though feudal relations collapsed, the dependant situation of the peasant lives on, sharecropping staying in extended use (Avcioğlu 1968: 230).

Here a definition of sharecropping comes handy. "Sharecropping is normally defined as the combination of factors of production (usually land, implements, inputs and labor) from different individuals for the purpose of specific production. The output is shared among the contributing parties in mutually agreed proportions" (Cheater 1987: 77-78).

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

Swiss female journalist *Schwarzenbach* (1938, 1992: 89) finds sharecropping no different than the former slavery for the case of cotton-picking Blacks in American southern states.

*She says that after being 'freed' following the Civil War and then being forced by the circumstances to make a new contract with the former masters called 'sharecropping' (Ernteteilen) they were no better off. Until the cotton harvest the sharecropper lived off the credit of the plantation owner, bought his needs at his shop; his mule, equipment, cabin belonged to the planter; when accounts were settled, it turned out that he was in debt to the planter from harvest to harvest, from generation to generation.*

The journalist visited the country during the big depression. The planters themselves were ruined at the time. In accordance with the aristocratic hospitality, the once-rich offered to her good hospitality, gave corn whisky, talked about former family silverware and the costly clocks, the three hundred slaves General Sherman took away and the monument erected for their heroic *General Robert L. Lee*.

After *Atatürk* passed away, the single party continued to hold power under the presidency of *İsmet Paşa (İnönü)*. A year later the Second World War broke out but Turkey, thanks to the wise diplomacy of President *İnönü*, did not get drifted into hostilities, despite insistent efforts from both rivaling factions.

The war's decimating effects were especially on the economic dimension: *Even though Turkey did not enter the war, the young males of the working population were conscripted and considerable shares from the national income were allocated to military expenses. Productivity in economy and foreign trade volumes shrank down. Wheat production fell down. Inflation of prices burst up. The load of all those developments went on the shoulders of masses. The newly instigated tax of agrarian products hit especially the small farmers, most of whom had already been in difficulty regarding daily bread. Commercial capital, big farmers and owners of wide lands could come up with important gains under the speculative and black-market-favoring circumstances of the war economy* (M. C. Ecevit 1999: 16).

“The wheat-producing family farming constituency [of the single party] was further alienated as the rigors of the war were compounded by the National

Defense Law of 1940, through which the government could confiscate ‘idle economic resources’ —and did so extensively in the case of draft animals, with disastrous results for peasant families” (Margulies & Yıldızoğlu 1987: 277).

The single [Peoples Republican] party rule is known as an iron-handed administration but the war should justify this practice. Even in western democracies strict control on press and other somewhat oppressive techniques are not totally absent.

In any case, *the mere sight or even pronouncing the name of the police in a building or a public place suffices to hush down the breath of thousands of middle class city-dwellers* (Savant 1944: 128).

According to Ahmad (1986: 255), *it is an irony of the history that the peasantry supported the party which first challenged a possible land reform against the party which appeared to advocate the land reform. The reason for that was the promise of the new party to save them from the despotism of the state.*

The *agha*, the tax-collector and the gendarme *triumvirate* were said to represent the “bad guys” for the villager. In the novel *Yusuf* from *Kuyucak*, *Sabahattin Ali* uses the tax-collector as his hero and depicts him as a victimized man worthy of sympathy in the eyes of the reader. In the novel series *Memed My Hawk*, *aghas* like *Abdi*, *Hamza*, *Ali Safa* and *Mahmut* are all given as despicable portraits.

But in *Murder in the Ironsmiths Market*, this time *Yaşar Kemal* describes the declining authority of the last feudal *agha* (*Derviş Bey*) vis-à-vis the gendarmes. His henchman whom he compels to kill the head of the opponent *Akyollu* family is tortured to death at the gendarme station. That is to say, the *agha* figure is forgiven and even sublimated by the author, in this novel.

*Derviş Bey* is a heroic figure with his racing horses, his gold brodered pants brought from *Halep*, his heroic resolution in not surrendering to his enemies a man seeking asylum in his mansion. Nevertheless, the gendarme is again strongly negated.

### 3.2.1. A Turning Point: Mechanization and Migration

“Contrary to widely held opinions, Turkish farmers are and have always been open to innovation. In previous centuries they were quick to introduce new crops, such as potatoes and tobacco; more recently, they embraced enthusiastically new techniques in irrigation, fertilizers, tractors and improved varieties of seed, while they often lacked the knowledge to apply them to the best advantage” (Mango 2004: 148).

In 1950 the government changed hands to the newly founded (Democrat) party, a splinter of the old block by itself. Swift integration with the western world came about. Foreign aid flooded into the country, especially from America.

“In order to revolutionize the mostly agriculture-based stagnant economy, and to promote production and consumption at the same time, the new government tried to better the farmers’ life all of a sudden. It subsidized products and abolished taxes and gave credit through state banks. It also inaugurated mechanization” (Yalman 1957: 269).

*The Democrats’ government accomplished with zeal a gigantic effort to transform the economic and social aspects of the country. Wheat, cotton, tobacco, rose essence, chromium, copper productions and exportations registered unprecedented levels* (Başgil 1963: 93).

But this sudden excitement and hopeful outcomes soon made it look incentive to have better conditions. Everybody inclined towards luxury and consumption. That in turn pumped imports enormously. It is in this time that masses began moving onto cities. The former discouragement through coercive measures (\*) was gone anyhow.

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

As Pauli (1990: 30) notes, *the land fugitives, who comprises land workers who had lost their bread through mechanization of the agriculture as well as peasants with insufficient land, today belong to the urban working classes and try to find jobs in city centers. Their number keeps increasing. They do not possess the strike and union organizations or they do to a very limited extent. They provide cheap man power as daily wagers in construction works, markets and in plants.*

Now, this is just what had happened to many Turkish peasants, starting from 1950's onwards. Many social changes ensued.

For instance, *this development caused a partition of the large village family and a labor division within the village family. Grocer, barber tasks in the village or other jobs in the city are examples* (N. Erdentuğ 1977: 134).

Considering that Turkish people are essentially without any true trades (as Çetin Altan always stresses in his chronicles), in that respect, one can speak of a positive result.

*The application of the etatism did not lead to any significant change in the distribution of professions. The percentage of agrarian population continued to be 80 %. The industrial population grew slightly but did not exceed 8 %. This in turn does not mean a radical change even in the industrial professionalism. Part of the labor force employed in the government sector stayed as "half-peasants". As far as percentages go, even the Tanzimat movement had been stronger in industrial and commercial developments, leading to fast urbanization in Selânik, İzmir, Zonguldak and Samsun. The slum areas emerged around many cities due to further falls in agricultural productivity under population boom rather than a result of industrialization* (Berkes 1975: 112-113).

While I was working for a state-owned pulp and paper plant in Çay-Afyon as late as in 1980, a laborer at the craft master position once complained that the unskilled workers were mostly former shepherds and farmers from nearby villages (like *Karacaören* or *Akkonak*) and thus unable to cope with the required technology. (Once we attended a circumcision feast in the latter village and were treated to various delicious dishes. But a dessert like milk pudding was followed by a salty liquid meal and than plum syrup and then



another salty liquid meal and so on. In cities sweet dishes come at the end to terminate the lunch).

*In parallel to the industrialization of the lands, the percentage of landless peasants increased on the whole. While in 1950 14.5 % of the entire peasant population were landless; in 1967 29.8 % and in 1977 32.6 % were in this condition (Roth & Taylan 1981: 49-50 with reference to Beşikçi 1969).*

Nevertheless the fact must be conceded that mechanization paid off as a whole: “Wheat production has doubled (Turkey imported wheat in 1950 and now plans to export two million tons in 1953); cotton production has trebled” [tripled] (Stevenson 1954: 17).

“Most spectacular has been the gain in cereal production, up to 50 %, from 9 million tons in 1948 to 13.5 tons in 1953. Wheat has become Turkey’s main export, with cotton and tobacco in second and third places. A basic element in this growth has been a tremendous program of road-building, which has gone far to eliminate isolation for most of the 40,000 villages where most of Turkey’s 22 million people live” (Chamberlin 1954: 38).

Famous historian Toynbee, while affirming the incredible revolution of the new Turkey, leaves a question mark for the case of what he calls the social plane:

“On the social plane, which matters even more than the political plane, have Turks succeeded in raising the mental and material standard of living of that vast majority of the Turkish people that lives in the countryside, in villages, working on the land?” (Toynbee 1954: 38).

As Roth & Taylan (1981: 49) put it; *according to Bülent Ecevit (prime minister during 1977-1979), upon fulfillment of the Village-City (köy-kent) Program, the villagers would possess strong and democratic cooperative organizations. Credits would henceforth be granted to the villagers directly. Technical means would also be obtained cheaply through those cooperative organizations without the intervening of go-betweens. State attempts to enhance irrigation would be increased. A conglomeration of villages, with the nearest town assuming the directing role as the center of activities, was foreseen.*

*Thanks to this community-reform of combining the villages together, advanced productivity would be obtained. For instance, it would not be necessary for each farmer to buy a separate tractor or a mower; instead it would be possible to lease such means of production. The model seemed promising at first sight. However, in a country like Turkey, it was doomed to fail due to lack of finances. With time, it proved to be no more than a good intention. Among*

*western foreign aid not a single project advocating the mentioned project came to be known. Autarchy [self sufficiency] and economical self-development opposed the western policies towards Turkey (Roth & Taylan 1981: 50)*

Donating some land to landless peasants was supposed to be a part of the project as well. But this land-giving promise was too good to come true. It is interesting to note that following the 1960 coup, the so-called land reform perhaps came nearest to anything like reality in the sense that the ruling iron hand could be considered strong enough to put it into force. The National Union Committee, that is, the junta holding the power; even undertook some expulsions of landlords again. (The first such expulsions occurred in early republican years as mentioned before).

*Burnouf (1967: 86) narrates the following: After sixty five landlords are deported from the east for their retrograde mentality, a peasant appeared in Ankara in front of the authorities and demanded his own landlord's return. He said: 'You took our landlord away. It is no secret that he used to exploit and beat us. You even claim to donate us the fields which he made us cultivate for his own sake. Well, now? Who will then give us the grains to sow? Our landlord could buy grains. He took away half the harvest but at least we kept the other half. After your intervening the fields are not even sown. Since you took the landlord away, nobody represents us in front of the governor. His staff forgot all about us!'*

*The villager went on with his litany: "Our landlord used to cure the sick. Don't tell me that only the doctor can achieve this! How do we pay a doctor? Our landlord accepts wheat and eggs as payment. Moreover, do you think the pharmacist will give us the medicament as a present? And, who will take the sick, who are unable to walk, to the doctor?"*

*"Our landlord lives in the very village. I know as well as you do, that blowing one's breath into the mouth of a sick person or wrapping a wounded arm in horse shit or saliva or urine or hammering a nail into a beam while reciting a prayer or I-don't-know-what-else would not do a great good; but at least, those practices give hope to the sufferers! Who gives you the right to deprive us of our hope?"*

*Dr. Tuğrul Tanyol once in his graduate class said that feudalism is more merciful than capitalism.*

Indeed, a feudal lord feels ashamed if he can't care for his men. At least he provides them free room and board if necessary. The French philosopher was probably in his right mind when he said that *nations only obtain the administrations that they deserve*.

In this context, let us note that even in the agricultural sector, temporary paid-farmlands, who are mostly migrants as well, are regarded much differently by the land owners in comparison to sheer sharecroppers, as far as responsibility feelings for their well being is concerned. In this case the landlord is behaving like any capitalist plant owner in industry:

“With the disappearance of sharecropping and the coming of wage work, landlords lost interest in all types of personal, face-to-face relations with the tenant and a new impersonal anonymous relationship replaced the old one” (Kıray 1982: 109).

While we are at it, let us also note that the formation of slums (*bidonvilles*) around the cities and related matters make up a gigantic topic beyond the scope of this dissertation.

As Professor *Ruşen Keleş* once said in his graduate class, *the attitude of the government for a very long time was a denial of their existence. On official papers the word gecekondu appeared very late. Instead, the description “not-permitted constructions” (izinsiz yapılar) was preferred.*

### **3.2.2. The Village Institutes Trial of Turkey**

Just after the republic rendering the nation literate was a main social problem even though the Latin script adapted in 1928 was easier to learn. Peoples' Schools then could only process a certain fraction of the adults. (*Atatürk* ordered the authorities “to teach it to everyone, including “the porter and the boatman”). Basically, the already literate population changed to the new Latin script.

Under the circumstances, *Atatürk* first paved the way to a gigantic campaign of education for the children at schooling age with the application of ‘educators’ (*eğitmenler*). This was a very swift and practical first-aid-like solution.

*The educators were newly discharged literate, intelligent service men who held one and two stripes as their ranks. Seven thousand of them were sent to the villages* (Mumcu 1976: 189).

As *Behçet Kemâl Çağlar* narrated it in his literature class, they were given a speech following their short preparatory course. When the ministry representative addressed the opening rhetoric “dear / honorable educators” the former soldiers, in accordance with the recent conditioning, immediately began to count the row call from the right hand side onwards as one, two, three and so forth. (“*Sayın*” means honorable but it also means the imperative form of the verb count. Maybe, if instead of this new word the Ottoman word *muhterem* had been employed, this confusion would not have happened).

Then came the village institutes into being. Village institutes represent an education movement unique to Turkey on the world. They got established in 1940 under the planning of bureaucrat *İsmail Hakkı Tonguç*, with the consent of the minister of education *Hasan Âli Yücel*.

The project of the Village institutes became a success. Five-year-long elementary school graduates originating from villages received a further five year training in those establishments and got appointed to villages as teachers. Boys and girls got academic as well as practical training (masonry, bee-keeping, carpentry, basics of hygiene etc.) here. A graduate is known to have said “after graduation my first task in my village was to wear the overalls and build a school building” (Akarsu 2009: 7).

*“Because they understood the environment and the mentality from which they themselves hailed [come from], and communicated in a similar idiom, such people were natural teachers for the village”* (Ahmad 1993: 82-83). *“By their eighth anniversary on 17 April 1948 there were twenty institutes with fifteen thousand pupils. The twenty-first one was opened in Van in November of the same year”* (B.Lewis 1961: 471).

*Konya-İvriz, Çifteler-Eskişehir, Düziçi-Adana, Kızılçullu-İzmir, Hasaoğlu-Ankara* [The husband of a distant cousin of mine studied there; this institute had a higher institute section also], *Savaştepe-Balıkesir* [a female colleague of mine studied at the Teachers' Lycée which is a later modification of this institute], *Kepirtepe-Kırklareli* were some of those institutes. [My mother had her diploma from *Kepirtepe*'s later-transformed Teachers Training Lycée version].

*Among some indirect contributions of the institutes mentioned by Tütengil are benefits like promoting equal opportunity understanding, removing the contrast between the ordinary people and the intellectuals, favoring co-educational study, instigating the holistic campus-style schooling model* (Hatipoğlu August 2009: 17).

“After the Second World War village institutions became a liability to the government, while the opposition accused them of spreading communist propaganda, they got turned into ordinary teacher-training establishments” (Zürcher 1993: 202-203).

Many scholars suggest that the elitist authorities regretted the try soon after it had started and being only lip-service providers for the peasantry they were only all glad to cooperate in the abolishment of the institutes at the first possible pretext thus hindering the awakening of the countryside. (After all, as sociologist *Gans* puts forward, the poor and the under-privileged have their function in society like performing the difficult, physically dirty and dangerous tasks).

On a television program an invitee was a professor who had graduated from an institute at the time. He talked about the wonderful feeling of camaraderie they had enjoyed. He said: “When we returned from a vacation we shared the good food we brought. We knew who had hazelnuts, who had walnuts and who had scorched corns (*kavurga*) in his locker”.

In his book on schooling in villages, educational inspector *Şaban Bey* talks about two industrious village teachers without openly specifying their origins but there is almost no doubt they are graduates of institutes:

*In a certain village the teacher and the students were whitewashing the school building together, upon my arrival. We began talking. The headman had sent some lime and brushes so they had plunged into work. A mason was expected to come but he was late. They had made the locker and the blackboard themselves before. This teacher did not even bother the headman for such trifle! They had weaved a waste basket from branches. They had obtained a glass-cutting apparatus too. The building was all shiny as if made of mother-of-pearl from the distance when I finally left the village (Sunar 1961: 33).*

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

For all the praise bestowed upon the village institutes, some critiques discredited them, and all this is done for the sake of the villagers, themselves: In December 26, 2011, an intellectual debate was held on the screen of NTV with the title “The Peasant Ways we had Taken Over” (*Devraldığımız Köylülük*) under the mediation of *Oğuz Haksever* and with the participation of *Gündüz Vassaf*, *Şerif Mardin* and *Murat Belge*.

There, *Belge* asserted that *the village institutions had initially been solely devised in order to keep the villagers within the villages and even perpetuate their autarchic [closed / self-sufficient] economy*. He ended his statement by expressing his view that *the People’s Republican Party [then in power as the single party] is an urban party*.

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

Karaömerlioğlu (2006:15) affirms that *the overemphasis of devotion to peasantry, in actuality, originates only from certain fears and anxieties, among which a leading one is the probable diffusion of landless villagers onto the cities and the resulting political instability caused by this newly formed worker class. Indeed, the chaotic and radical agitations stirred by similar mass movements of peasantry in Eastern Europe and the Balkans especially in the aftermath of the First World War was still fresh in memories at the time.*

A similar opinion is put forward by the senior journalist Çetin Altan in one of his chronicles: *In the republican era, not building the highways did not pertain to a lack of funds, alone. In a sense, it was a deliberate decision to prevent the flow of the villagers onto the cities. In Ankara, a barefooted peasant, if spied by the military policemen on the main boulevards between the quartiers Ulus and Bakanlıklar, was simply ordered to turn into a side street* (Ç. Altan November 10, 2005).

But the many shortcomings of an education system far aloof from rural facts and circumstances constitute a genuine problem worth of vigorous debate, for many nations, even in contemporary times, as it can be inferred from the following passage.

*Since 1970s, the crisis of state school systems in the lands of the Third World were ignored and thus further sharpened. This holds true also for Indonesia, whose school system —resembling those in many other countries — is oriented on an urban model in form and content. For a rural life style, school attendance is far irrelevant or even a negative influence. The schools supply almost nothing which is of importance for life on the countryside. 80 % of the Population of Indonesia living on land and this fact staying unchanged since years, a new orientation in schooling so as to include full consideration of the rural domain, is especially of significance* (Karcher & Alhadar 1986: 215-216).

## CHAPTER IV

### DESCRIPTIVE ASPECTS OF THE PEASANTRY

#### 4.1. What Defines a Turkish Village?

Referring to the idea of isolation, Vergin (1973: 87) says that *evidently nothing outside his village seems to concern the Turkish peasant. Two years <sup>(\*)</sup> of compulsory military service and certain tax-payments are the two only contact points where the nation immediately affects his lot. His world is limited to two dimensions. One is the land on which he is born, works and dies. The other is a vague and imprecise image in which exterior and foreign things sort of merge together and the rest of Turkey freezes.*

Such definitions are still valid for purposes of study but a village still preserving its purely classical and typical image is perhaps hard to find under today's changing conditions. The actual situation of Turkey is probably closely described as a *société dual* (resorting to the term suggested by Baud et al. 2003: 397) in face of its rapid transformation. The Turkish village itself is changing and getting jointed to urban connections more and more in many aspects of life whether it be economic, social, cultural or psychological.

*A village is the smallest place where people live within the country. There the population is less than two thousand. In our country it came to become customary to specify the number of houses instead of the number of people when it comes to talk about the population of villages. Given in that respect, the biggest village consists of about four hundred houses (Âfetinan 1969: 283).*

*Item number one of the Law of Village inaugurated in 1924 considers settlements with a population less than two thousand as a village. More crowded settlements up to twenty thousand are specified as small towns. If a*

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\* In the year of 1973 when Vergin wrote those lines the service comprised two years. Along the course of time it has been incrementally shortened. Now it takes only fifteen months. (For a university graduate it is a short term of half a year). Very recent debates are in question about further revisions of the service duration.<sub>S.C.</sub>



*municipality administration is present than the settlement is legally taken as a small town even if its population is less than two thousand (Tütengil 1983: 27).*

*A classification given by İbrahim Yasa is classifying villages as people's village, agha village and mixed village. In the first type big income differences are not encountered among the inhabitants. West Anatolian and Thracian villages are of this type. In the second typology, one person or family exclusively dominates and in a sense owns the village. In the third type of village the dominant family has another rival family and the rest of the peasants own some or no property (Tütengil 1983: 101).*

*As the head and important person of the village, the muhtar [préposé / headman / Dorfvorsteher] is in possession of the right to speak and issue orders. While in charge of the village affairs, he who attacks or opposes the préposé is liable to receive the same penalty as in the case of harassment of a government official. He who violates the herds and property of a village is penalized as in the case of abusing state property. The administration of the villages is regulated through the Law of Villages passed in the era of the republic. While the public and private affairs and the municipal works of towns and cities are handled separately, all duties of a village are considered as one and same administrative topic and function accordingly (Tütengil 1983: 102).*

As Pierce (1964: 84) says for the case of a central Anatolian village, “Under the Republic it is required by law that the muhtar be an elective office. From 1923 until the mid-fifties this had little effect, as the villagers simply voted the oldest man back into office at each election. However, in the last election held under Menderes government the old muhtar was voted out of office [only] in favor of the next oldest man in the village. It seems likely that as the very large crop of young people go through the public schools, learn more about democratic processes, and mature to become voters, still younger men will be elected to this office until finally it will become truly elective”.

Villagers wear cheap but strong clothing. Former *çarık*, home-made moccasins, are replaced by plastic shoes and more and more by leather shoes. From here comes the euphemistic title *çarıklı erkân-I harp* (moccasin-wearing staff officer), since males like to talk politics in coffee shops. In winter the ground being muddy up to ankles —poor infra-structure— plastic boots are preferred.

Some villagers have very large feet. Barefoot in summer, the feet are not constricted to grow. *Yashar Kemal* in one of his novels depicts an auxiliary character whose feet were so big that in the army service he wore open slippers.

Turkish people, compared to Americans, have smaller feet on average. (An athletic girl I knew with feet sized 44 had her shoes exported from America).

When I was a boarding student, our American housemaster *Mr. Kuniholm* <sup>(\*)</sup> once posted a note on the bulletin board requesting the student with the biggest feet to see him for a present. The brand new sport shoes were too big even for that student! The biggest shoe size was 45 on the market until recent times. Once a shoe seller in *Lüleburgaz* proudly said that Oil-Wrestler *Rizeli Şaban* bought a pair of size 45-shoes at his shop, the only shop where this size was available in town.

While she was a village teacher, my mother used to refer to a boy as the leather-shoed student. Later he killed a rattler sneaking into the classroom and earned the heroic title “snake-killer in our house.

Meanwhile let us dwell at some length upon the danger of snake bites on the countryside. Since it is a constant threat in rural regions to get bitten by snakes;

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\* The same Mr. *Kuniholm* gave a wonderful slide show to us the boarding students in the dormitory building study hall, in one October evening. The topic was his summer impressions of Anatolia at the time, as taken through his amateur camera. My first interest in anthropology could very well have been stirred during this one-hour-long presentation session. A picture still vividly embedded in my memory was the slide featuring a public toilet in a remote village.

On the archaic entrance door whose aged wood veins were bulging had been scribbled with white chalk in crooked small lettering: “Big job 25 *piastres*, small job 10 *piastres*”. The housemaster looked away from the audience with a shy smile and a blush discernible in the twilight as the scene suddenly emerged on the screen. (That housemaster was an imaginative person. One afternoon he would measure with a stop watch the timing of volunteers who race the staircases up to the entrance to the dormitory building. Some other time, he would instigate the arrangement of a song contest etc. The former English teacher was to proceed his career later on with a Ph.D. degree in archeology). s.ç.

the average peasant knows a great deal about snakes. In August 2009 in a peripheral coffee house in *Edirne* I overheard a hot discussion about snakes. The group leader, a middle aged talkative man equivalent to the American “cracker-barrel-philosopher type, was talking about his former adventures with snakes to two obviously fascinated acquaintances, all three originating from villages.

As inferred from the talk, the group leader, *Özcan*, was a shepherd in a village of *Saray-Tekirdağ* until his military service. Once a snake rolled around his leg and his sister quickly fetched a spade from the tractor. *Özcan* hit the snake with the spade blade at the cost of cutting his plastic boot and injuring his shin bone. Much other information about snakes leaked through the conversation.

*Özcan* said that *an open machine oil can lures snakes. They love the taste of lubricating grease like leeches sucking blood. He said a snake would come from far-flung distances (ırimdan Kırım’dan) for that delicatessen. His friend from Ortaklar village of Edirne added that milk also attracts snakes. He said “emcee” snakes —the local word for a kind of snake is derives from the verb “to suck” (emmek)— suck milk from the udders of cows, usually sparing the cow and getting away after feeding themselves.*

*Özcan* confirmed: “Yes, grease or milk is what snakes like besides frogs and rats”. He affirmed that *a snake once crept past his thighs while sleeping in a barn. “It gives you a prickly feeling but if you don’t disturb the God-damned creature —Özcan’s tongue was prone to swearing often— he wouldn’t bite you. You should just stand still. They bite when they get afraid. After all, they carry lives in their bodies as we do”* he explained. He named a few kinds of snakes along the course of the conversation. He said some would jump quite a distance, “*maybe as long as the distance from that f\*cking motorbike up to our very table here!*”

Running water is usually absent and girls and women carry water from the common fountain. Today few villages lack electricity but formerly that was a problem too. Women usually wear colorful dresses and headscarf. Some wear chadors. Men wear the waistcoat (*muhtar yeleşi*). (The name “*muhtar çakmağı*” was also coined for certain press-ignite benzene lighters which never broke down and were in circulation until twenty years).

A *casquette* (peaked cap) on the head was like a trademark until recent times. While this hat identified with the village male has its roots in early republican days when the oppression by the gendarmes was a constant fear to reckon with. They adapted the hat and were safe from a threat in that sense as a practical solution.

Those were the times (1930s) when villagers could not even walk up the main avenues in Ankara in their typical clothes as Keyder (1987) notes.

In recent times the younger villagers had done away with that hat and go around bareheaded (like *citadins*) as I witnessed in *Çankırı* villages in 1990s and in recent field trips in Thrace and the Aegean regions.

Poet *Nâzım Hikmet* pays his own tribute to the peasant-cap in exile when he says “*neither my casquette made there remain on my head nor the shoes which trod your streets, my country!*”.

The villager’s weather-beaten nape ages early and gets all wrinkled. Exposure to sun is inevitable even with a handkerchief spread around the neck. The callus of the hands goes without saying. So, one can read the peasant-origins at a single glance.

Education is a constant problem: *Within the agrarian structure children help their families in production. Thus their school attendance is considered a loss from the point of view of parents. Or, parents are reluctant to send them to school with the fear that they will be alienated from the traditional family form through new ideas and knowledge.. A female’s place is her home is a fairly common understanding whereas school is an institution not in support of this.*

*One can speak of the fright that educating females might slacken the filial ties and work to the detriment of the village hierarchy (Tezcan 1981: 200).*

The coffeehouse is the center of the village. Interestingly, as a German academic travel group from Berlin (*Türkei 1980, Erfahrungen und Berichte Berliner Lehrerstudenten: Eine Exkursion von Studenten und Dozenten nach Westanatolien*, p. 62) observes it correctly; *it would have been more realistic<sup>(\*)</sup> to call such places 'teahouses' rather than 'coffeehouses'.* Especially in year 1980 when they undertook the research travel, foreign funds being scarce, it was not possible for Turkey to import coffee. Anyway, the report asserts that even the smallest Anatolian village has at least one coffeehouse. It is found in the very center and serves as the mid point of social life. It pertains to males only. There men talk over all daily happenings, politics, and various problems. The television is on the whole day long. The *préposé* (muhtar / headman), the religion official (imam) and the security official (korucu) come in whenever they have an announcement to give. Important decisions are taken. It appears possible that in case more than one coffeehouse is present, political views play a role in the choice.

Here the German text very properly uses the term “*sheriff*” in quotes or the term “*Dorfpolizist*” meaning village police. In this context, the word “*korucu*” is not the same as the salaried “*geçici korucu*” (temporary guards) employed in vast numbers in South Anatolia presently, as a government-backed militia

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\*Sometimes an outsider catches certain details and at first hidden meanings more successfully than an insider. I, personally, never associated the district *Sirkeci* in Istanbul with vinegar until I read it in a foreign book. The district was in fact had been a center of vinegar commerce formerly. In an Education conference which I participated in *MEF*-schools in *Ortaköy*, Istanbul, a certain participant from the private sector dealing with educational textbooks carried out an experiment right there, taking advantage of his being the chairman of a session.

He directed a question to the whole audience and asked the difference between a one-minaret mosque and a more-than-one- minaret mosque. The well-educated distinguished audience, history teachers included, kept silent. Not a single person came up with the answer. The chairman said that only the Ottoman dynasty had the privilege to erect more than one minaret. Otherwise, even the *grandvizier* had to be content with a single minaret. He added that he had learned this knowledge from a foreign book on Ottoman history! s.ç.

force specifically against separatist terrorist acts. Village security officials have always been on scene in all regions of Turkey.

Village security officials wear thick clothed brown uniforms and uniform-hats and badges on their chests. This is only a semi-official appearance not based on written directions. Rather it became customary and convention-like (*alışı / teamül gibi*) along the course of years.

Village security officials are not on any official payroll but get donations from the village. (Until a symbolic salary issued in relatively recent times, the *muhtar* himself had no government salary, either). Nowadays, based on news on media, it is known that some cunning village security officials are beginning to sue their villages' legal persons to obtain retirement pensions from the social security fund.

Returning to the German team's affirmation about the central importance of the village tea house; we can only confirm it. Especially during 1950's when political partisanship between rivaling Democrat and People's Republican parties was paramount, tea houses were divided on that basis. Other criteria may also come into play.

For that matter; even at *Bosphorus* University, the high society canteen of *Kâzım* was differing from the more "proletarian looking" other canteen (of *Veli*) in late 1970s.

Similarly, here, too, social standing can be the differing criterion among men. Even the small village is not uniform in this sense. The population is conscious of social status. Moreover, mere income is not the only "ingredient" in determining differences.

Other "additives" pertaining to prestige are also there to reckon with. One is education. Another one is the perceived intelligence and skillfulness level or

credibility. A man exempt from the military service due to bad health can never enjoy a high prestige even if he is rich.

*Beside the coffeehouse, the central locations and the streets are also the domain of males. Females are seen rarely. As a rule of thumb, they depend upon their children's courier service to learn about news and happenings (Türkei 1980, Erfahrungen und Berichte Berliner Lehrerstudenten: Eine Exkursion von Studenten und Dozenten nach Westanatolien, p. 53).*

#### **4.1.1. A Strong Traditional Tone**

In sociological terms of *Tönnies*, a village is a community (*Gemeinschaft*) as opposed to a society (*Gesellschaft*). It is a place where few of any things are in compliance with the written law in every day life aspects. Getting a punctual birth certificate is a problem because the father has to go all the way to the district for this purpose.

Sometimes the baby is reported and registered only when he / she attains the age of two or three. Sometimes the baby just takes on the former dead sibling's official identity. As a matter of fact infant mortality <sup>(\*)</sup> rate is high compared to urban centers and this practice saves a new confrontation with authorities, an unpleasant as well as expense requiring task.

In primary schools, even two-three decades ago, educational textbooks and magazines used to describe a family as "consisting of father, mother and children". Now, in village societies those nuclear families are difficult to find even today. Instead, we encounter larger families and even *polygyny*. Many

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\* As Delaney (1991-67) notes (for an Ankara village she studied in 1980's) *the swaddle is then used as a substitute for the usual shroud in burial*. In Islam a dead child is considered a bird of paradise, who will intercede (*şefa'at*) for the good of the parents in the afterworld. Delaney also notes "*the nonchalance with which parents speak of the death of a baby*".

Indeed, I remember the half-bitter smile on my grandmother's face when she mentioned my would-have-been uncles and aunts. She claimed she raised the later babies thanks to amulets. s.ç.

males have common law wives and lack marriage license. Polygamy is getting rare but in some regions it is still a valid practice. (The clergy may have blessed the wedding, which is the case in almost all non-official unions).

Again in primary schools educational literature, a breakfast used to be described as consisting of “cheese, jam or honey, butter and tea” (if not grapefruit juice and caviar). Of course, as time passes, urbanization trends and new developments make those *clichés* more and more valid. But, especially in former times, those were only didactical aspirations/images and would-be-concepts rather than the commonplace reality:

“The step-brother of my maternal grandfather had been a prison-guard in the city of *İzmit*. Once he came to visit my grandfather in *Kırklareli*. At the time my mother was a ten-year-old girl (The year was 1942). My mother —as she would narrate it to me in my childhood years— was quite astonished in the morning to see this “guard-uncle” seated at the table (!) in expectation of cheese and jam (!) for the breakfast. My mother’s own family ate all the meals on a cloth spread on the floor, in accordance with the traditional provincial Turkish way at the time; and their staple morning food itself was soup, not cheese and jam” (Çaya 1992: ix).

[In Turkey] “the most desirable actions strengthen the solidarity of the group; consultation and cooperative effort rather than individual initiative are the accepted norms of behavior. The group is variously defined according to the circumstances. Primary emphasis is placed upon the family and kin. It is only with some difficulty that the tradition-oriented villager trusts and cooperates with individuals and groups outside the village context, including the national government. In relationships involving non-kinsmen, a person acts much the same as he does toward different kinds of kinsmen; he respects his elders, advises and reprimands his juniors” (Roberts et al. 1970: 168, 169).

The daughter-in-law enters the father-in-law’s household, where a lot of manual work awaits her! Pierce (1964: 43) narrates the following through the eyes of a 10-year-old boy (to add flavor and to facilitate the understanding of the matters to the western reader):

[*Mahmud*’s elder brother got just married]. “The new bride in Mahmud’s home was of some interest to him, for she was always on the run. When there was work in the kitchen to be done, he heard his mother’s voice snapping out the



word *gelin* (bride) almost constantly, always followed by a command to do this or that about the house. Thus she ran from morning till night, trying to satisfy her new family and prove that she was a good housewife. This situation would remain unchanged until Mahmud married and brought a new *gelin* into the house”.

*Polygamy is forbidden since the grounding of the republic. It is an exceptional practice now and mostly pertains to far-flung eastern regions or else it occurs out of necessity like when the wife is sick or when she can not give birth or when a man's brother dies and the dead man's family needs to be incorporated into his household. Polygamy is also practiced out of prestige considerations. A rich and powerful man displays that he can afford it and that his traditional right is more important than the forbid imposed by the state* (Kündig-Steiner 1974: 99).

After building the Republic, a law was accepted in 1934 to use family names for the first time in history. Formerly nicknames were commonly employed to differentiate individuals with same names. Some of those nicknames were of ethnical nature like *Arnavut* (Albanian) *Vehbi*, *Pomak Sami*, *Boşnak* (Bosnian) *Rıza*, *Macır Mehmet* (here the word “*muğacir*”, meaning “emigrant” is collapsed into a shorter familiar version).

The home-cities were sometimes even part of the official titles throughout the Ottoman History like *Nevşehirli Damat İbrahim Paşa*, *Çorlulu Ali Paşa*, *Kavalalı Mehmet Ali (\*) Paşa*, *Resneli Niyazi*, *Manastırlı Hamdi* and *Tophaneli Hakkı* (commander of Battleship *Nusret* in Gallipoli naval wars).

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\*“Muhammed Ali Pasha (ruled 1805-1848), the first modernizing ruler of the Arabic-speaking country of Egypt, was an Ottoman of Albanian origin, and he and his had his top military and other officials were all Turkish-speaking” (Lewis 2002: 156).

The man is said to have intended to replace the Ottoman dynasty with that of his own. *Mahmud the Second* called the aid of Tsarist Russia to overcome this possibility at the cost of big concessions through the Treaty of *Hünkâr İskelesi* (1833). European powers themselves, preferring the continuation of the relatively weaker Ottoman State instead, intervened by arranging the Treaty of London to check the expansion of both Russia and the practically autonomous Egypt. s.ç.

Some other nicknames could be very degrading adjectives or could simply refer to some physical structures or even deformities. Example are: *Topal* (lame), *Kör* (blind, usually meaning “one-eyed”), *Yangöz* (side sighted), *Şaşı* (cross-eyed), *Kel* (bald), *Pinti* (miser / stingy), *Deli* (crazy), *Alçak* (low, designating shortness in height but also insinuating lowness of character), *Tek Taşak* (with only one testicle / one-balled), *Çüksüz* (without penis in figurative sense), *Baygın* (fainting, because of sleepy-looking eyes like those of actor *Robert Mitchum*), *Kedi* (Feline).

Many women had nicknames too: *Fındık* (hazelnut) *Fatma*, *Güzel* (beautiful) *Fatma*, *Çakır* (blue-eyed) *Emine*, *Fışfış Kadriye* (This onomatopoeia, something like plop plop, refers to inarticulate speech), *Soysuz Nesrin* (literally without pedigree but figuratively coarse and impolite).

*Kanlı* (Bloody) *Şevket* was a construction worker in a Thracian town with a murder history behind him. *Batan* (sinking) *Ârif* was a notorious drinker. *Taşaklı* (with testicles) had been the keeper of a good coffee house many decades ago. As I have been told by my mother, my grandfather used to go to *Taşaklı*’s far-away-coffee house in his younger days.

The owner died and the place got closed before I was born. During my childhood, old grandfather was visiting the nearby coffee house of *Bilâl Oğlan*, as he had baptized him furtively, in accordance with a Macedonian folk song: “The window blast open, son- *Bilâl* and the revolver roared!” (“*Pencere açıldı Bilâl Oğlan, piştov patladı*”).

*Bilâl* was a fierce Macedonian with a bushy moustache and with his “archaic” revolver he had registered a few “heroic” incidents. Ironically *Bilâl* had been a gendarmerie corporal and commanded a station for a matter of weeks. He was younger than my grandfather, who had attained the conscription age back in Macedonia. Hating the idea of service in the Greek Army, my grandfather had chosen to post an enormous bail and had received exemption from the service.

The tradition of nicknames still lingers in villages and even other small communities. Most people are referred to by nicknames instead of official last names.

#### **4.1.2. Convention versus Written-Law**

Years ago while I was traveling on a train the ticket controller asked for a wedding certificate from an old, bearded, wrinkled face peasant, who was sitting next to his wife covered in black veils. The old man must have bought a family tariff ticket. He could not produce the document. (One can not even easily carry around the bulky note-book type of document, even if it *did* exist). I immediately hated the over zealous snob, the arrogant *citadin*.

In a course I once attended, a classmate from a village in *Kayseri* narrated a case story. A woman from the village, an ex-migrant worker who had been in Germany was a widow. She got the alimony salary of her dead German husband. Upon return she got married to a male in the village unofficially.

The head of the village took all the trouble to report her to Germany to get her salary cut off. The informal sanction, he just faced. Even the classroom got furious over that village head. Besides, the money came from a different government. So what of it?

Things put down in written form may assert what is widely different from the actual practices even in small towns, let alone villages. In the Turkish Law, it is stipulated that any contract where deceit is involved, is legally null and void. This statement comprises wedding acts also. Now, in reality, in provincial Turkey many would-be grooms lie about their professional, social and financial situations to the would-be brides; just to win those girls!

A plain officeholder / *fonctionnaire* may pose himself as director of the department or a health-official may pose himself as a doctor and so on.

Years ago, in *Çay* county of the province of *Afyon*, a foreman introduced himself as a technician [a technician had higher status than a foreman in the pulp and paper plant where he worked] to the girl's family. *Süleyman*, the actual technician and his superior, only collaborated with the foreman at the visit to the girl's family. He seconded his man and said "he is a technician and I work under him".

On rare occasions a woman may resort to deception to win a man. My travel-comrade from an Aegean return trip by bus, *Ahmet* the Roll Bread Maker, is very anxious to remarry after the death of his wife. He said a divorced woman from another village was arranged by acquaintances for this matter.

The woman proclaimed only one daughter, which was quite acceptable for him. But then it turned out she concealed her two sons. "This would not have worked" he explained to me, putting into words possible conflicts with the boys. He may be unable to mention Oedipus complexes and resulting complications by name in a Freudian approach; but he is fully aware of what they represent.

*Ahmet* the Roll Bread Maker is a wise man. He said that he does not visit his married daughter so willingly, feeling himself a burden for the son-in-law though he is a polite young man respecting him. But he intends to visit his son's bachelor house readily and frequently, that being different.

Such deception practices also illustrate the pride of the people in question. A rich or high status-person may not need to be boaster but in self-perceived lower roles it is like a necessity to brag about oneself in order to keep one's face.

I remember in D.H. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers*, the newly-married bride, Mrs. Morel, discovers the next day the bills in the suit pockets of her husband, Mr. Morel, a drinker of a coal miner.

She then realizes that the furniture was only bought on credit and the debt must be later paid. Before a wedding is arranged the would-be groom pays a visit with his close circle of acquaintances to the would-be bride's family in his title of *suitor*. I better like the expression *gentleman-caller*, from the mouth of Amanda, the unforgettable heroin in the play *Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. She is a strong resolute woman deserted by her husband, putting up a fight to keep the family going (and I always associated her with my own dear mother).

#### **4.1.3. A Mainly Self-Contained Economical Structure**

In this section about the economic aspects of the village some oversimplification is taken and an "ideal" village is considered for facilitating the issue of comparison. However in actuality it is known that almost every mode of production almost everywhere is commercialized at least to some extent and in this respect peasantry's economical activity is also somehow attached to the micro economic dynamics.

That is to say, in the words of Prof. Dr. M.C. Ecevit (1999: 259) *the relationship between the small assets production and the world surrounding it are determined with respect to the capitalistic patterns.*

Indeed; as an American scholar expresses it, *a peasant community differs from an isolated Indian tribe, a band of Australian Bushmen, or a former Polynesian island in that it is not self-sufficient. They exist in intimate relationships with crowded centers. Peasants are primarily farmers and sometimes artisans* <sup>(\*)</sup> *as*

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\*Of course only certain artisanship may pertain to peasantry. One can not expect to find a goldsmith in any village. But a craft producing felt from wool is a suitable business for a village. Usually a village tailor and barber is always present. In any case, certain artisans

*well. They produce food and material items for clothing and tools. But they depend on town markets to sell surplus produce and buy items they can not fabricate. Kroeber aptly calls them 'part-societies' forming a segment of a larger civilization (abridged from Foster 1962: 46).*

When my mother, a city girl, got married to my father, then a first lieutenant in the army but originating from a village, she noticed my father's craving for milk, eggs and cheese in breakfast and casually said "how come you devour such food so eagerly? Aren't you a country boy? You must be sick of such food ever since your childhood!"

Then he explained to her that villagers sell milk, eggs, butter and cheese in weekly set up town fair markets to obtain some cash and they are more deprived of such food than poor city-dwellers!"

Indeed great symbolic Turkish poet *Ahmet Hâşim* points to that fact in one of his rarely-written prose works in which he wonders why some city people are so fond of visiting the awful countryside:

*Its air affected with malaria, its waters full of snakes, its paths stony; its inhabitants hungry after sending off onto the city their butter, milk, meat, fruits and vegetables in their entirety; the sole joy of the village is to wait for a visit from the city in total resignation (Hâşim [new print] 2007: 59).*

The self-contained closed nature of the economic system of a village favors exchange of goods rather than a purchase in money. A service is also paid in goods rather than in cash. I remember the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In one

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like saddle-makers and horseshoe makers, though stationed in towns, live on villagers' payments almost exclusively. Such crafts are diminishing. They had lost their golden times long ago.

*Leather-processing (tabaklık / debbağlık) survived in Afyon. Traveler Evliya Çelebi reports a hundred such shops in the city in his day. Those shops need much water and are situated near public baths. They provide clean leather for further use by saddlers, and light shoe (Yemeni) makers. Goat hair spinners (mutaf) are also putting up a fight to survive (paraphrased from Arsoy 2004: 383).*

episode the county physician is mentioned to receive a bushel of potatoes etc. from his patients instead of money. (The plot evolves in rural Alabama in 1930's).

Elia Kazan (1969: 668) also gives a similar account in a partly biographical novel (\*) for a small American town in Connecticut. The hero of the novel settles down in this town and begins to work for a spirit-shop, serving the drunks. In a sense he becomes the spiritual counselor of his clients, who get to like him and bring him gifts: The surplus of the vegetable products, eggs, chickens. The rumor goes that the counter-attendant likes strawberries and a flood of strawberry delivery follows. Conserved jam and vegetables, winter apples, pears do not lack. A drunken woman knits a woolen pullover for him. People offer the books and magazines of a few days in retard to him after reading them. He finds himself the receiver of communal subsidies.

*In a village shopping occurs through barter rather than cash. Somebody gives what he owns to get what he needs. He gives plums in return for barley or he gives eggs in return for onions. This solidarity extends to an exchange of work as well. Somebody whose tobacco field needs to be hoed fetches a neighbor and works the field with his aid. Some other day he pays his work debt to his neighbor by helping him out in his toil* (Sunar 1961: 7).

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\*The novel is about *Eddie Arness*, the son of a Greek emigrant, *Seraphim*. The father, originally from *Kayseri* in Anatolia, a dealer of oriental carpets, loses his capital in the depression years. His son gets a university education despite the father's discouragement and becomes an important employee in an advertisement firm. He is married to a dean's daughter. He is a well-to-do figure in Los Angeles.

An affair with a frivolous woman, *Gwen*, upon disclosure, changes everything. His renunciation of his mistress renders him unhappy deep inside despite the best appearance (the now so-called golden couple). He eventually attempts suicide twice, donates all his wealth to his wife and ends up in an asylum. After recovery he joins the problematic mistress again and restarts as a salesclerk in a small town. He chooses to be free from all his former urban engagements and burdens. s.ç.

*Even the small village shop's owner engages in barter. He gives straw and gets oat; he gives barley and receives beans (Sunar 1961: 47).*

*[Anyhow] the peasant does not always have money at hand. He gets his income from his fields and livestock; so, he obtains money after the harvest when he sells his produce or incrementally as he makes excursions to weekly fair markets in towns to sell smaller items (Sunar 1961: 34).*

Indeed, for the typical villager, money is too precious to spend readily. When I was a child, on a winter weekend my mother chose the train to reach her parents' home. We arrived at the station early. A middle-aged peasant man in rough puffy clothing was among the waiting travelers. He was clinging the coins in his palm while squinting at his hand. Obviously it was a challenge for him to part with his valuable money.

Finally at the last minute he walked to the ticket-window and bought his ticket. My brother must have noticed him also. He whispered to me with a solemn face: "That man kept looking at his coins!" I gave him a nod and hushed him to silence.

(Even though a bus trip is more practical in many respects, villagers usually prefer the cheaper train travel. Recently I took the train from *Edirne* to Istanbul and witnessed that most former village stations had been abolished, with the station buildings already fallen into half-ruins)

Those smaller items to be sold by the peasants on the town market could be eggs, hens, yoghurt, vegetable. The peasant may also consign them to a friend to sell and bring the money back. If there is a grocery shop in the village the customers buy in credit to pay back in harvest time.

Peasants love credit since it is a way of life. During my former tailor shop apprentice days —the shop was always bursting with customers during the harvest season— a peasant customer once said "if you accept credit, then you



might as well load a truck with excrement from that public toilet yonder and expect to sell it in the village square! But you can't sell anything for cash".

*For the peasant who earns the money through hard work coping with the soil under the hot sunrays, money means more compared to a town or city dweller. He tends to hide the money for wedding and circumcision festivities, taxes, and illness (Sunar 1961: 43).*

Sunar (1961: 42-43) narrates that *in a village there was a problem about provision of stationary material like pencils, erasers, notebooks for the students and there existed no shop in the village. He suggested establishing a school cooperation to the parents. They replied they had no money. He asked if they got eggs and the answer was yes. Then he required each student to bring a single egg and this way they accumulated the necessary small capital to establish a school cooperation.*

As Tütengil (1955-1956: 38) notes, *in Keçiller village of Altıntaş-Kütahya the fee of the village barber is paid annually in terms of cereals as agreed upon unanimously by all villagers beforehand.*

Though the overwhelming majority of villages rely on agriculture as subsistence; coastal villages engage in fishing. Forest villagers collect permitted timber. In *Aydın-Bergama* villages they go collect cones from peanut pines, which are tall trees. Peasants climb trees and poke cones with long sticks for that purpose. (When pruning the trees stumps are left out to facilitate climb).

The fallen cones are collected and peanuts sorted out from among the blades. They still have a hard shell. The rest is factory work. Pine peanuts add flavor to rice and other food (like *helva*). Forestry administration promotes pine peanut growing in *Istanbul-Terkos* and *Çanakkale* regions too. There being almost no input like fertilizers, seeds and gasoline for plough with a tractor it is very profitable (based on reminiscences from a fairly recent TRT broadcast).

Stock raising was more of a nomadic occupation. In villages it is done but finding pastures is more and more difficult. French researcher de Planhol (1958: 165) in his work on rural Turkish life around the lakes region near *Burdur* talks about the sheep raising:

*Flat tailed sheep are good for meat; sheep with S-shaped tails are good for milk. They are cropped once a year (in Tefenni twice a year). Goat keeping is also common. Where the landscape permits (like in villages of Karamusa, Bayramlar, Hasanpaşa) on yunum günü (the day of washing) (to improve the quality of the wool before cropping) they block a stream in a manner to let form a pool of water. Then the shepherds dip themselves in water up to neck and drive the herd forward. The sheep must swim. This is a day of festivities.*

Villagers are frugal and pragmatic. They make much of anything at hand. They don't throw away old fashioned house commodities and replace them by new ones as city families tend to do. For this reason, many objects considered antiquated in cities are in full service in villages. One can even possibly find hand-driven sewing machines properly oiled and kept working since nearly a century! (My own grandmother had had one).

A villager, even if well-to-do in his own measures, would hate to pay for a high bill in a luxury restaurant or café. He would regard this as being ripped off by scrupulous city shop owners. (I just remembered a scene from a movie by Kirk Douglas which I watched in my childhood under the Turkish title “*Gizli Münasebetler*”).

He plays an army general and one night after treating his girl friend to dinner he can't help saying “with this price a whole platoon of soldiers could be fed”. (As checked from internet, the original title is “Top Secret Affair”. The movie was released in 1957. The girl, a wealthy journalist, Dorothy, was acted by Susan Hayward).

The frugal habit of the villager gets transformed into the so-called *culture of poverty* when he moves to the urban slums. Along with valuing frugality, the poverty culture also incorporates laziness and being content with the little one possesses and thereby discourages the spirit of entrepreneurship and positive greed to get ahead in life.

Türkdoğan (2006: 15-16) rightly claims that *when closely examined, the poverty culture is seen to contain a socio-psychological quality besides depending on economical grounds. He says it is easier to overcome poverty itself but it is not so easy to overcome the culture of poverty.*

I remember that journalist *Engin Ardiç* years ago mentioned on the TV screen about the frugality of the older generation who had had experiences (*Erlebnis*) of scarcity from times of wars. When his father had died they had found an old agenda in his drawer with pages all unwritten. The man could not somehow bring himself to use it!

*The small family farm in market terms is not of significance since it does not run on business lines. It aims to reproduce its occupants rather than gain wealth. But even that enterprise represents considerable disguised and mostly unrecorded labor reservoir, especially female labor as Cornwall remarks (paraphrased from Cater and Jones 1992: 218).*

The importance of land for the peasantry is to be seen in the following case history narrated by a school teacher at the teacher club in *Edirne*. This teacher had encountered a practically “forceful” land transaction. He had left his village for a boarding school at the age of twelve and had few relations left, one being a childhood friend he kept in touch with. At the age of thirty five he lost his father and inherited his share of the land. He rented it to his former friend.

The friend got to like tilling this prosperous field. He got to like it too much. [A newly-coined and very meaningful Turkish verb is “*yerimsemek*”; one gets to like an entrusted or somehow temporarily appropriated position, place or an object and eventually begins to consider his informal privilege as a rightful ownership]. Then the peasant friend began circling around the teacher to arrange a purchase of the field. The teacher, to appease his lust, changed tactics and renounced over the rent.

He said: “Use the land as you wish and pay no rent! But never expect to get the *titres des propriété*. The bottom line is hereby thus drawn and period”. But one

day the friend found him in the city. He had a lump sum of money. He explained that half of it came from the selling of his wife's gold necklaces and the other from the selling of his sister-in-law's bracelets.

He said: "If you ever refuse to sell your field; I can not go back to the goldsmith and recuperate those gold objects without a considerable loss. I know that you are a good-hearted man fond of your comrade. An equal some of money is on the way as my seniority payment from the job I lost in the town. You are a man of the city now and do not need land. We will head for the notary right away!"

This, they did. It was a *de facto* situation hard to beat. A month later the promised seniority payment also arrived on the table of the teacher. Two years later the friend took the teacher for a visit to his former land. A marvelous two-storey house was towering over in a corner. The household was supposedly praying for the teacher's benediction.

#### **4.2. Typical Collective Traits of Villagers**

Classifying general traits and tendencies into rural and urban categories is not so simple since differences of region and ethnicity also come into play. Attachment to one's compatriot (*landsmen*) for instance, at first sight associated with peasantry, does not apply to western regions of Turkey even among peasants.

It is a much stronger feeling in eastern people in general even if they are urbanized in many ways. Western people, let alone clinging to one another, might even compete with one another in exile.

*Vedat F. Belli*, my former "boss" at *Çukurova* Faculty of Medicine, Chair of Legal Medicine, a former assistant of famous psychiatry professor *Rasim*

*Adasal* in *Ankara* School of Medicine at the time, once narrated the following story about *Adasal*, who had been an immigrant from the island of *Crete*.

*Belli* vividly imitated the *Cretan* accent, adding extra flavor to his narration. *Adasal* had a rival professor in the Chair of Microbiology, another immigrant from *Crete*. They disliked each other.

The microbiologist talked about him likewise: “*When Rasim was a child, he looked like an abnormal, maniac boy! Indeed, he grew up to become a lunatic-doctor*”. *Adasal* used to retaliate by the following information: “*When that man was a boy, he was always filthy and snotty and he used to play with horse-shit on the roads. Now that he is an adult, he is still stirring shit in Microbiology !*”

Though helpful in distress compatriot solidarity ensues mutual responsibility and account-giving. Display of individuality accordingly diminished accordingly. He who enjoys the favor and benefits of his compatriot-group must always be ready to pay for a related sanction, in case his behavior is not approved by compatriots.

In a bull-session in the dormitory in the university a student from an east *Anatolian* city once said: “*When a football player in our city-team scores goals we bestow him with all possible benefits. If he does badly on a match, then we give him hell too*”.

Mustafa, a scholarship student from *Gâzi Antep* came to *Robert College Lycée Prep class* at the same time with me. The notables of the city considered him as a representative in *Istanbul* and “submerged” him with gifts of all kinds (clothing, laundry, stationary and an expensive bed-couch) on his departure.

They praised his achievement and urged his success. I personally envied his situation at first glance, as another scholarship student from a western region

left by all alone. But I later saw that he was coping with crushing feelings of gratitude.

The poor boy was really subject to considerable social pressure, at least as he himself perceived it. On one occasion when he took a low grade, he could not help saying: “What answer shall I give to my benefactors at home, who had been so generous, so kind to me? I am thankful to those people and I shouldn’t disappoint them! What shall I say to the owners of all those good things? I really didn’t deserve all those gifts”.

He sometimes went without the free food supplied to full scholarship students. He did this as a means of self-punishment / mortification. Some were even teasing him, repeating his constant rhetoric “I don’t deserve this goodness and I don’t deserve that goodness”.

Nevertheless, there are certain behavior patterns and even personality traits which pertain exclusively to peasantry in its entirety whether eastern or western regions are in question.

#### **4.2.1. Being Functional**

Villagers are practical and pragmatic. For them, being in immediate interaction with the nature, the functional value comes much before aesthetic considerations.

For instance as *M. C. Ecevit* (1999: 140) points out for a *Samsun-Bafra* village; for them *furniture basically serves their needs of living, sleeping, nourishment and preserving. A whole set of sitting-room appliances (one couch, two-three armchairs, buffet and an end table) is absent and if present, owners of such a set seldom use it. Floor mats, floor beds, a round wooden table just above the ground, a trousseau chest and a small locker for clothing suffice for most families.*

In his article based on a research comprising a few eastern villages near *Erzurum*; *Mümtaz Turhan* (1969, 1985: 208-209) relates that the *acceptance*

*and acquisition of bedstead, table and chair go back to the days after the World War One. Before the war such household items were possessed by the few rich among the community and the stratification prevented the villagers even from emulating those families. During the Russian invasion, especially in downtown Kayseri where they had retreated as immigrants they witnessed and admired such furniture among plain people. Upon return, they readily embraced similar furniture abandoned by the Russian and the Turkish military units.*

Convenience of use and functionality gains priority above everything for any villager. When my mother was a village teacher, on one spring Sunday I went to watch the horse races arranged near “our” village with a few peasant football mates, all my peers.

Foreseeing a picnic, we all brought food with us. At noon time we sat on the grass to eat. One of them seriously suggested me to spread my (brand new) *pardessus* (trench coat) on the ground as a substitute for a large, suitable table cloth.

They themselves were only wearing (smaller) jackets on. The others unanimously seconded him. I, shy to object and be a snob, simply took it off and spread it on the grass and we all had a hearty picnic meal on top of it. We happily returned to the village in the afternoon. Before entering the house, I washed away the tomato seeds and the hard-boiled egg-yolk stains on me at the public fountain, before my mother ever saw them.

Two journalists (Öz & Arman) visited and investigated the social happenings<sup>(\*)</sup> in the village of *İncirlik* just nearby the American Air Force base in *Adana* in

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\*Mixed marriages between foreign soldiers (especially Blacks) and homely local young girls are also mentioned: *There are women who had seen New Jersey or California before Istanbul*, as the authors put it.

As a matter of fact, late half-black, jovial-tempered *Defne Joy Foster*, a popular figure in show business, had been the daughter of a Turkish woman and a black American corporal.

1993. They mention some missionary activities, as well. *The people of İncirlik claim that propaganda tape cassettes are interesting just to obtain them and later re-fill them with Arabesque songs.*

There again is the vestige of functionality and even pragmatism and opportunism of the classical peasant at work! Young “urban-villagers” popular culture is well represented by such songs, while sheer villagers like folk songs of their own.

#### **4.2.2. Being Munificent**

Villagers (and also provincial people for that matter) are generous. But this generosity is usually mingled with a desire for being ostentatious. They love to show off. When it comes to guests, they are genuinely respectful and eager to offer hospitality. My junior high school friend *Turhan* transferred to

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In such cases; the side of the groom usually feel proud (as a nation) while the side of the bride are invariably somewhat shamefaced, no matter what else others may claim. Indeed; the whole world is predominantly male-dominated and it is only a matter of degrees as far as the differences among them go. (In Islamic practice it is explicitly forbidden for a moslem woman to take a non-moslem husband, whereas the corollary is possible; namely, a moslem man can take a woman from among the people of the book —Christians or Jews).

Nevertheless; in accordance with the Turkish sayings “feelings do not obey the official edict (firman) of the sultan” or “one’s heart and soul resembles a whimsical flying insect which can touch down anything, whether it be green grass or a heap of excrement”; love affairs and weddings do occur among young members of very different societies.

James A. Mitchener, in his novel *Sayonara*, talks about the American soldiers stationed in Japan, former-enemy and present-ally, during the Korean War. Despite huge obstacles set by the American government on the way, many American soldiers go ahead and get married to Japanese girls. s.ç.



*Lüleburgaz* from *Konya Ereğlisi* when his father (employed by the Agricultural Bank) got moved. He said he wanted to accompany his father in his official trips to villages.

His father commented that they were not so receiving like the peasants of *Konya*. After a period of warm-up, though, he began to take place in such excursions. One day he said laughingly —and with an imitation of their pronunciation— that they always wanted to treat him to “*Çoça Cola*” [coca cola] while he enjoyed diluted yoghurt more. In a village, the city style of offers are more valued. This is a matter of prestige for the host.

I used to be a loyal reader of *Turkish Allgemeine*, a weekly newspaper published in Istanbul in German. At a certain point along the course of its publication life the newspaper unfortunately closed down.

Soon after I met the former editor in a passenger ship at *Kadıköy* Harbor. I recognized him from his picture and introduced myself and inquired into the closing down issue. A major reason was the developing conflict with the editor *Mehmet Savaş Bey* (as he himself put it) and the owner *Kenan Bey*.

*Mehmet Savaş Akat* is a graduate of German *Lycée*. He lives at *Fenerbahçe*. He is a pure *Istanbulite*. (Unfortunately the now-elderly man is on too good terms with ethyl alcohol). *Kenan Bey* is a *Yozgatian*. (I had met him even before at the administrative office of the newspaper at *Mecidiyeköy* and had been surprised to notice his Mid-Anatolian accent).

The former editor, though obviously still angry at his former boss; had to admit his generous *agha*-like character at a certain point. (Like many landowner notables) he is supposed to be fond of donations. For example, he likes to spend aid to his home-city’s football team, *Yozgat Spor*, the former editor explained.

In a British book of memories it can be seen that being generous pertains to all farm people universally. James Herriot is the pen-name of a county veterinary surgeon in Scotland who practiced his profession in 1930s and 1940s and wrote his memories. Part of his job is to arrange his relations with the farmers smoothly. He narrates in one episode (Herriot 1976: 201-202) that after a problematic delivery of a sick cow, the farmer's wife in her gratitude invites him to breakfast.

The veterinary surgeon spots two white, gigantic slices of fatty bacon on his plate and is immediately disgusted. His own diet is free of any fat whatsoever. Moreover the loaded slices are not hot and crispy, but rather cold and all sticky! Meanwhile, the woman is helping herself with her own blubber, with a great appetite, while she and the husband are watching the veterinarian expectantly. In order not to hurt that generous farmer-family, he forces the first morsel into his mouth, represses his shudder and fortunately discovers the glass with mixed pickles. It is only thanks to the taste-domination of the sharp, vinegary pickles that he is able to finish off the offer on his plate!

#### **4.2.3. Ego-Centric Tendency as a Village-Unit**

Another general trait of the villager is his evaluation of world affairs only from an angle pertaining to his immediate surroundings and showing himself indifferent to any happenings unless he is directly concerned.

This is true for the German peasant as well, as *Kschneider* (1976: 49) affirms it in his book. The book is about a West German School teacher's persecution in mid seventies by the then constituted *Oberschulamts* (*Academic Inspection Bureau*). In those years *Baader-Meinhof* gang in West Germany and Red Brigades in Italy caused trouble for the "established order" even in those western countries and obliged the two countries to take severe measures against similar extremist youth movements.

The hero of the autobiographical work once takes a promenade in wilderness with his girlfriend. They then encounter a villager: *A peasant riding a bicycle showed us the way to Rhin*, he says.

*We had just passed a destroyed bunker concealed behind wild bush and the peasant spoke in his dialect: Nowadays they are producing nuclear energy so that the electric bulbs will never be off, they claim. But, what will happen in five or ten years if we remain alive? Maybe a war will break out again. There is a war every thirty years and this is the thirty-first year you know [31 years after the end of the Second World War:  $1945 + 31 = 1976$ ]. In a war the first thing to be attacked is an energy center. This was the case in the last war and it won't be different in the future. Then in a moment a hundred thousand people will die and not a single one will survive. Before the World War Hitler evacuated us all because this was the eastern front. Next time the prime-minister (Landesfather) will drive us away again. He looks like a ghost already anyway.*

Indeed, education inspector Şaban Sunar (1961: 14-15) convinced a peasant to send his son to school with the following argument:

- *Your son has attendance problem. How come?*
- *He went to school for some time but he quit. He could not learn much.*
- *He will learn a lot if he attends regularly.*
- *What of it? Will he become a salaried official?*
- *Perhaps.*
- *No, no, mister. This here is a village. He will be working on the fields again.*
- *But he will be able to read newspapers and write letters!*
- *Oh so? Well, from now on I will send him to school!*

#### **4.2.4. Sincerity and Altruism**

Villagers are also philanthropic, candid people. They are curious about others' affairs and love to intervene and offer help. Elia Kazan (1969: 698) in his autobiographic novel writes that, *on the way to an island near the ocean, a peasant driving a pick-up loaded with potatoes, without the slightest jest on his part, offered to take him to the other side of the island.*

Human nature being universal, it must be the social circumstances which determine this altruistic tendency in village life. In a small community people know one another if not by direct encounter then through hearsay and by sight. Therefore it is extremely important to build a good reputation. Conversely, it is equally important to avoid a notorious image of oneself.

In a social psychology textbook an experiment was mentioned. A car was abandoned in an urban environment with the motor hood open and passerby behavior was observed secretly. The car soon got pillaged. The same experiment carried out in a rural region revealed totally different reactions. People avoided coming nearby. One person even shut down the hood in drizzling rain.

No wonder bandits used to use masks to cover their identities. Rich people providing help to the needy, on the other hand, were usually glad to be recognized. (It is known that in Ottoman charity institutions (*vakıf*) men in charge of distributing soup served behind hurdles covering their faces and revealing only their hands in order to spare shame feelings and personal gratitude on the part of the acceptors).

Regarding the truly sincere and sociable nature of the peasant, let me relate an army reminiscent of mine. Our commandant was inspecting the mess hall. The private in charge of the cleaning affairs was a village boy named *Cemâl*. Somewhat naive, officers used to find him very sympathetic. When the commandant came near he stood to attention and introduced himself in high voice as the regulation requires. He had no fear of the inspection.

On the contrary, he was glad to be near the commandant, the important person he admired. Even though not directly addressed to, he said "my commandant, I mopped the floors beautifully!" The commandant had an eye contact with the next senior officer and smiled imperceptibly. *Cemâl*, now encouraged and keeping his upright attention position, said: "I also watered the flower pots!"

The commandant ignored the statement and took a few steps sideways. But the naive private insistent to squeeze out a word of recognition like “good for you!” or at least forming a dialogue of some sort. He finally blurted:

—”What time is it, my commandant?”

The commandant now covered his mouth and looked at the next senior officer openly. He in turn made a slight “go away now” movement to the soldier and the group marched on spontaneously, leaving the eager soldier behind, who shouted “attention!”, as it should be done. Everybody understood his sincerity and genuine respect and nobody hurt him by uttering a negating word.

On another occasion, due to bad weather bread came late into the officer’s mess hall at noon. Many had their meals without bread. As soon as the bread bag arrived our *Cemâl* made a leap and like a plunging goal-keeper took over the control of the precious trust immediately.

First-lieutenant *Yusuf* saw this and laughingly said “there is the brave peasant boy, he appreciates the value of the bread!”. Truly, bread is the staple in nourishment. It is not soft and baked and white like in a town bakery but comes tough and brown as the whole-wheat version. On the Black Sea coast, corn flour is substituted for wheat.

#### **4.2.5. Smoking Habit**

Village males usually smoke. Smoking may be associated with virility. In any case it is a common way to disperse boredom in a small, closed society. According to Barth (1898: 12); Hermann, a German agricultural inspector working with the Turkish peasant more than a century ago wrote the following: *Turkish peasant is kind and likeable in social terms. His frugal manners and satisfaction forms a good portion of his character. His only passion is smoking. If he were to choose between bread and tobacco he would apt for the latter.*

Interestingly, as *Erdentuğ* (1956: 19) notes for the village of *Hal* in *Elazığ*, breakfast is also called “*tütün altı*” (*below tobacco*), suggesting that it is

necessary to enjoy smoking with a full stomach, let alone to keep you going for the day.

The village shops sold cheap brands made of crude tobacco residues. Up to late 1970's, while socialist youths took pride in smoking the non-filtered “*Birinci*”, the village groceries commonly sold, let alone “*İkinci*” (literally The Second), the “*Üçüncü*” brand (literally The Third) (\*).

When I was a child a villager entering a town shop simultaneously with me asked for “cottoned” (*pamuklu*) cigarettes. This was an exception and after he left the shopkeeper said he must be a rich villager, since he was smoking filter cigarettes.

As paraphrased from *Asker ve Yöneticilere Anlamlı Sözler ve Olaylar* (1994: 81) an anecdote originally transmitted by journalist *Hikmet Feridun Es* based on the narration of *Şükrü Kaya* relates the following:

*A peasant man had once swore at Atatürk publicly because good cigarette paper was not available and newspaper paper not a proper substitute for wrapping tobacco rolls since it caught fire. While the inquiry about the peasant was “on rolls”, a deputy brought the issue to the president’s attention.*

*However, to the surprise of his yes-men, Atatürk first asked his court if they had ever smoked newspaper rolls. When they replied no, he said that he himself had done so, back in Tripoli, and it had been a horrible experience! He said that the swearing words were well-deserved and pardoned the villager! He added that they should take measures to provide proper cigarette paper for this peasant instead of suing him in court.*

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\*Picking tobacco leaves starts from the bottom of the stem and follows upwards. The lower leaves are valueless and they are left over or thrown away. The ‘hands’ (groups of leaflets) highest and just below the highest portion of the plant are of best quality. Classification and arranging in strings for drying and storing are made all on this basis (M. C. Ecevit 1999: 80). [The cheap cigarettes mentioned above were rolled from leaflets of much lesser quality].

After all, he is the man who specified the peasant as the master of the nation, being the primary producer. (The saying has an echo of *Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent*, who had uttered a similar sentence <sup>(\*)</sup> in the sixteenth century. Four decades later, the leftist ballad-singer *Âşık Mahzunî Şerif* was to challenge the saying in a song depicting the situation of the peasant in a crying lamentable voice and repeatedly employing the refrain “Is this the master of that nation?” / “*Bu milletin efendisi bu mudur ?*”).

*Atatürk had a genuine liking for the peasant. He recognized the virtue of the peasant in the young conscripts facing glorious death shoulder to shoulder in his command in Gallipoli and on other battle fields. One day he visited an old peasant’s cabin on a walk around then-rural Çankaya.*

*His aid-de-camp Salih Bozok (it is him who later told the anecdote to Naci Sadullah) inquired about Gâzi [this title of holy warrior as well as the rank of marshal (*müşir*) was officially bestowed by the Parliament to the ex-Ottoman general in recognition of the *Sakarya* victory, which he had directed without a military rank] and the old man described Gâzi as a holy man with a beard down to his belly. Atatürk winked and played it cool. He could not take it to heart to disappoint the old peasant (*Asker ve Yöneticilere Anlamli Sözler ve Olaylar* 1994: 34).*

*Atatürk was a heavy smoker himself. The Monopoly <sup>(\*)</sup> produced a private brand for him alone, carrying his majestic name on the cigarettes.*

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\*More specifically; as historian *Mustafa Armağan* emphasized on a TV program (July 2012); *the sultan had actually used the word “reaya”, meaning the very first producers (and tax-payers) including the artisans of all kinds as well as farmhands but definitely excluding any salaried staff (the palace members, the military, the clergy, the scholarship-receiving student-body and even salesmen relying on sheer profits or commissions).*

The Turkish Monopoly, *Tekel İdaresi*, was then known under the Ottoman word, *İnhisarlar İdaresi*. People in the provinces long continued using the name “*Rece*” though as a distortion of the French word “*Régie*”, dating back to the foreign-owned Public Debts (*Düyun-u Umumiye*) of the late Ottoman Era. One neighbor of my maternal grandmother

#### 4.2.6. Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages are consumed, usually in furtive, even if it is generally despised as a vice. Some *Alewite* villages are exceptions, where alcohol can be openly praised.

As *Erdentuğ* (1959: 19) puts it, in the *Alewite* village of *Sün* in *Elazığ*, the religious head figure *dede* (literally grandfather) arranges meetings where alcohol is drunk. He in person fills the glasses of those present and says: *Drink thou that wine so that your faith will be enlightened! If there is no smoke in the head, then there is no belief in the heart!*” (*İç şu şarabı ki imanın (!) nûr olsun! Kafada duman olmayınca göküste [göğüste] de iman olmaz!*”).

In his novel titled *Turtles Fakir Baykurt* (1995: 41-42) depicts *Abbas Kartal*, an old *Alewite* man in the village of *Tozak* not too far from Ankara. Gray haired *Abbas* once goes to another village on a borrowed donkey to buy grapes. The vineyard owner is of Sunnite creed and once he learns *Abbas*’ intention of fermenting the grapes, he refuses to sell. *Abbas* uses an intermediary, Sunnite *Fork-Osman*, to get the wines.

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was a *Rece*-official’s wife. She was an elegant woman with airy ways as my grandmother described her.

The public, especially the villagers, in fact, used to have difficulty with the pronunciation of other European words, including the name of the political party “Democrat”. After the politically partial May 27 1960 coup, former Peoples Republican Party survived but Democrat Party got banned, allegedly to be followed by a new Justice Party. A clever trick of the Justice Party’s important personages was to acquire a white horse emblem —former democrat party’s logo only consisted of the letters “D” and “P” even though an open right hand palm meaning “enough now!” had been launched in the starting campaign— as a remedy to the problem. Thus, “*demir kırat*” (iron white horse) facilitated the pronunciation of the foreign word “democrat” for the so-called “ignorant” masses. Moreover, the newly established Justice Party could thereby strongly imply a political “descent” from the former Democrats. s.ç.



#### 4.2.7. Swearing Habit

Village males take a pleasure in using swear words in the predominant male culture. Even children do and some are even encouraged by fathers to do so! Females are known to resort to swear words only when they reach elderly ages. This is when their social status had risen upwards.

Stirling (1965: 100-101) relates in his *Sakaltutan* village study that *once a guest neighbor male with his own initiative wanted to drive the females off the guest room for a private talk with the house owner. The younger females obeyed but two elderly women stood their ground. Indeed, women past the menopause stage could easily participate in the social setting of males [they had a higher status].*

Female versions of swearing usually has to do with defecating into the mouth of the opponent instead of copulating with, of course.

Güçlü (2008: 43-44), for the case of e *Nevşehir* village lists some local examples for female swears and insults like “*let her urine stop!*” (*sidiği durasica*), *shitty-mouthed* (*ağzı boklu*), *manure* (*fışkı*), *fertilized egg* (*dölleme*), *Jewish offspring* (*Yafıdı [Yahudi] dölü*). (\*)

Some local (pertaining to *Nevşehir* environments) examples for male swears and insults mentioned by the same author, Güçlü, are phrases like “*with a shitty anus*” (*g\*tü b\*klu*), “*shitty veined*” (*damarı b\*klu*), “*whose mother I f\*cked*”, “*whose p\*ssy I pulled aside by force*” (*\*mını kanırdığım*), *oddly dressed* (*zibidi*), *woman-mouthed* (*avrat ağzılı*) [there it is again: An imprint of the man-dominant middle eastern culture!].

Moreover; in the highly “flexible” Turkish language, many verbs like piercing, inserting, emptying out etc. could be employed as substitutes for swear verbs directly as they are. We had an American math teacher who once came to this

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\*Indeed; It is a well-known fact in Economic Sociology that “ ‘middleman minorities’ or ‘market-dominant minorities’ like ‘Chinese in Southeast Asia, Parsis in India, Marwaris in Burma and especially Jews in the Ottoman Empire and throughout Eastern Europe’ “ had always been envied because of their financial success and thereby exposed to prejudices and accused of conspiracies. s.ç.

realization and said in class “I understand Turkish is a very good language to swear in”.

(That teacher of ours claimed to be the third generation bastard-son of Buffalo Bill and was very popular in the school for that reason. He willingly accepted being the descendent of a bastard for the sake of being eventually related to the legendary American hero).

In some southern regions like *Adana* or *Hatay* swearing at God Almighty —that awful blasphemy, *never ever / jamais!*— is practiced though it is slightly indirect and the format mentions “your God” or “his God”. For some it could be a mere cultural habit where words are uttered mechanically and without a thorough consideration of the horrible meaning involved.

*Kadir* from *Adana* in our university while I was an undergraduate student explained this situation in the following context: “When an untimely rain pours down it ruins the cotton product and it is this natural disaster which make the people resent God [*jamais! / never ever!*] in our region”.

A private slaughterhouse owner’s son from *Sütlüce*-Istanbul I had once met on a train trip, a mighty and muscular man, explained that when he was a corporal in the service he was especially vindictive towards the men from those regions just because of that peculiarity. He said that he used to give them hell on the smallest pretext.

#### **4.2.8. The Perceived Government-Image**

The typical Turkish peasant regards that awesome entity as the “Government Father” and accordingly holds it responsible for all facets of his life, including his miserable plight in a natural drought! If anything goes wrong in his dealings with any official institution, he angrily sends out a mouthful of swearing words aimed at that very state.

In many folk tales it can be seen that the figures of authority do not really deserve respect; but, they have the capability to hurt plain people:

*The Vizier provokes this man against that man or even one man against his own children. He does not refrain from resorting to tricks in order to achieve success. He spends a lot of money in order to win the favor of the Sultan. He even admits to his own daughter's being sold like a slave, by the Sultan. Still, he is not genuinely loyal to the Sultan. On occasion he seduces the Sultan's wife when she has been confined to his protection. When the Sultan falls from the throne and impoverishes, then the Vizier totally abandons him. The Vizier gets involved in conspiracies aiming to assassinate the Sultan.*

*The Vizier is the strongest negative character in folk tales. In three tales and five funny anecdotes s roles are ascribed to the judge. This is the former [Ottoman] "kadi" figure. He is married but he indulges in debauchery...He tries to do injustice to needy people. He abuses his influence and his official position to this end. He proclaims unfair sentences in return for bribes. But he can not always get away with what he does: [A fictitious folk hero] Keloğlan (the bald boy), a dealer of old goods (eskici) and sometimes the Sultan penalizes him (Tuğrul 1969: 48-49).*

#### **4.2.9. Merciful Hearts**

The villager is merciful by nature. Despite his own harsh conditions he takes pity for those in worse situations. The lunatic of a village is cared for collectively. The city-dweller in comparison is only self-pitying and not sensitive towards those in distress. They leave the fallen man alone by himself (and this is true for one who literally falls on the ground as well as one who is brought low and falls in the figurative sense of the word).

When Prime-minister *Bülent Ecevit* offered a general amnesty on the fifteenth anniversary of the republic this was acclaimed with general jubilation. At the time the population was mainly rural in character. When the great statesman did the same (on a less narrow scale) in the year of 2001, it fell flat. Public opinion gave a cool reaction. Now the population was essentially urban in character.

#### 4.2.10. Conservative Minds

##### Respectful of the Sacred

Villagers are mostly religious people and they honor holy places. Shrines of saints are visited and prayers are addressed to Allah in their sacred presence with the formula “for the sake of this holy person bestow me with such and such wish, my God!” Both Sunnite and *Alewite* denominations recognize their own respective saints. The *Salafia* sect and its extension *Wahhabi* sect from continental Arabia consider this a sinful novelty spoiling the religion and equates it with putting up a partner —*never ever / jamais!*— to God Almighty, which is a horrible sin.

However, besides the *Wahhabis*, many Islamic scholars see no wrongdoing in the veneration of the Blessed Prophet’s apostles, saints and martyrs. They stress that the institution of intercession (*şefaat*) is valid in religion. As long as a divine request is not directed to the saint himself, they argue, it is only a blessing to visit them and put them as go-betweens. They stress that worshipping is different from respecting.

It is said that the Blessed Prophet got his hair cropped and distributed to the Moslems all over. His glorious beard clippings, too, are believed to be preserved in some prominent mosques.

According to the Islamic faith, miracles (*mucizeler*) were bestowed solely upon the prophets. No more prophets will be sent. The era of miracles is closed. A miracle is a supernatural phenomenon realized by Allah as a reply to the given prophet’s own wish and prayer.

As for the saints, they can only perform wonders (*kerâmetler*) —and this they can achieve even after they die— which are not on “wish or bargain”, so to speak, but come about unexpectedly, even its instigator-saint not knowing if or when they will occur.

A wonder attributed to a republican-era *Çankırı*-saint (who constitutes a rarity since most Islamic shrines date from *Seljukid* or *Ottoman* times in *Çankırı* or for that matter in the entire Anatolian peninsula) goes as follows:

During the Cyprus peace operation carried out in 1974, a well-liked soldier appeared from time to time among the soldiers of a certain platoon as if visiting them from an adjacent platoon. He fraternized with a few soldiers and invited them to his home city in case they would survive the war.

Some years later a couple of those friends happened to pass by *Çankırı* and they wanted to pay a visit to their mutual comrade-in-arm. The name (*Astarlızâde Mehmed Hilmi*) did indeed sound well-known enough in the city, as formerly assured by their comrade.

But they were eventually led to a tomb instead of a living person! So, they thought their friend had passed away in the mean time. But what?

The date of death inscribed on the stone was only 1962, a time more than a decade before the operation in Cyprus! Only then they realized that their military comrade was a saint, who had risen from his tomb to take place in the battle!

*Alewite* villagers are usually much less conservative and possess a “wider” disposition in delicate matters representing strict taboo for the Sunni ones.

When I was a tailor’s apprentice, a *Geselle* (journeyman, senior apprentice, *kalfa*) working on a piecewise system was a young *Alewite* man. Our *Meister* (*usta*) one day wanted to take him along to the Friday prayer in the mosque and he retorted: “C’mon now! Stop teasing me! Stop playing around with a poor being like me!” Then he looked up and mumbled: “I hope a colossal beam

from the ceiling won't fall on my head, now!" The *Meister* laughed and left him alone (He always appreciated his young helper's sense of humor a lot).

Once an *Alewite* peasant customer had ordered a suit. He was a burly man always displaying a subtle smile on his reddish face and he had jovial, even exuberant manners.

One day at the trial of his half-finished jacket, he said that in the village a married woman with a tall bearing and serious look appealed to him; so he went to her husband and jokingly said "*well, comrade, what about the idea of tramping my woman with yours?*"

The joke came to the attention of the woman in question and she escaped in horror from her house to her own village to take shelter in the maternal nest for a certain time.

All this was told among intermittent laughter fits by the man himself, in the tailor shop. A typical Sunnite man can never make such a suggestion or relate such a memory to others in such a light-hearted manner.

#### **4.2.11. Common Peasant Names**

Many villagers have typical names like *Ökkeş, Sürmeli, Cumali, Satılmış* for males and *Fadime, Hatice, Düriye* for females. (One of my former female students in a private school was upset when I pronounced her second name *Hasibe*, "an old peasant wife" name in her opinion). *Halime* (the Blessed Prophet's wet-nurse had this name) is also common.

In the novel *Çalığışu* by *Reşat Nuri Güntekin*, the heroine in escape from a platonic love affair goes to an Anatolian village as a teacher and she discovers that the girls are either *Zehra* or *Ayşe* while one has a unique name, *Munise*. She adopts *Munise* but the poor, delicate girl dies of illness.

In *bidonvilles* in cities, however, as a repudiation of their peasant origins, some parents name the boys with fancy choices like *Şafak*, *Cüneyt*, *Koray* while girls are assigned parallel high society names like *Jale*, *Leman*, *Jülide*.

I remember an editorial by *Zeynep Oral* in *Cumhuriyet* Newspaper about the ballad-singer *Ruhi Su* at the time his death in 1985. [One of his devoted admirers, I also attended to his burial at *Zincirlikuyu* Cemetery]. The orphan boy had excelled in Music in *Adana* in his childhood. Studious orphans were brought to Istanbul and registered to the military junior high school in *Halıcıoğlu*.

But before, the guide in charge told them to give up their former peasant names and adopt polite, city names instead. It was then that he was given the name *Ruhi*. (The boy implored to a military physician to record him sick in order to avoid a military career. Instead he came to Ankara and graduated from the Higher School of Music teachers).

(Some critiques had said his voice was maybe equaled by Black American singer Paul Robeson and when I arrived in America, my first task was to obtain a record of Robeson).

*Ruhi Su* trained our folk music chorus at *Bosphorus* University for a short time. A few extreme leftist students upset him for his adapting the ballads into proper Istanbul accent. He once said: “*We should stick to our own culture. Why did we get education then? We should not emulate the peasants in singing*”. In a *zeybek* balled he insisted on “*ateş*” instead of the authentic rough version “*ataş*” (fire, to lit a cigarette). The rumor goes that one day he played with his *saz* and sang with his voice a folk song in front of *rhapsode* / bard (\*) *Âşık*

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\*In July 2011 during an intellectual debate moderated by *Taha Akyol* on the screen of CNN-*Türk* Television Channel, Harvard Historian *Cemâl Kafadar* stated that the best fitting term for the counterpart of a Turkish *saz şairi* could be a bard. He added that

*Veysel* and waited for an approval. But *Veysel* criticized him for “having picked up a beautiful (*gozel* [*güzel*]) flower from the meadow and putting it in a vase in a house.

I later in my life discovered that some of my classmates in *Lycée* had concealed their traditional first names at the time successfully. Only years later; in their visiting cards or e-mails would appear the once-hidden first names along with the familiar second names like *Saadettin Ufuk* or *Abdurrahman Levent* or *Mehmet Sağman*.

In their adolescence years they would adhere to the latter modern names exclusively! Indeed, names mean a lot, suggest a lot and can be inferred to guess more about their “carriers”.

As I were to discover later, many of my classmates had their other little lies, too. Many adolescents are somewhat *mytho-maniac*, probably their imagination capabilities are still wonderfully rich like those of children.

One “reflected” his health official father as a practicing doctor. One gave his quartermaster-officer-father in the Air Force as a pilot. I concealed my parents’ separation and later divorce. The vice-principal of Robert College once in an informal dormitory visit chat with us (which comes close to something like an “official” bull session) openly encouraged embellishments and lies about our school in our home cities. The school was extremely anxious for publicity.

My father had concealed his peasant origins and put up his junior-high-school-city, *Edirne*, at the front line. His desk mate *Recep Ergun* from downtown *Kayseri*, met my father and step mother in *Kırklareli* Officer Club during his inspection of the 33. Infantry Division (now downsized into a more flexible brigade like almost all other former divisions). One was a four star general

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William Shakespeare [1564-1616] is sometimes referred to simply as “The Bard” as the most famous example. s.ç.



commanding the First army. The other merely a humble major-retiree. The general immediately recognized his former classmate and exclaimed: “İbrahim from Edirne!” The couple were honored.

#### 4.2.12. Usually Loose Care for Hygiene

Villagers, as a rule of thumb, are not so meticulous about cleanliness and good hygiene conditions just because the conditions demand it so. [From a book about Russia written by an American journalist I remember some mentioning about *Khrushchev's* youth memories. *Russian peasant soldiers were so unconcerned about sanitation that some simply urinated from their bunker beds down, without bothering to go down. Khrushchev* himself walked to the latrine pit on wooden slits].

The restroom in most villages is a cabin outside the house<sup>(\*)</sup> with a cesspool dug underneath. My villager paternal grandfather used to order my paternal grandmother to fill the jug so that he could “pay a visit to the latrines”.

As the author *Nihat Genç* told on a TV broadcast once, up to 1970's, even in towns certain empty areas between habituated houses were used as urination places. People went to public baths from time to time. The houses were not even designed in a way enabling washing the body.

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\*When we were in the village where my mother got a teaching job, my parents' separation was yet new and my mother's rage against my father in full swing. One day I girded myself with my father's ceremonial sword belt in the room. My mother caught me and she confused my childish enthusiasm for the military with a longing for his profession and therefore an admiration for him. She got furious.

She took the belt, went all the way to the exterior toilet cabin and threw it inside! Some minutes later I sneaked into the cabin and looked at the belt from the hole. Perpendicularly below in the cesspool the belt was floating in filth. The waterproof gold gilt threads were in good shape but the red velvet lining was soaked and irreversibly spoiled. I regretted that horrible scene many a times! s.ç.

I know that in *Adana* bus terminal, some rude passengers used to urinate in far corners up to 1980s! (A foreigner once described the city as the most populated village of the world. From mid1980s I remember the headline of a local newspaper praising the new improvement carried on by the municipality: “The ‘Big Village’ is Breaking its Shell!”).

In the novel *Yaban* by *Yakup Kadri* the hero is an ex-officer with one arm amputated. He takes shelter in his former orderly’s village during the National Struggle. The village excludes him as an outsider. His former orderly once tells him politely not to shave his hair every day, not to wash himself so often. if he wants to better integrate with the village.

It should be pointed out that poor hygiene used to be related to ignorance (lack of knowledge on microbes) to some extent but mainly the bad infra-structure gave the people little choice for being meticulous about cleanliness. No doubt, the immune system of the peasants got stronger over generations, too.

One can easily infer that the degree of cleanliness is closely matched with material possibilities as well as a consciousness rooted on socio-cultural habitudes, as well. Culturally deprived people are usually worse off in hygiene matters. The difference between old settlers’ and new immigrants’ dwelling places is a typical example. A rich private-school’s well-ventilated dormitory sharply contrasts with a professionally-oriented-state-boarding-school’s stuffy dormitory, as another typical example.

I remember that after returning home from a week-long-journey I detected a foul atmosphere in the house (my wife had kept the windows shut due to her cold spell) and I broke out bluntly: “It is the odor of sheer poverty which reigns in here!” I then explained to my astonished-looking-spouse that I, during my childhood, had sniffed that very same stench in a poor household which we had shortly visited on the way to the market with my grand mother.

Styron in his historical novel (1972: 170) describes the black slaves' cabins from the mouth of his chief character: A house-Negro, Nat says that *despite master Samuel's efforts to teach his negroes cleanliness; in their huts; the smell of sweat, lard, urine, rubbish, unwashed hair and armpits, bundles of straw with baby vomit was awfully unbearable.*

In lucky villages where abundant water is available from public fountains, peasants are so clean that guests from cities admire them. After all, the Islamic precepts <sup>(\*)</sup> regarding the necessities of ritual washing and ablution are there to start with.

#### 4.2.13. Crowded and Precious Families

*Villagers choose to have many children since It is a prestige to have many children, especially sons. But, more important, they represent aid in hard manual work. If the peasant has few children, he has a hard time accomplishing the necessary work. A crowded family achieves work better. It is desirable to have many children and to marry them at young age. This is called "tying their heads". This is not a bad tradition since it prevents the emptying of the village. Besides the attractions of the city may drift the young person to futile adventures and eventual disappointment (Sunar 1961: 6).*

The region of Thrace is an exception. In Thracian villages young men can marry only after the completion of the compulsory army service.

In my high school days in a debate session in Sociology course guided by our valuable teacher *Dr. Mediha Esenel*, Little *Can* (a small sized, charming classmate) explained the high number of children in the village family with the well-known "no copulation, no population" concept, stressing the idea that the only leisure in the village was nothing but sexual activity.

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\*In Islam, before the daily prayers an ablution consisting of partial washing) is essential, but in certain circumstances (like danger, lack or insufficiency of water) related body parts may be rubbed with clean earth (*teyemmüm*) instead. s.ç.

*Mediha Hanım* smiled. She approved the ingenious approach but pointed out to the non-sociological line of thought. Indeed, even the villager finds contraceptive method if he believes they are what he needs.

Another interesting thing which is not commonly mentioned to note here is the fact that a pregnant woman has a lot of respite from work as well as an acquired extra value. Men coddle and cajole pregnant wives and they therefore keep getting pregnant to enjoy the connected privileges!

Villagers often marry with their blood relatives. This is a big social problem since it may generate hereditary deformities. In this respect again Thrace (\*) constitutes an exception:

As *Çavuşoğlu* (1993: 151) notes; *among Pomak-Turks and generally among other Turkish groups in the western [and for that matter eastern] Thrace, a very meticulous rule is to avoid marriages between blood-relatives.*

His livestock is the most precious possession of a peasant after his family. This we can see in the memories of a German author. She is the wife of the chief archeologist of a team who did digging and excavating of ancient monuments in *Adıyaman-Kâhta* region in mid 1970s. She then published her impressions in a marvelous book illustrated by a friend of hers:

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\*For such reasons Thracians have a high opinion of themselves in compared to Anatolians no matter how low their social status may be. One of my paternal aunts; *Hatice*; a blue-eyed, fair skinned village girl in her blossoming youth, got married to *Hâlis Karagöz*, an assistant (and a future-professor) at the Faculty of Agriculture in Ankara.

This happened during his service as a reserve officer in Thrace. When I visited them in *İzmir* in mid 1990's, on one occasion my aunt whispered to me in a tone the professor could not hear: "You know, my husband's side is from Malatya. They are not as civilized as we are". I could not help grinning. So she thought she was better (!) than a man of science merely by her "western" origins. s.ç.

*One early morning our employee Mehmet was standing before the tent of our doctor. His dark eyes were filled with the whole world's grief. In his arms he was holding a kid (a young goat) [here the English word for the young goat coincides with the synonym for child in English and renders the narration more emotional] affectionately. It was bitten by a snake. When my husband asked for a serum injection for the animal the doctor grumbled: "Is our expensive serum intended for human beings or for animals?" But then he could not endure the grief-furrowed face of Mehmet and conceded as Mehmet's eyes filled with tears of happiness (Dörner 1983: 148).*

#### **4.3. The Rich Verbal Culture of the Peasantry**

To begin with, peasants are poetic even though they are not on good terms with written prose. *Kemalist* poet *Behçet Kemâl Çağlar* —he was my Turkish literature teacher in Lycée One class— came from rural *Erzincan* and a part of him resembled the folk poet beside the thinking and meticulously working studious intellectual poet element also present in him.

He could compose rhyming stanzas almost on any occasion and because of this was very popular in his life time. When visiting France, for instance, he wanted to see his poet friend *Kemalettin Kamu*, the representative of Anatolian Agency there. He at once wrote a rhyming couplet: "I wait for you in the *gare* / signed: Behçet Kemâl Çağlar". The postman accepting the cable smiled.

Central Anatolian shamans were also poets. *Many ancient written works surviving to this day are in poetic style. Glorification of deities in temples and implorations accompanied by sacrificial rituals at altars were recited in poetry. Poetry has been associated with magic while the poet with magician (M.N. Turhan 1992: 35).*

The Holy Koran is more of poetry than prose (and thus a lot easier to memorize than any other volume of same length in sheer prose).

My high school literature teacher *Şefik Bey* told us an anecdote: A *Sorbonne*-graduated snob in high placed in a Ministry in capitol asked Anatolian sub-governors for some statistical information about the heating measures taken in

*their districts. From a remote district came the answer that the main energy source was dung.*

*The snobbish bureaucrat asked for further explanation. What was dung? What was its calorific value and the annually consumed amount? The answer was cabled in rhymes at once by the sub-governor: “Tezek b\*ktur / Miktarı çoktur / Kalorisi yoktur” (\*) (Dung means shit / It is in abundance / It contains little if any calories).*

Delaney (1991: 50) by reference to Dundes, Leach and Özkök (1972) comments about verbal dueling rhymes practiced by adolescent males: “In this verbal game the retort must rhyme with the initial provocative insult and encompass it; and the subject is the active, aggressive male, and this is the culturally important role”.

Delaney does not give any examples. One such common rhyming duel would go as follows (To keep the rhymes, only *train* is adapted to *aircraft* and place names are altered): The first boy says something rhyming.

The second boy retorts: “It has just heavily rained and here comes the thunder / How come you also became a poet, the son of an ass as you yourself render!” The first boy has his say again: “The plane took off from here and landed in Honolulu / If I also became a poet, why would that upset a male prostitute like you?”

#### **4.3. 1. Local Naïve Poetry**

In mid 1970’s in a socialist reunion of songs and celebrations in Istanbul a folk ballad singer (*halk şairi*) named *Mustafa Koç* performed his radically composed work in escort of his *saz*. One of the stanzas was: “Both the mother

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\* Sometimes some funny correspondence is known to occur in bureaucracy. A biologist friend of mine with extensive provincial experience in Anatolia, *Murat Meşhur*, once narrated the following: A prospective pimp once applied for permission to a governor to open a brothel. The governor scrutinized the petition and annotated the margin of the sheet in red ink: “Let this petitioner’s request stay in suspension until a whorehouse-lover-governor (*kerhaneci bir vâli*) arrives to take over my post”. s.ç.

and the spouse of whom he regards the peasant dirty [deserve to be f\*cked!]" ("Köylüye 'pis' diyenin anasını avradını hey!").

The verb designating the shameful act was actually left out while suspending the unfinished sentence but it was implicitly understood by the audience from the common pattern of the started clause (In mid-seventies some of the folk singers were very much politically oriented, late *Mahzunî Şerif* and late *Âşık İhsanî* being two among the prominent ones).

One ballad composed by the latter was depicting the torture suffered by political detainees in the Second Department of the Security Directorate of Istanbul, then in *Sirkeci* district. The absurdly small rooms were called coffin-booths (*tabutluk*). The song went like "*The three of us are confined into one coffin*" ("Üç kişi bir tabuttayız").

In a *rhapsodes'* night held in Istanbul, one certain ballad singer was even bitterly hard towards the good old blind poet *Veysel*. In his melodious poem he compared him with another name from the same city (*Sivas*), *Pîr Sultan Abdal*, a historical symbol of protest and called *Veysel* an obsequious praise singer of the oppressors: "Whereas the other performed in palaces").

Love of naïve poetry is a very conspicuous trait of the peasant culture. Of course few peasants are poets themselves but almost all do appreciate and evaluate poetry as they conceive it. Certain well-known rhyming couplets are employed by children competing in reciting repartees. He who is quicker in response is always cheered by the audience composed of other children.

As a matter of fact poetic tendencies apply to all people of Turkey to a lesser degree. In all walks of life poetic people are held in esteem. About fifteen years ago a harmless, half-crazy young bum used to enjoy a certain poet-prestige in the neighborhood of a Thracian town.

Some people were eager to buy him teas and soft drinks in exchange for a recital of his original erotic / homoerotic poetry. Once he appeared in a coffee-house in his shabby clothes when I was there.

An elderly shopkeeper was just in the right spirit for some of his stanzas. He ordered the bum a glass of tea. The bum guzzled the tea in a few hasty sips. Then he paused for some time with a grin on his face as if concentrating and remembering. But he was in actuality probably increasing the thrilling effect of the oncoming verses.

When the suspense was ripe enough, only then mouthed he his most recent couplet: “The caravan comes from Yemen, with rugs made of tail-hair and all / Let me pierce you with that (member of mine), pubic hair and all”. (“*Yemen’den gelir kervan, çulunla mulunla! / Haydayım (\*) bunu sana, kılınla mılınla!*”).

In April 1993 I stepped into the roof of an officer club with my father. In a dark corner we spotted a group of 1944 graduates, my father’s peers, all long retired. They were all smiles and all ears, listening to a half a century old poem’s

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\**Zâhit*, my friendly rival as another honor student in the eight grade, was philosophizing one day about this word, with fellow students: “*I understand that it is a prolific verb. Firstly, it means to drive a vehicle. Secondly, it means to shepherd cattle. Thirdly, well, you guys know better than me!*”

In fact; the above case history flashbacked in my memory in a tea-house in Thrace, when a teenager shouted in protest to the tea-maker: “You screwed us with stale tea!” (“*Haydadın bize bayat çayı !*”).

I remember a porter in 1970s, a fan of politician *Bülent Ecevit*. He was praising his hero and condemning the oppressor-capitalists just before the 1973 general elections: “*Ecevit aydâacak [haydayacak] onlara!*” (Ecevit shall screw them all !” s.ç.



rehearsal by a popular <sup>(\*)</sup> colleague, *Hüsamettin Sevengül*, alias *Üsküdarlı Hüsam Paşa*. (The Istanbul boy had made it to the rank of a brigadier general). The retired general's autobiographical verses were about his lingering in the school's bath and masturbation in a solitary booth as a horny teenager when the officer on duty checks into the bath at the very wrong moment and spoils his pleasure!

(At the time, showers were not even known in Turkey. A domed Turkish bath partitioned into booths with marble basins equipped with hot and cold taps were in use for body washing. One such domed bath is now converted into a canteen for the military school in question).

Up to 1970's, even a sensational crime would present an occasion for certain *rhapsodes* to compose poems and sell them. While the incident still fresh on the collective memory, a *peoples' poet* would deal with this theme.

Then peddlers would sell the cheap one-page-long prints in towns and villages by reciting certain striking verses through *haut-parleurs* in order to make their own publicity. People anxious to read rhyming verses would readily pay 25 *piastres* for such printed sheets.

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\*Normally a colonel, once promoted to the rank of general, wins a lot of jealousy and witnesses a start of distancing away from the part of his peers, former pals and confidants. For that matter, any officer certified as a *mouchard* (informer) for the higher levels in the chain of command and control, is discarded from a young age onwards and is never forgiven again. For the cast off individual this is a horrible outcome very similar to the situation of an adolescent rejected by peers.

The mutually enjoyed closely-knit solidarity developing over the years is a wonderful psychological support and a rare prerogative compared to other professions. Within the group everybody is at home, at ease with nod secrets to hide and no pretensions to claim. Weaknesses and strengths, vices and virtues are known and accepted as such. Even friendly exchange of obscenities (ritual insults) is part of the routine. s.c.

From mid-1960s in the small Thracian town of *Alpullu* <sup>(\*)</sup> I vividly remember a *vendor* selling the tragedy of a beautiful young girl victimized in an intricate deadly love affair.

In accordance with the convention, one of the last verses used to be a sign and stamp destined to commemorate and immortalize the poet himself, by mentioning either his true name or his pseudonym. In that particular case the end went as “*He who had written my ballad, Rhapsode Mustapha; bla bla bla*” (*Destânımı yazan Âşık Mustafa falan filan falan filan*”).

Some years before that date, an opportunist rhapsode trying to make a profit of a misfortune must have emerged in the aftermath of the ominous first *coup d'état*. As a matter fact; a seller with a megaphone was heard climbing down the steep streets of *Yıldız quartier* in *Beşiktaş*, Istanbul; while we small children were playing on a pavement.

In a melodious tone the malicious gloating couplet hit us all at once:

*“Oh Menderes, Menderes oh!  
In a poultry house stuck is the great man now!”*

*(“Ya Menderes e Menderes !  
Kümeşe de girdi koca teres!”).*

The Turkish word “*teres*” is a somewhat pejorative version of “man” approximating the American word “guy”, the British word “chap” or the German word “*Kerl*”.

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\* My father, after his forced retirement from his rank of major in the army following the *coup* of 1960, got settled in this town for the sake of a part-time English teaching post at the local junior high school. s.ç.

{In his superb translation of an anonymous song (sung by the legendry French female singer Edith Piaf), *la goulalante du pauvre Jean*, late-poet *Can Yücel* employs this word in the verse “*metressizdi teres*” for the sake of a beautiful alliteration effect.

It literally means something in the sense “*the poor devil had no mistress*” but is used as an interpretation to describe a sheer bachelor, connoting his *horny* and miserable situation, which was to lead him into eventual fatal trouble <sup>(\*)</sup> }.

Moreover, the very first stanza as well as the melody itself were obviously plagiarized from a popular song dedicated to a then-legendary football player—and this despite his small stature—in the *Fenerbahçe* team, famous Micro-Mustafa!

A French teacher, my friend *Sertaç Bey* originating from the Aegean town of *Turgutlu*, once narrated his reminiscences of a pavement-poet from his childhood days:

The March-12-1971 military coup had been in full effect. The parliament was hushed into obedience (if not dissolved as it had been during the previous and first coup of May-27-1960 or as it would be during the next future coup of September-12-1980).

A pro-junta deputy, *Nihat Erim* in favor of martial leaders was “appointed” as prime minister. The pavement-poet was an old *Roman* (gypsy) <sup>(\*)</sup> shoe-shiner

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\*The epilogue (and the moral) of the anonymous song is an advice to the audience to quit the bachelor style of life: “*et voilà mes braves gens / la goulalante du pauvre Jean / qui vous dit en vous quittant / aimez-vous !*”. Can Yücel’s translation goes as: “Çıktım ben aradan; / Size öğüt garibandan; / Diyor ki idamlık Jan: / Sevişin, sevişin lan!”.

\*Like in many settlements, in *Turgutlu* and other big Aegean towns Roman neighborhoods are present. In January 2010 an incident involving the Roman families (living there barely since 1978) broke out in the tiny town of *Selendi*. The law against smoking in public places had just got into force and a young Roman man was warned by a coffee-shop owner

named *Kerim*. All day long he would shine customers' shoes beautifully (and meekly) right at the town center, until night time. Then he would *guzzle* his two bottles of cheap wine right there on his shoe-shine box; slowly transform himself into a roaring lion; load his *gagne-pain*-box on his shoulder by its leather belt and stagger towards his shanty house, shouting out his quadruple all the way:

“In (capitol) Ankara (Premier) Nihat Erim !  
And here in Turgutlu, I, drunkard-Kerim!  
I'd go ahead f\*ck the mother and spouse <sup>(\*)</sup> of  
Anyone claiming to be a tough [daring challenge me]!”  
(“*Ankara'da Nihat Erim!*  
*Turgutlu'da Sarhoş Kerim!*  
*Ben adamın anasını*  
*Avradını s\*kerim!*”)

Let alone the town folks, even the security forces with their extra-swollen egos due to the prevailing martial law would not lay a finger on him. (Perhaps his

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for smoking inside. The young man (most probably touchy due to his ethnicity) took offense, considering this an excuse for discrimination.

After the quarrel he returned with a group to damage the place (strong solidarity among persons with a shared persecution perception). Trouble escalated with a climax whereby a mob of “whites” in rage retaliated by attacking the Roman households. Fortunately, security forces prevented life casualties. The Interior Ministry intervened promptly and tactfully, by deploying the victimized families first to *Gördes* and soon after relaying them to *Salihli* and *Kula*. s.ç.

\*That second half of the poem is not a unique original invention unlike the rhyming first half; on the contrary; it is a horribly provocative and very commonplace “format” in known swearing forms in the Turkish language. Indeed, it must sound familiar from a previous page in the beginning of this section mentioning about the folk-song by *rhapsode Mustafa Koç* in mid 1970s in a socialist reunion of songs and celebrations in Istanbul.

paying some tribute to the prime minister in the first stanza might have helped somewhat in that respect).

Drunkard-*Kerim*, the pavement-poet, used to be considered a colorful character and tolerated, even implicitly approved.

In one of our visits of the paternal grandparents in a Thracian village during my childhood, my cadet-cousin *İbraam* [*İbrahim*] wanted to impress me with his capability about finding rhymes.

Just across the house a naughty boy named *Emin* had his house. *İbraam* cupped his hands around his lips like a megaphone and shouted his short poetry in the *Pomak* language:

“Emiiiiin!

***Kış tatatibes kumin !”***

Ignorant of the *Pomak* language but curious about the meaning of the perfectly-rhyming second stanza, I asked him about the translation into Turkish. In an equally proud manner; her elder sister and my peer-cousin *Fahriye* volunteered to provide me with the Turkish translation for his sake; while the poet of the household started playing with his fingers and looking down shyly, following his wonderful performance:

— “Here ‘*kış*’ is ‘house’ and ‘*kumin*’ is ‘chimney’; so the meaning is: ‘Emin, whose house has no chimney’ ”.

#### **4.3.1.1. Anonymous Quadruples**

In villages girls and women like to recite quadruples called *mani*. Some improvise their own ingenious *mani* verses. The stanzas fall in rhyme and there lies the value. In the small village *Alpullu* an authentic quadruple recited by a girl from *Samafor* (train station) neighborhood in the Turkish class of the

junior high school —I now appreciate our Turkish teacher *Ömer Bey* better for encouraging such research as homework— went as follows:

“The rain falls and drips the soil wet  
In cascades from high altitudes  
And the gentlemen of our street  
All feign to be polite dudes!”

(“*Yağmur yağar sine sine  
Samafor Deresi’ne  
Samafor beylerinin  
Fiyaka neresine?”*)

Another nice *mani* was improvised by a high school girl when *Nermin Hanım*, their literature teacher assigned such a task for the class. The teacher, my colleague then, liked it a lot and publicized it in the teachers’ room. But she did not reveal the girl’s identity, in accordance the word she had given her:

“The air rises, bizarre comes the sound  
As for the weather, look, it is all cloud  
And the darling handsome boy I fancy  
Has his upper lip just getting fuzzy!”

(“*Hava havalanıyor,  
Hava bulutlanıyor;  
Benim sevdiğim yârim  
Yeni bıyıklanıyor !*)

#### 4.3.1.2. Riddles and Puns

Children usually play many outdoor games. For boys wrestling<sup>(\*)</sup> comes first. But in winter nights and at other times when they are together indoors, both boys and girls like to recite puns of words (tongue twisters) or test one another with riddles. Turkish is very convenient for deriving other words from a given root word and a famous tongue-twister is supposedly the longest word in the world, thanks to additions of suffixes one after the other:

*Are from one of those whom we could not checkoslovakianize?*

( Çekoslavyakyalılaştıramadıklarımızdanmısınız ?)

Turkish is very rich in riddles too. Peasant children as well as city children like riddles. He who knows more riddles than others acquires prestige. Some examples of anonymous riddles are:

*When I bought it at the shop it was one  
But at home it came to be a thousand!*

*(Çarşıdan aldım bir tâne  
Eve geldim bin tâne!)*

(The expected answer is a pomegranate)

\*

*Allah makes its structure  
A human being opens its gate*

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\*In some southern regions like *Denizli* even camel wrestling games are arranged: *Awesome looking camels with beautiful eyes decorated saddles and with their mouths contained in chain masks participate in the games. Whenever festivities are held for a mosque or school construction camel wrestling is remembered* (Kaptan 1988: 96).

*(Allah yapar yapısını*

*Kul açar kapısını!)*

(The expected answer is a watermelon)

#### **4.3.1.3. Idioms and Proverbs**

Many idioms and proverbs enrich speech and strengthen the defended cause in arguments. Two proverbs originating from Erzurum and registered by Bulut (1984: 89, 90) are as follows:

*My ration's morsel may well be tiny*

*But at least I'm free from headaches*

*(Azıcık aşım*

*Ağrısız başım)*

This idiom represents the contented situation of a person who lives in scarcity but away from burdens and responsibilities which could lead to probable trouble.

*The lords are indebted to the thieves*

*(Hırsıza beyler borçlu)*

This idiom says that nobody is immune to the threat of theft. Even well-protected rich people can be victimized by thieves. The proverb is uttered to console a theft victim's grief and boost his spirit.

An interesting feminist proverb is generated to my mother from her maternal grand mother, who had arrived in Turkey at middle age from rural Macedonia during the population exchange decreed by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1924. (My older uncle had been a baby on his mother's lap. At the border he had



pointed to the Greek soldier and simulated a cutting motion directed to his own little throat but the soldier just laughed off).

*Ayşe Hanım* had been an unhappy woman. She had fancied a handsome young man courting her mounted on a chestnut colored noble horse in her youth. The wives of her two big brothers were jealous of her. They had discredited her in the eyes of the family of the young good looking man (She had been supposed to be lazy). Instead they had arranged her wedding to a somewhat rude and rough (but good hearted) Albanian man.

She had kept her children all to herself and her favorite motto to make her husband look cold in the eyes of the children followed from an archaic proverb. *Ayşe Hanım* must have transmitted her feminist views to her favorite grandchild, my mother.

*Ayşe Hanım* had a long life span. We learned about her death from a letter when we were in Ankara and I was at the age of six. The proverb, to the detriment of the father, indirectly praises the mother. Written in original Macedonian form in phonetic writing, it goes as follows:

U-bay-ko su kur-ut mak-sım prave, su kur-ut mi-luve !

{ *Father makes the child with his phallus [and accordingly]  
loves (or rather deigns to love him)( merely) by his phallus! }*

Another metaphor full of wisdom which she had revealed to her grandchildren is this: “If man at a certain age ever falls in love, by God, it is like an old dirty rag catching fire and is much more difficult to extinguish than a new piece of cloth burning!”

#### 4.3.1.4. Ballads

In villages melodic ballads (folk songs) are very popular but classical Turkish music comes somewhat heavy for villagers to understand. The former is traditionally associated with peasantry while the latter is the “cup of coffee” of refined, educated city-dwellers. Parallel differentiation of music tastes regarding country music on one side and popular or classical music on the other should be valid for other countries including America.

The tradition of *saz*-playing poets is unfortunately dying. Some inspiration-full able *saz*-poets (*rhapsodes*), until about two decades ago, could even compete with one another in musical repartees by improvising verbal melodic compositions on the spot! Unfortunately they are almost all gone now.

Again a very interesting heroic *épopée* blessing one’s weapon in *Pomak* language was taught to me by my father. The population of his village <sup>(\*)</sup> came collectively from *Leshnisa-Plevna* during 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War.

My father’s grandfather *Mahmud Agha* had been a child then. The ballad was sung in the village until 1940’s. The new generations are forgetting that

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\*In July 1984, Staff Colonel *Ali Meralcan*, commandant of the Tenth Armored Regiment in *Kırklareli* said the following words in an assembly with his newly joined officers: “For the anniversary of *Çanakkale* Victory, which we celebrated four months ago, I had intended to fetch here a veteran (*gâzi*) of that battle. I had made a screening of the whole Thrace to find one. By great chance, in the village of *Mandır* I found not just one, but two together!”

So, it was the honor and the sacred luck of that very same village, to provide two veterans for the victory ceremony held in March 15, 1984 in the Tenth Armored Regiment in *Kırklareli*. The action in Gallipoli had occurred in 1915. The two former warriors therefore must have been at least 89 or 90 years old at the time of that commemoration day.

S.Ç.

language more and more. Again written in original form in phonetic writing, it goes as follows:

Moy-te-ya ja-nı tın-ka-ta-mi puş-ka  
Moy-te-sa det-sa sit-ne-te fi-şe-si  
Ma-ke-da-tu gi-ot-prata tam- vra-vat  
Plaçi may-ko plaçi pa-sa-na plaçi !  
Gley li-be-ley da-sa-na gley !  
Nes-ka sam-si tu-ka za-ra na-ma ne-ma!

{ *My wife is my elegant gun  
and my sons are my bullets  
Wherever I shoot them there they go (find the target)  
Cry mother, cry! To your satiation fully cry!  
Look, my darling, look! Give here a full free look!  
For today here I am but tomorrow I'm absent !* }

#### 4.3.1.5. Funeral Songs

Funeral songs have in important weighting especially when a young person dies. Rhyming words then are improvised and with a tune fall out the mouths of females. Rarely males do it too. In 1993 I participated in a funeral ceremony held in a village of *Yapraklı-Çankırı*, for a fallen soldier. The body of the martyr had arrived from the Southeast. Close female relatives of the dead soldier were lamenting and improvising funeral songs.

Just after the ceremonial burying, the father of the dead soldier; an old, bearded man; also began his own funeral songs (which is rare for males to do so). In a melodious voice the old man uttered sentences like:

“Oh my son! My precious, brave son! Once I wanted to go to Çankırı but had no money. Then I secretly searched your wallet, found your ten-markie-bill

(*ton petit 10-mark-note*) (*senin o on markçığını*) and I took it! How I repent it now!”

Many folk songs were originally funeral songs like the slow rhythm ballad sung after the dead girl named *Ferayi* and the marvelous ballad *Arda Riverbanks* bitterly sung by *Şükriye Tutkun*. They are deeply moving pieces of music accompanied by melancholic words.

As Bayrı (1947,1972: 131) notes *in Istanbul there is no tradition of funeral songs for a dead person. The relatives, friends and acquaintances just visit the house to present their condolences.* The same is true for almost all urban centers.

In Islam funeral songs are strictly forbidden. They are supposed to cause suffering the dead person’s soul. For that matter feud is openly forbidden in Islam, too. But in practice funeral songs are composed and feuds do happen (as handled under a separate subtitle before).

Christianity seems to be no different in that respect. Etori (1978: 248, 259) gives an interesting example of a Corsican —a very traditional (\*) Mediterranean island even though in Europe— funeral song (*vocero*) at the end of the eighteenth century during the church service. The cleric warns a woman who keeps crying funeral songs during the church office service of the dead.

The funeral singer (*vocératrice*), however, does not hold back from retorting to the priest himself:

« *Ancu vo, o sgiò curà / Diti: chiati chiati! / Ma no perdimi roba è ghjennti / E'à vo vi crescini l'intrati* ».

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\*The August 1924 issue of the *Encyclopedie Sciences et Voyages* writes (p.11) *that there stay some retrograde places where people are not drifted into the stunning speed of the mechanized age and where even the most painful labors are still done manually and depicts Corsica as one such place on earth.* s.ç.

The French translation is provided near the Italian Corsican dialect as follows:

« *Vous aussi, Monsieur le curé / Vous dites: taisez-vous, taisez-vous ! / Mais nous, nous perdons corps et biens / Et pour vous les entrées augmentent* ».

All that means is the following: “You too [Reverend] priest / you say: Shut up, shut up! / But we, we lose life and fortunes / While your income just grows”.

#### 4.3.2. Folk Tales

Villagers used to like fairy tales more than city people. (Nowadays the television is intruding in their lives, too).

Remembering his village days in childhood, Şanal (2009: 26) an exceptionally lettered boy in his time, writes: *In sleepless, half-happy nights books like Ali the Blessed and His Holy Wars, with their extravagant styles were part of my childhood literature. The Blessed Prophet's Sacred Birth, The Story of the Cut Head, Battal Gâzi the Ottoman Warrior must I also mention. Ali the Blessed upon his horse, his scimitar in hand, used to disperse thousands of infidels, without getting a scratch himself. [City boys in the mean time could have been reading the translation of Sans Famille by Hector Mallot, like I did].*

There is a contrast between winter and summer activities. In summer outdoor life and work goes on. In winter assemblies in take place *köy odası* (village hall). Women do their own assemblies at homes, modeling the child soul and mind.

*The old men, other times left to the company of one another in the shade of a plain tree before the coffee house, now get the opportunity to have attentive ears around them. Winter is their season. Now legends and epos and tales have free reign to pour out of the mouths (de Planhol 1958: 346).*

*In the village at winter nights people gather and tell tales. Tales are told and listened to by both men and women. Among men or women some excel in tale telling. The most famous one in Eylen village is the poorest man (C. Tanyol 1966: 64).*

Tales involving some puzzles and wisdom besides moral principles are more in favor among adults. As *Tuğrul* (1969: 70) points out; (in anonymous verbal literature) *exam and difficult question motifs are related to testing and trying patterns which are applied for making a wish come true, getting rid of a misfortune or just satisfying some curiosity. The patterns can be grouped as ordering ordeals; replying hard questions; testing to see if a claim, promise or one's loyalty is genuine or not ; competitions and bets.*

A wonderful tale embodying such test motifs is provided in the collection of *Boratav* (1967: 263-265) under the title “*If I Send You a Goose Can You Pluck it?*”:

*One day the sultan in disguise makes a tour of the capitol with his vizier. They come across a house in front of which a young girl was doing some sewing work. The sultan began to chat with her:*

— *Where is your father?*

— *He went to make many out of one.*

— *Where is your mother?*

— *She went to make two out of one?*

— *I see that your chimney is oblique.*

— *That is so; but the smoke rises up straight.*

— *If I send you a goose, can you pluck it?*

— *I can until the finest duvet!*

*The sultan on the return way asks his vizier what he can make out of this chat. He threatens to give him to the executioner if the answer fails. The vizier implores the sultan for a deadline in two days to think all about it. Next day he finds the girl and requires an explanation. The girl says each answer has its pay in gold coins. He agrees. Here is the solution to the mystery: The girl's father was a chopper; so he made many pieces of wood from one tree. Her mother was a mid-wife. So she helped a pregnant wife to bear her child (One became two). She was squinting, true. But her sight (smoke out of chimney) was good. And the vizier who paid for all that knowledge was the plucked goose of course.*

A slightly different version was told by *Dr. Belli* at *Çukurova* Chair of Legal Medicine. The next evening at social facilities I joined the table of late *Dr. Kemâl Melek*, with whom I was acquainted with from Bosphorus University days. A guest, a certain *Dr. Malamid* from an American University was at his table. To entertain the guest I told my newly-learned tale to the pleasure of both scholars during the dinner.

In *Dr. Belli's* version *the sultan is named as Murad the Fourth*. (He and *Mahmud* the Second are known to go around the city, incognito). *The girl is replaced by a boatman rowing them across the Golden Horn. No threat is in question but the vizier is curious and amazed at his own stupidity. So, finds the boatman the next day. In this version the questions are:*

- *How do you get along with Thirty-Two?*
- *I multiply it by thirty and always obtain fifteen.*
- *Nowadays they report about thieves. Did one enter your house?*
- *Three months ago, praise to Allah! Hopefully another will soon come!*
- *Good!*
- *If I send you a goose, can you pluck it?*
- *I can. Up to the finest duvet!*

*As for the clues, here they are: The boatman was asked about his gain (thirty-two teeth). He said every month repeatedly he could feed himself every other day (a total of fifteen days out of thirty). Nowadays marriages were being arranged often. (A bride was a “spoon-thief” coming into the house of his father-in-law). The boatman married one son and planned to marry another, hopefully. As for the goose to be plucked, it is his Excellency the vizier again.*

Once during my parents' separation I (4<sup>th</sup> grade) and my elder brother (5<sup>th</sup> grade) were sent to my father's village with an accompanying bitter letter from my mother, challenging my father's folk to care for us for a fortnight, as a change. Father himself was God knows where at the time.

We the two brothers kept commuting to our *Alpullu* school on foot along with the junior-high-village-group. The distance now was twice that from our home base, the other village where my mother took up the school-teaching job.

In the evening in the crowded family my aunts were telling local supernatural stories, legends <sup>(\*)</sup> and horrifying ghost tales while we were preparing homework in the light of gasoline lamps. (Later, my mother's folk would interpret those tales as a subtle intimidation, aiming to gain our consent for transfer to the local primary school; thereby avoiding "fearful" daily trips to and from *Alpullu*).

One tale was about the scaring evil spirit (which had the same name as a scare-crow in Turkish, *korkuluk*). The scaring-spirit once appeared to a young widow on her return way from a neighbor's visit, at sunset, with an ironic smile as if to mean "let's see who will rescue you from my hands now".

The clever woman said to it: "Hi there my sister-in-law (*Schwägerin*, *belle-sœur*), but your face is somewhat distorted this evening for some reason or other!" The scaring-spirit eased its manners curiously: "So, do I look like your sister-in-law?" and got the answer "you sure do; you are a lady, a female and you resemble my sister-in-law".

Approaching the house, the evil spirit asked the same question once again: "So, do I look like your sister-in-law?" and got again the answer "you sure do; you are a lady, a female and you resemble my sister-in-law".

A few moments later the spirit for the third time asked the same question and received exactly the same answer automatically. At the house door, the widow

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\*One was about a soldier stabbed to death by a young farmer because of a love affair, half a century before our times. The martyr-soldier's soul would sometimes moan and wail in the *Ergene* river basin filling the passer-bys with panic.



temporized her finding the key. She diverted the attention of the spirit by referring to the blossoming fruit trees. Then she blast the door open, jumped inside and shut the door immediately.

From behind the door, the widow now shouted: “You are neither my sister-in-law nor a lady. You are just a lowly prostitute!” The spirit replied disappointedly that the same words a few moments ago would have gotten her a strike like lightening.

When my aunt finished the tale I was astonished that the spirit could not transcend a wall like an ordinary jinn could do. Moreover; as a boy I found the adventure of a heroin somewhat insipid, and there were no other auxiliary characters for me to identify with, either, I must say.

#### **4.3.3. Appreciating Turkish Movies**

Before the introduction of the television the peasant youth culture was totally different from the urban youth culture. Peasant boys did not have access to popular comic spirits (*Teksas, Tommiks, Zagor* etc.) and foreign movies about cowboys, ancient Romans and Hercules, secret agents, detectives.

In the village where my mother was teacher only updated Turkish movies were played in a movie theater improvised from a barn, where wooden benches substituted armchairs and a support pole in the middle partly hindered the screen sight.

The heroes of the peasant boys and girls were *Eşref Kolçak, Orhan Günşiray, Ayhan Işık. Efkan Efekan* had his own place in their opinion. *Göksel Arsoy* with his golden hair, fair skin and European look did not quite appeal to their taste at the time but his steady co-actress *Leylâ Sayar* was well-liked as the esas kız (heroine).

*Suna Pekuysal* was popular as a comedian; so was *Suphi Kaner* (he committed suicide). *Yılmaz Güney* was yet beginning to shine; but new movies were too expensive to bring there.

They did not know a thing about foreign movies. Even today they don't watch foreign movies on TV. If they seldom do, they don't get curious about the names of the actors and actresses. The serial *Dallas* is an exception in 1980's. There too the names of characters like Sue Ellen got to be known instead of the actress' name.

Some years ago I went to the restroom of a passage in Beyoğlu, the most urbanized center of Istanbul. Here the men's section is indicated with an actor's picture instead of the common pipe or hat sign or a man's *silhouette* or even comic character Popeye. An elderly man was in charge of the toilets.

For all his low-status-job he proved to be a proud city person. While leaving *les chiottes* (the bog) I searched for some coins in my wallet to tip him and I asked about the picture on the men's WC.

The man made a grimace and expressed his disapproval, looking down upon that uncultured but decently dressed toilet-customer. Then I said "*my sight is not so keen, I recognized Marilyn Monroe on the door to the ladies' section. But that picture over there is so absurdly small for me to recognize*".

He then half-took my apology and answered: "*That guy is James Dean; how come you don't know him if you know Marilyn?*" I answered that I indeed knew the idol of the rebellious youth, the actor of the *West Side Story*. The man gave a broad smile and put some *eau-de-cologne* in my palm with a respectful gesture. My city-dweller status was acknowledged in his eyes, good for me!

#### 4.4. Folk Healing and Folk Beliefs

Folk healing for peasants has two dimensions. One is reasonable and rational and is resorted to because of necessity like practicality, unavailability of health professionals, lack of money. The other dimension has to do with producing or overcoming magic and follows a totally different line of thought, or rather belief. Incenses, lead pouring <sup>(\*)</sup>, various amulets, drinking or smearing on the skin obviously filthy and microbe contaminated stuff like remains of a dead hedgehog or donkey's urine <sup>(\*\*)</sup> involve this sort of "cure". Some methods are a mixture of the two dimensions.

As for folk healing, first of all, Turkish peasants are superstitious people although being superstitious is not an exclusively a peasant-like trait. Rather it may be more correct to consider it a personal trait of many a people in the bosom of the modern society.

*The military might of Prussians was admired by the later Ottomans. The superstitious sultan, Mustapha III (1757-1774) once asked Frederic II to send him three astrologers (fortune-tellers) as military advisors.*

*The emperor replied that his astrologers were his staff officers and gave the following advice: "The sultan should study history, evaluate the former experiences and possess a good army".*

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\*Some years ago Belly Dancer Asena got shot on the stage, allegedly by an angry fan. She suffered a lot but finally totally recovered. In a later interview on TV she proved her humorous wit by saying "I got lead poured" (*kurşun döktürttüm*) and chuckled over the adventure (In Turkish the words "lead" and "bullet" are homonymic).s.ç.

\*\* In Acipayam region swollen tonsils are treated by gargling donkey's urine in the mouth (Acipayamlı 1982: 15).

This should not appear as such an awful case of ignorance for the times. Though not totally relying on fortune-telling, many kings were known to touch the concept. In a historical novel Barbara Cartland depicts Napoleon himself as a superstitious man in need of the advice of his astrologers.

A movie released in 1961 and directed by Frank Capra starring Glenn Ford (Dave, the Dude), Bette Davis (Apple Annie) deals with superstitious beliefs in the background. The title was *Pocketful of Miracles* and the Turkish title was *Elmacı Kadın (The Apple Selling Woman)*.

*Annie is a peddler selling apples in depression years and bootlegger Dave buys one apple every time he encounters her.*

*He believes her apples will bring him good luck. On day he finds Annie in tears. It turns out that she has a young daughter, a student in Spain since infancy. The girl thinks her mother is rich. She is coming for a visit with her noble fiancé. The gangster needs her to sustain his luck and decides to help her.*

*Accordingly his close circle collaborates to prepare a mise- en-scène. A cultured billiard player hooligan becomes Annie's husband. Curious journalists who sense something fishy and interfere are kidnapped and tied by Dave's mob.*

*A spectacular reception succeeds to fool the guests and they are impressed. Meanwhile, the police are searching the missing journalists and Dave's girlfriend Queenie's nightclub is surrounded by police.*

*Dude makes a deal with the police chief and includes him in the conspiracy. Luck also helps. The people at the coincidental party for the mayor show up for Annie's reception. At the end, the daughter and her escort return happily by ship to marry back in Spain.*

*Before the return one problem was the issue of drahoma, the "anti-dowry". Like in Greece, in Spain the girl's party pays a groom price in contrast to bride price more common around the world. But the prospective father-in-law, the count, is a billiard freak. Annie's false husband beats him in a billiard party and that financial problem is also settled in this manner.*

#### 4.4.1. Certain Recipes and Techniques Employed

The rational treatment involves a “*pharmacopeia*” or recipe where certain diseases are matched with certain ingredients, mostly of herbal nature.

For instance *in Acipayam if the menstrual cycle is cut off [at a young age] the patient drinks a boiled extract of harmal plant (üzerlik) seeds; A coughing patient drinks the hot extract of elder (mürver) tree flowers* (Acipayamlı 1982:13, 15).

Some rational folk treatment methods involve physical handling instead of taking organic chemicals in digestive tract. One such method is pulling cups on the aching body region. The section of the body in question is cleaned. A piece of cotton is burned and a cup or bottle is covered over the flame.

When the oxygen content of the imprisoned air (21%) is consumed the resulting vacuum sucks and elongates the skin locally. Some capillary blood diffuses out. After a while the cups are removed one by one. Modern versions of this treatment are advertised.

From the movie *Zorba the Greek* (starring Anthony Quinn and Alan Bates and based on a novel by Nikos Kazantzakis) filmed in a Cretan village, a related scene is in my memory: *Inn-keeper old French widow gets sick and the high-spirited, joyous, life-affirming Greek peasant Zorba (my father has a touch of his character) applies this cup pulling treatment to her.*

*In fact; when removing the cups one by one, gloom gloom; to spirit her morale he teases her by saying “sounds sexy, does it not?” (She can not recover. When the Cretan peasants understand that she will die they rush and plunder the house since she has no heir).*

Sunar (1961: 18) relates an unsuccessful folk healing in one village with an educator (educators were unschooled, course graduated preliminary teachers) as a memory: *I knew a girl in the front row before. When I revisited the school Fatma was absent. I learned that she died meanwhile. She got a cold and her*

*parents wrapped hot bread from the furnace on her chest and back. Moreover they tightly covered her and pressed the cover. The poor girl cried “mama, I am all burning!” but they told her to endure the beneficial heat. She got suffocated in the bed.*

Bone-setting is also practiced in villages by skillful and experienced persons. A student in my junior high school in *Alpullu* got his wrist dislocated in his village, *Lahana*, on a weekend. They took him to *Kavaklı* village of *Kırklareli* and the locally famous *Hasan Aga* <sup>(\*)</sup> put his wrist in position (He and his son both had passed away. As I inquired and found out in a recent trip to the Village of *Kavaklı*, his grandson is practicing the craft presently).

When I was a teacher in *Eskişehir* at a boarding school a dorm *surveillant*, *Halil*, got his elbow dislocated in the evening time. It was more handy to skip any hospital and go to the nearby house of the local bonesetter *Hüseyin Aga*. The bonesetter put the elbow in position, took *Halil*’s handkerchief and wrapped it around. (Cloth handkerchiefs were yet in use). The irony is, *Halil* was a student at the Pharmacy Faculty.

An old retired government official once mentioned about his finger being deeply cut in childhood. An old neighbor rubbed off some granules from the

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\* “Aga”, a very humble title in Western Turkey, is different from the rich *agha* / *ağa*. It merely means elder brother. General *Cemâl Gürsel* was given this title by younger officers. A part-time journeyman in “my” former tailor shop, “Patched” (*Yamalı*) Mustafa, served as a conscript under his command in *İzmir*. He said the general had been a fatherly figure. Once he tasted the soup during a kitchen inspection and did not find it delicious. He tilted the cauldron with his army boots and poured the content down. He ordered new soup to be cooked.

The general was abused during the 1960-coup. Unlike the September 1980 coup, this was not carried out within the entire chain of command but a small junta group undertook the “task”. In need of a higher rank than the junior general *Madanoğlu*, they fetched the retired four-star-general from *İzmir* by plane and put him at the top position as a front view to save the appearances. s.ç.

inside suede surface of his thick leather belt. He treated the cut with those particles and wrapped. The awful cut healed almost perfectly.

#### 4.4.2. Healer Foyers

When visiting *Kırklareli* I asked a person from the same village about the *cairo-practor* of my childhood days. He said the old man died but his son *Nâci* took over the practice. Many healers come from a family, foyer, and the talent is inherited from father to one of the sons.

In 1980s a certain famous *Hacı Macit* from a special foyer in *Dört Yol-Hatay* was supposedly specialized in driving away scorpions and similar poisonous insects from a given location. The rumor went that then-president *Kenan Evren*'s *Marmaris villa* was blessed by him too. But this is a mystical issue rather than sheer hand talent as a craft. At least some mystical tinting is always involved in foyer type of "healing", anyway.

In his famous novel analyzing a Central Anatolian village; *Makal* (1963:121) talks about *different healing foyers in the vicinity of the village specialized for different sorts of suffering like high fever or nose bleeding etc. Sometimes one decides to choose among them through divination. One puts pins in a bowl full of water. Each pin indicates the direction of a different foyer. Whichever pin begins to rust first gives the right direction.*

On a TV screen some years ago showman *Mehmet Ali Erbil* was confronted with his mother and stepfather, a medical doctor. The father mentioned that in Ankara he carried his step son on his back to a healer for jaundice treatment through the "cutting" method and it worked.

Noah Gordon in his novel *The Physician* writes about a healer. *The nine-year-old Scottish boy Cole is the apprentice of an itinerant barber surgeon. He has a "gift" for sensing the approaching death when he grabs the wrists of a sick person. He travels all the way to Persia and in Ispahan becomes a student of Ibn Sina (Avicenna).*

*Since Christians are not admitted to the Islamic Medical School he pretends to be a Jew and completes his education.*

*Another novel by the same author, “Shaman”, depicts a descendant of that very boy as the hero in America during the Civil War time. He has a physician’s diploma along with the hereditary mystical gift. The gift passes to his deaf son who also begins the study of medicine.*

I understand strong traditions exist in Scotland, too. When I was a summer-trainer in a Swiss plant as a junior chemical engineering student, my Scottish boss, Dr. Roger Page once mentioned about sewing woolen patches on the torsos of rural children in autumn and leaving them untouched until the spring, without washing the trunk.

He said some families consider it more healthy. He named the practice as being “bleached” or “bleached” as I understood from the pronunciation and as far as I can come close to spelling it; but I could never check it on any written literature, which is expected.

#### **4.4.2.1. Some Experience (*Erlebnisse*) with the Healers**

My maternal granny, originally from rural Macedonia, had some folk healing capabilities which she practiced on insistence for some neighbors around. Her children picked up none of those talents. She used to gently rub injured points on the body with ash and yolk and then wrap. Another thing she used to do was applying mortar-beaten raw onions to wounds and then wrapping. But her distinguished practice was a little surgery.

If a baby’s tongue was too thick below, she would remove some of the tissue with a pin sterilized on fire and then put salt as disinfectant. This operation prevented the baby from having a lisping speech in adulthood. One time a neighbor discovered the tongue-fault too late, at a growth stage past the infancy;



and my granny refused to handle the child. Based on long passed experience, she said that it could be fatal to do it on this child.

When a child in *Alpullu* I once acquired a lovable street puppy and soon after that wounds surrounded my face and hands. (I brought the puppy to our garden in our bread basket; my mother found out about it from her neighbor and discarded the contaminated basket).

The ointments did not help much. When my mother took me along to a an elderly female tailor she saw my wounds and advised my mother to take me to the healer just next door, while we are already nearby.

Mother agreed in order not to contradict the tailor. The elderly person murmured a very short prayer looking at me, took two voluminous pebbles from his worn-out wallet and just before my face stroke them one against the other three times in succession. Sparks came out and the session was over. This pebble-striking method I never came across in related literature and I consider it a unique method worth of mentioning here.

#### **4.4.3. Certain Well-known Folk Beliefs**

Many superstitions have historical roots. Tuesday is said to be an unlucky day for important undertakings. In Turkish coincidentally *Salı* (Tuesday) and *sallanmak* (to shake or swing) are phonetically related. This reinforces the belief.

*Bayrı* ‘1947, 1972: 24) writes that *the belief stems from Istanbulites but earlier from Byzantium subjects since the city succumbed to the army of Mehmed the Second on a Tuesday*. He says, *on the contrary, it must be a lucky day for Moslem Turks*.

Folk beliefs depend on the specific region in question and are too numerous to collect together in a section like this. In *Bilecik* for instance *looking at a mirror at night time is believed to make one go crazy or fill one’s face with freckles*.

*Chewing gum or cutting fingernails at night bring bad luck also* (Yalvaç 1984: 50).

*In Burhaniye the crushing majority of folk beliefs are concentrated around gates and thresholds. Good or bad effects from outside enter the house from here. Sometimes necessary measures are taken to influx of good effects and at certain other times and situations the reverse is done to prevent the inflow of undesired effects. The gate has a predominant place in people's minds* (Erden 1978: 58).

#### **4.4.3.1. Beliefs About Hidden Treasures**

In villages, many beliefs are also turn around hidden treasures. “A widespread treasure belief in Turkey is that of money being hidden in the walls or columns of mosques and other public buildings by their builders for future repair expenses and this leads to considerable destruction” (Uysal 1985: 103).

“There are two types of treasure hunters in Turkey: the urban and the rural. The peasant treasure hunter can not of course read and understand profound [occult] works of medieval learning [believed to lead the way to treasures] but he often consults some ‘deep hodja’ for that“ (Uysal 1985: 98).

In an autobiographical novel the author with the pen name *Tayyar Tahiroğlu* (a retired Air Force sergeant) mentions about his childhood memories in his Thracian village in 1930s:

His father obliged him to read maps of hidden treasure from the bottom of a bowl filled with water. In multiple unsuccessful tries, he tries to conjure the notables of the jinns: “Ya Mersin, ya Hudût, ya Hayyum, ya Kayyum!” He attempts in vain to call and coax those four jinns to show the exact location of an alleged buried treasure.

The father is a hard man and based on a few omens he had observed and heard about, he had come to believe that his small innocent son should be able to communicate with spiritual beings. The child feels crushed under this responsibility but can do nothing but playing alone. The bridge legs are the main obsession of the father as being the right locations to dig around.

In *Çankırı* a janitor working for a government office was a treasure hunter. He was from a village of *Şabanözü* (the hometown of late honorable Professor *Hasan Ünal Nalbantoğlu*, as he had one time revealed to me). The janitor one day “confined” to me that some treasures were under the protection of jinns, which further complicate their discovery.

When I was an engineer working for the state-owned fertilizer plant in *Kütahya*, one night I had to relieve myself in open air. When I was talking with a factory watchman of peasant origins, I inferred that he must have seen me then; for he tactfully drifted the topic to the dangers of urinating in open places.

He said that *it is a dangerous practice and a jinn can strike you*. While mentioning those entities he did not neglect to say the necessary mystical formula, either: “Let them be in their good hour!” (*iyi saatte olsunlar*).

#### **4.4.4. Nevertheless, Peasants *are* Rational People**

I remember some field work (whose author’s name unfortunately had escaped my memory) dating back to mid 1970s where peasants in southern regions were asked by the researchers if they thought using tractors and other modern equipment were *sinful*. They reacted with indignation and answered with counter-questions like “do you think we are stupid just because we are peasants?”

The Amish society in Pennsylvania may well have their own grounds to avoid the use of technology; but Turkish peasants definitely have no similar problems. They are on good terms with any technology they can afford to attain. The peasants are shrewd, wise and they have a certain level of education enough to get by even when they live in urban centers.

Returning from my recent Aegean trip with my next-seat peasant travel companion *Ahmet* the Roll Bread Baker, I philosophized when the bus

approached the Dardanelles. I said “straits could present themselves as very keen boundaries; one such strait at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea separates the Islamic Berber communities from Catholic Spaniards, two entirely different worlds”. He came up with the name of that strait: “Cebel-i Tarık”, he said “as I remember from the fifth and last year of my primary schooling”.

I got impressed and also ashamed for underestimating his knowledge of geography. (While crossing the strait on a ferry we got off and smoked on the deck, mutually conspiring to pretend that we did not know that the whole ferry was a non-smoking “area”. When a security man warned us we took our last quick puffs and extinguished the butts).

It appears that high morale and psychological processes are accompanied with many folk healing methods. In the country side those methods are resorted to, simply out of necessity. Bookish remarks about discrediting them at a throw and advising to go to a specialist only sounds pedantic!

It is equivalent to reminding the children to drink their milk (!) before going to sleep at the end of the night programs “Before Sleep” (*Uykudan Önce*) presented by *Ergun Uçucu* on black and white TV screen a few decades ago (not a fault of the mild-faced actor himself). Which practitioner-doctor, let alone a specialist? And which milk? And under what circumstances <sup>(\*)</sup>?

A desperately sick person would not hesitate to try any method unless obviously suicidal. Let us listen to a scholar of Anthropology, who had just carried out a research around rural *Diyarbakır*:

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\* Emergency conditions may occur in other places besides villages like on a battlefield, for instance. A lieutenant-colonel who had fought in the peace operation in Cyprus in 1974, revealed in a talking session in 1984 that health services had been “not bad, but instead literally non-existent”. Probably a lesson was taken and the Military Medical Academy in Ankara was restructured accordingly, soon after the operation. S.Ç.

*Peasants believe in the modern treatment methods for diseases due to natural causes like cold, heat, food and drinks, filth (microbes) and wounds. But in addition to treatment in line with modern methods; behavior tending to please supernatural powers through vow, sacrifice, charity, alms, pray, amulets can not be neglected by the peasantry in secondary plan; since such powers render the person delicate to such illnesses. It should not be forgotten that certain elements in Islam support this opinion and understanding. In Islamic faith Allah knows everything and everything occurs in accordance with His will. Spiritual beings like jinns and fairies are also accepted in the religion of Islam (Gençler 1978: 89).*

Today one can not see any snake-oil salesmen deceiving ignorant masses by selling magic formulas to remove stains from clothing or swindlers like *Sülün Osman*, who used to sell tower-clocks to peasants visiting Istanbul.

When it comes to belief in the existence of spiritual entities like the human soul, angels and jinns; this has nothing to do with a backward mentality; since they are in accordance with the mainstream orthodox creed of universal celestial religions. Belief in fate also falls in the same category.

Even the latest degenerated *Janissaries*, when opposing military reforms and accusing modern techniques as being the inventions of infidels; were only using this argument as a cover story; protecting their corrupted ways. They were neck-deep “submerged” in commercial activities and had totally deprived themselves of any trace of proper military discipline.

The payroll of a Janissary with his name labeled officially (*esâmi*)<sup>(\*)</sup> was circulating in the market as a substitute for a stock bond. Goldbricking in face of hard military training was the other concealed and real factor.

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\* The Turkish idiom (*esâmesi bile okunmuyor*) meaning “his name is not even being mentioned” comes from the Janissary *esâmi*, the slip carrying his name in the payroll for his three-monthly salary, *ulûfe*. s.ç.

Such are the folk beliefs of peasantry. In spite of every kinds of material deprivation; one can with confidence easily say that modernism has penetrated the countryside when it comes to people's mentality.

Today's peasant can never be regarded as backward in that respect. Because the decisive point in classifying a people's mentality as backward or forward essentially lies in their attitudes towards use of technology.

As a matter of fact, peasant new-mothers could be more rational than their city counterparts, as a French scholar affirms in his research carried out in *Bergama*, near *İzmir*:

*Contrary to what one may think, it appears that the peasant circles are less intransigent [uncompromising] than urban circles in the matter of traditions, at least in the domain we could study. The village is a community, one might as well say a grand household; where life goes on by fulfillment of the same tasks by every one; that is, work in order to survive. There, agrarian activity commences from childhood onwards. People do not have time to worry over executing detailed rituals which are not somehow related to either common sense or religion or good health or production or smooth flow of local life.*

*The most striking difference is in the respective attitudes of the city and the village towards the custom of "forty days confinement" after birth (childbed). Peasant mothers don't respect it; they return to the fields <sup>(\*)</sup> in a few days as soon as they feel good; whereas in downtown Bergama the custom prevails and it offers the mother good opportunity to accept visits and indulge in eating sweets (Nicolas 1972:146-147).*

The first novel written by Latife Tekin deals with a peasant family moving to Istanbul-Yıldız for good. The adventure of the family is narrated by the family's little daughter Dirmit and the novel is full of supernatural beings.

"Studies in Turkish folklore show that such figures in *Dear Shameless Death* as the fair-haired girl-witch *Sarı kız*, the exhibitionist *Neighing Boy*, who is

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\* This custom should not be interpreted as mistreatment of women. They are spoiled and cajoled by their men after birth, especially if the baby is a boy. s.ç.

possibly a cross between a young man and a horse, and *Dirmir*'s imaginary donkeys that bray '*ninnisare*', a nonsense word coined by the author, could well be jinns in disguise... in popular practice an exorcist like *Djinnman Memet* can be called upon to cleanse a person of what appear to be signs of possession by djinns, as happens when [the mother] *Atiye* is pregnant with *Dirmir*" (Introduction by the translators, 2001: 14).

## CHAPTER V

### CITY-DWELLERS VIS-À-VIS PEASANTS

#### 5.1. Arrogance of *Citadins* in Face of Peasants

Peasant-like behavior patterns usually come into the attention of urban media in the form of aggressive acts like shooting guns in the air in exuberance when gloating over the football victories and the doers got stigmatized with the pejorative newly-coined word “*maganda*” (approximating the English word *hick*). (Former *hanzo* or *keko* seem to be replaced by the new word. The new world implies possible danger which may emanate from the person, which the former ones lacked).

As I remember, in his work titled *On Productive Soils*, novelist *Orhan Kemal* narrates the adventure of three peasant men who leave together to gain a living. One of them dies of illness. Another, a wrestler, gets tempted by a frivolous woman and gets in trouble. The third, learns the trade of wall construction and returns, more or less a success. On the way back a train official treats him badly empties all his grudge directed to villagers in general.

Many snobby city-dwellers are like him. They despise villagers and somehow show their contempt overtly. Some prefer to conceal their hostile feelings rather than acting out. Perhaps the lightest persecution encountered by a villager is probably mockery. Advocates of villagers in cities are usually re-socialized villagers themselves or their children.



A visiting peasant's situation is mentioned in a somewhat merciless manner in a pun of words (tongue-twister); which is recited with a certain melody in the evenings, on the verge of quitting street games and returning home:

“Let the married go home! / Let the villager go to his village! / And whoever has no home, / Should just enter a mouse-hole!”

(“*Evli evine! / Köylü köyüne! / Kimin evi yoksa, / Sıçan deliğine!*”).

While I was a junior high school student in *Lüleburgaz*, we had an *Istanbulite* music teacher, *Sezai Bey*. Once he discovered a sticking out nail on his teacher-desk. He attempted to pull it out with his naked hand but could not.

To save the situation he began to say “one needs the strength of Hercules”; but he immediately corrected himself and re-said “one needs the strength of Hadrat Ali to pull out this stubborn nail!” He might as well had referred to the strength of *Zaloğlu Rüstem*. Village-boys constituted approximately half the class and *Sezai Bey* was too clever to exclude them.

But one day, focusing his attention to a typically peasant-faced boy, he counseled: “After graduation you should go to Kırıntepe Teacher-Training School. That place is appropriate for you”. The way he put it was a bit pejorative in Turkish (“*seni orası paklar!*”). But his intention was good and he solely wanted the betterment of that student, as he evaluated his case.

On a May evening in 2009 I was watching a history program on *Haber Türk* television. On one occasion, researcher and author *Murat Bardakçı*, an Istanbul-born and Istanbul-bred gentleman, referred to the Ottoman nicknames regarding persons' home-cities.

The city's name followed the person's name with a certain suffix, an elongated letter (i). *Bardakçı* promptly gave an example, employing his young co-worker, associate professor of history *Erhan Afyoncu*, as the subject.

He said “Erhan-i Tokadî, for instance”. I explained to my late mother that *Erhan Bey* comes from *Tokat*. When I saw a thin smile beginning to play upon her lips, only then I came to realize that the elderly program-maker probably caught the opportunity to tease his young colleague in a very subtle manner (as he sometimes enjoys to do so), emphasizing and contrasting each other’s respective metropolitan and provincial social backgrounds .

In another episode of the program, *Bardakçı* on one occasion, as if only stressing the younger age of *Afyoncu*, more bluntly said: “At that time you were in the village running about in short-sleeved trousers”.

His interlocutor got offended and retorted back: “It is you who came from a village!” The elderly journalist swallowed the retaliation and the repartee came to a halt. Another topic began to be handled.

*Zülfü Livaneli*, son of a sub-governor (*sous-préfet*), had his high school education in Ankara College. He once related in one of his chronicles that he used to take his guitar to school and play the traditional *saz* only at home. In late 1960s it was an embarrassing occupation to deal with folk songs and *saz*-like provincial music instruments.

## **5.2. Some Relations on Equal Footing**

Following my father’s retirement we had just moved from Istanbul to the very small town of *Alpullu* and rented a house in the far-flung flood-houses neighborhood with no electric lamps. My crowded classroom had a mixed character since it was the only third grade section. Then a new teacher (also female) got appointed and all the “riffraff” (mostly peasant children) in the opinion of some (whoever they were) were “decanted off” to the new-comer’s newly opened section.

Now all students left over were children of shop owners or sugar plant officials, teachers, policemen, health officials, train station officials. This represented the highest social standard cross-section at the time and at the place. But we were a morning class and the new section became a noon class.

On my mother's instigation I knowingly volunteered for the noon class <sup>(\*)</sup>. I had to care for my small brother. (My one year older big brother was a noon student but he had an independent character and had pretended indifference).

One evening after class dismissal, on the way home, two peasant students from my new class "took us prisoners" and brought us to a nearby harvested field for a talk in a real "captive audience". (I consulted with my big brother and we decided to agree, warding off possible violence since no brute force was employed in the beginning but seemed imminent in case we did not comply).

They questioned us for about twenty minutes and listened to the replies with utmost curiosity. What were Istanbul girls like? Did we have darlings there? What meals did we eat there (and here?) etc. (Like a *Stocholm* syndrome I later got friendly with those two peasant students).

In the third year of my junior high school my desk mate *İsmet* was a village boy. I got the highest grades in painting and drawing course from the stingy-in-grades *Sema Hanım* (and later from the more generous, academy-educated *Muzaffer Hanım*) in the entire school, combined *Lycée* division included, along

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\* As an army officer's son moving place to place, I was already experienced in changing classes. But even before, I had done it on a voluntary basis and so, this would only be my second chosen plight in vertical social mobility.

In *Beşiktaş-Istanbul* I had been in the class of the "nobility" but; for the sake of becoming a noon student to aid mother in looking after the baby; I told had our young, good-looking, steel-rimmed spectacled teacher *Neclâ Hanım* about my transfer wish. She had acclaimed me as a hero daring to do that. The noon class of elderly *Hâdiye Hanım* proved to be full of children of door-keepers, peddlers, itinerant weekly marketers and whitewashers. s.ç.

with *Sami*, *Hülya* and *Yaşar*. (Years later I was to run into *Yaşar* when we both became reserved officers; he had studied dentistry).

Just before graduation *İsmet* implored me to donate my water-color pictures to him and I accepted; passing him the entire collected works in a file. This was honoring for *İsmet* like stamping our friendship with a solid memento.

Another village boy learned about this from *İsmet*'s gloating and resented me for not having given *him* a single painting. He wore a rope-like greasy necktie; so, that evening I picked up a few ties from among the collection of ties left over by my father after his deserting the house.

The next morning I presented the ties to the boy as if giving a “consoling prize” like the National Lottery Administration does when only a single digit does not match to gain the big prize.

### **5.3. Self-Perceived Inferiority and the Resulting Resentment**

A city-person is always conscious and proud of his urban origins in front of his provincial counterpart, no matter how high the acquired status of that counterpart may be. On the slightest pretext, this perceived superiority comes to express itself if not explicitly, certainly implicitly.

This instigates a resentment on the part of the villager. But deep inside he *does* accept the superiority of the other. This may easily transform into an impulse to go forward. Many village oriented people achieve success and wealth (like the wonderful practical *Nuri Kantar* businessman character of an old TV serial).

Late Psychiatry professor *Adasal* brought up the concept of collective inferiority complex in one of books. Villagers have just that vis-à-vis city-dwellers. My father, though an officer, with his peasant origins used to feel

crushed before my mother, who originates from a big town. Eventually they got separated and later divorced.

While we were on a visit to my maternal grandmother, my mother once exclaimed “how lucky of me that I don’t come from a village! Otherwise I would have to wrap a veil on my face when visiting home, like that other female teacher does!”

Indeed, as *Erdentuğ* (1959: 53) specifies, under a subtitle regarding some characteristics of peasants “even in the case where one person has lived for long outside the village, he [/she] is morally obliged to observe what tradition dictates; he [/she] tries to adapt himself [/herself] to the village’s customs by first changing dress upon coming home”.

#### **5.4. A Possible Victim in Urban Environment**

Villagers are by no means stupid. In fact they are crafty. The peasant’s cunning (*Bauernschlaukeit*) is famous. But, paradoxically, it is their lack of urban experience which makes them prone to be victimized by flimflam men. An anonymous anecdote goes as follows:

*The cunning peasant visits the big city for the first time. While he is gaping at a skyscraper with an open mouth, a swindler approaches him and asks him at which floor he is staring at. He must pay so many piastres. The peasant pays six piastres, asserting the authoritarian-looking new-comer that he had been watching the sixth floor. When he is left alone he congratulates himself for his alternative gain. In actuality, he had been staring at the tenth floor!*

This vulnerability *vis-à-vis* swindlers extends out to all provincial people including town-dwellers. But they take lesson experience. They may even get too cautious once being a victim. My father originates from a Thracian village. When I was a child my father was an army captain. For a time, he was also in charge of a twin company as the acting commander. A new conscript was

complaining about his swollen, aching legs and my father assured his well-being, exempting him both from training and toiling in the barracks.

After leaving the other company, an inter-companies running contest was held at the battalion. Among the other officers he was watching the competition. The winner proved to be a familiar face, that same conscript who “had troubles with his feet”.

Boasting off with raised hands in his victory tour, he noticed my father and immediately began to limp! My father let it go unnoticed. But in his fury, I and my sibling were scapegoats at the house, for quite a long time. Everything we said was cross-checked. The change money we brought back from the bakery was carefully counted and so forth.

I used to know a female intern doctor, who was a relentless enemy of beggars. (Feeling my annoyance about that fixation of hers, once in a letter addressed to me she wrote: “*Go to the same pool, order a glass of tea, light a cigarette and think about me. If beggars ever come nearby, dispel them; don’t permit them to disturb your sweet meditating mood!*”). She obviously had a reason for that negative attitude against beggars.

Upon her arrival from Anatolia into the big city for registration at a faculty of medicine as a boarding student, she had an incident. A shabby-looking woman at the gate of the research hospital of the faculty quickly told her a bitter illness story and asked for charity. In her joyful mood of a happy new medicine student, she gave her a considerable lump sum of money, thus reducing her own allowances.

Thirty steps away, another woman did the very same thing, thereby “shaking off” her *naïveté*. She immediately returned to the first woman to re-claim her money, which she could not recover (When I mentioned all this to my mother, following our frustrated separation, in need of some consolation; my mother

was merely amazed at and impressed by the girl's resoluteness to go back and recover her pocket-money, instead of acquiring an attitude like "it was just a mistake and let bygones be bygones").

I fell victim to a foot-in-the-door <sup>(\*)</sup> technique once. Returning from my (Thracian) home, I was on the verge of transferring to another municipal bus in *Eminönü* district of Istanbul to get to school (Robert College *Lycée* Division).

I was a boarding scholarship student and I had only one lira (Turkish money unit) left over that Sunday afternoon. Near the bus station, at the courtyard of the *Ottoman mosque* dominating the square; all of a sudden; a smiling, dark complexioned youngish woman held a small tin vessel full of corn grains before me and requested me to spread it on the ground for the pigeons to pick up.

The price was written on the can: One fourth of a lira, the same amount as the student bus fare. I took the vessel (the cap of a glass jar) and offered its content to the pigeons.

But the woman hastily threw up three more measures (or to be more precise, half-measures) of grains to the pigeons without my consent and obviously "for my sake" and thus, in a sense, she came to "deserve" a whole lira (all of my

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\* The "foot-in-the-door" approach involves asking for a small favor and incrementally obtaining much bigger ones. "When individuals commit themselves in a small way, the likelihood they will commit themselves further in that direction is increased" (Aronson 1992: 189).

Confidence artists know this and abuse it. The reverse technique is equally effective. It is the face-in-the-door method (asking for a big favor and settling for a smaller one). A child who demands to borrow his friend's bicycle may very easily obtain his lollipop candy instead. Giving away the lollipop will appear like an insurance document for the bicycle in the eyes of the bicycle-owner. s.c.

money) with that *fait accompli*. The shy and provincial boy I was, I had to walk all the way to my school, in two hours.

### 5.5. The Overcautious Peasant within the City

A person is cautious by nature. As it appears in a very old grammar book on German, even a German proverb emphasizes this truth: “*Was der Bauer nicht kennt, das frisst er nicht*”. (The peasant does not devour <sup>(\*)</sup> what he does not know). When I was a tailor apprentice in a summer vacation, one time my boss left the shop for a visit to his far-away-relatives for a few days. Before his departure he “appointed” me as the acting boss in charge. The full-time journeyman (*Geselle / kalfa*) had quit and the part-time journeyman working on piece-rate pay could not be held responsible.

Following my craft-master’s instructions written on paper, in his absence, I handed some finished works to customers and received the specified money, in the mean time. A peasant then came to ask for his ordered trousers.

I had given away a pair with about the same size and color to another customer before his arrival; so, for a moment I got confused and mumbled about a mistake. The villager bitterly smiled and threatened to go to police. This was the first such threat I was confronted with in my life. In his insecurity, taking me as a deceitful city-boy, that is what he just did to me. After a short desperate search I located and submitted his order and he apologized.

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\* The proverb appears on page 153 in a book written by *Tuğrul Madran* in 1973: *Türkçe İzahlı Almanca Gramer*. The verb “*fressen*” is definitely a pejorative selection since it is used for animals in place of “*essen*”, the usual verb for human beings. The noun form “*der Fraß*” similarly means fodder for livestock. S.Ç.



## 5.6. Admiring and even Vindictive Peasant

My wife, Istanbul-born and Istanbul-bred, sometimes turns down my knowledge of foreign languages with a harsh attitude. Then I wisely find an excuse to exaggerate my more humble provincial aspect to mitigate her anger.

Just after the meal, for instance, turning a *ritual insult* towards myself I say: “So you fed the village bastard full!” (*köy piçini doyurdun*). She keeps mute but I know she gets delighted, feeling elevated in contrast to me. (Maybe thanks to the author *Elif Şafak*’s novel titled *The Father and the Bastard* the word in Turkish does not sound so obscene any more).

I remember visiting my father’s village as a whole family in my childhood, when a peasant boy took his mirror and began to reflect light on our faces. My father, always reluctant to break hearts (and for that manner a lenient, kind, fatherly figure <sup>(\*)</sup> towards the soldiers under his command unlike many other fellow combat officers) did not scold him on my mother’s instigation but patiently instructed the boy to be more welcoming and polite. The boy behaved himself right away.

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\* After his (obligatory) retirement as a major from the army (during the 1960 coup), for a time thanks to his distinguished certificate from the Army School of Languages, my father gave English courses at *Alpullu* Junior High School and especially favored peasant students. One of his favorite students, with a very dark and grave face, was commuting to school daily from *Temren* village of *Hayrabolu*, farthest away than any other student’s home. At the end of the academic year he had a few failing grades but my father vigorously defended him at the general assembly of the teachers and got his grades corrected to passing limits.

To convince fellow teachers, he even resorted to humor. He said to them “How could you ever dare flunk this burgeoning *Lumumba* of the future?” The assassinated legendary black leader of Congo were yet fresh in memories. About two decades later, overhearing the word *Temren*, his village, from a passenger in a municipal bus in Istanbul, I asked about *İsmail*. His compatriot said he was now a policeman stationed somewhere in the east of the country. s.ç.

The peasant boy's first reaction was like that of the Taurus boys stoning the window panes of the passing by trains, in animosity towards urban power. When the railroad directorate undertook a project to offer them free trips, the action came to a halt. (Indeed, in a Friday sermon in a mosque a cleric had once said: "If a man offers a glass of milk to his neighbor after feeding his family with milk and if that neighbor still prays for the death of that cow, what a sinful human being he is!").

In America some luxury hotels have happy hours during which the prices of drinks sink to regular levels. Such measures give respite to lower income groups and mitigate their antagonism, as compared to wild capitalistic insistence.

In the novel *Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck makes speak a character about the Californian gardens: *If the money paid to security people to prevent eating of the fruits by the pickers were to be added to wages, the wages themselves would have gone up considerably.*

I know from my personal family history how touchy a village individual can be at the slightest critical remark or even gesticulation:

On a visit to my father's village in my childhood, one evening I was the object of curiosity, being interrogated in a sense about the city ways. At a point one of my aunts said they will find a good girl for me to marry, in some years. In a very much *naïve* and puerile bluntness I retorted that I did not want a peasant girl like them.

A slap flashed on my face and my buzzing head could hardly make out the following reprimanding words as if from a distance: "If we *are* peasants, then, how come your own mother searched for a c\*ck here among *us*?" (*mâdem köylüyüz, anan ne s\*k aradı bizim aramızda?*).

On another visit, I wanted to change a notebook bought at the village shop the following day with another one with a different cover composition. Another man was in charge of the shop now. He replied that he bought the whole shop anew and the former transactions were now irrelevant. I asked if a shop can change hands in a single night. He retorted back: “So, a smart city boy you are. Not at all dumb like *us*”.

I quit the shop with the same notebook in my hand and came to my female cousin (my peer) plying some word games. While she was writing in the notebook, I must have scrutinized her rough hands somewhat intently.

She looked up from the writing and said: “Of course, in Istanbul you wash your hands under running water with *Puro* <sup>(\*)</sup> toilet soap every morning. Do not expect *my* hands to be equally fresh and soft even though I’m a girl!” (she would later attend *Alpullu* junior-high school and after graduation, with the encouragement of her retired major paternal uncle —my father— she would gain entrance into a nursing secondary school).

When my father got promoted to the rank of first lieutenant, they appointed him to *Lüleburgaz* garrison not very far from his village. (He would later spot my mother there and they would marry). The young tanker officer rented a bachelor house and brought her youngest sister *Suna* there. The girl would care for him like a surrogate mother and attend the junior–high school after an interruption of a few years in her education, her primary school graduation lagging behind now.

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\* The chemical plant *Puro-Fay-Pop* was contained in a fairly small building in Zincirlikuyu but the building got demolished years ago and just like margarin *Vita* those products fell into the oblivion of nostalgia. s.ç.

But in her class the other girls mocked her manners and speech and in a week the poor country girl got all fed up with it. One morning she took her belongings along and took the train to her village, for good.

### **5.7. At Times, Countryfolk Surpass Townsfolk!**

In this section as if paying some homage or tribute to the peasantry, let us see how the peasant sometimes wins his own little victory over the city-dweller. Indeed, the peasant who had commonly been described as rude<sup>(\*)</sup>, despicable, lazy, filthy, shrewd, cowardly, ignorant, backward and deserving whatever other ignoble adjectives; *does* prevail over the city-dweller; at least in certain given circumstances; as it is to be seen in a lot of case histories presented below.

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\* While studying some Gothic German from an “archaic” grammar book, I was surprised to encounter an exemplary sentence with the French translation, asserting the so-called rudeness of the villagers, in accordance with the “ages-old” stereotype: Here it was on the 414<sup>th</sup> page:

Stützen Sie sich doch nicht auf den Tisch wie ein Bauer ! [*Stützen Sie sich doch nicht auf den Tisch wie ein Bauer !*] = *Ne vous accoudez donc pas sur la table comme un rustre !* [Just do not lean on the table like a peasant !].

The hundred and twenty (!) year-old book’s twentieth print was in question and the meaning of the sentence obviously had not been challenged. The book is:

PLÖTZ, Karl (1898). *vocabulaire systématique et guide de conversation française*, zwanzigste Auflage, Verlag von F.A. Herbig, Berlin.

### **5.7.1. The Peasant as a Subject of Art**

As the wife of a Soviet culture minister puts it while referring to a Turkish Painting Exhibition in Moscow, villages in early Republican era constituted a theme to work on even for the Turkish painters:

*Among the primitive styled works, Turgut Zaim's tableau depicts scenes about village customs. Namık İsmail, an impressionist, describes various aspects of rural life in his work named "Villagers Bathed in Vigorous Turkish Sun". In his work titled "Greek Officers", Painter Mahmud chose his topic as the capture of a Turkish village by the enemy (Bobnova 1938, 2003: 291-292).*

Peasantry constituted a vivid topic for bizarre-loving painters all over the world. In a historical novel by *Olden* (1978: 62) featuring *Edgar Alan Poe* as a hero, talking about a rich New York house (at the time half of the city were formed from ugly, cramped tenements housing miserable immigrants), a reference is made to a *tableaux* of *Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, a sixteenth-century Dutch artist, in oil:

"You could smell his peasants and barnyard animals, you could touch their clothing and skin! The first painting showed peasants shearing sheep in front of a thatched cottage. The second showed three men in colored doublets and thigh-boots, hands tied behind their backs and hanging from a gibbet".

### **5.7.2. The Peasant's Natural Environment is Healthier**

In the modern world (including Turkey recently) there is a growing nostalgia for a return to the countryside for the sake of peaceful days.

Just like a novel-character (a lawyer leaving urban Arizona for some two hundred miles due north) of *Elia Kazan* (1974: 95) puts it, there in the countryside is to be found the real undisturbed life:

“I’d rather see a rattler in the morning than most of my clients; a coyote sounds more brotherly than anything I hear in the city; and I don’t know a friendlier sound than the one my cows make when they come in at the end of a day”.

### 5.7.3. Peasants Have Their Own Celebrities

Today in Turkey some prominent novelists like *Mahmut Makal*, *Fakir Baykurt*, *Talip Apaydın* (his daughter Su was a student in my university but I found out about it afterwards), writers like the prolific pedagogue *Cavit Binbaşoğlu*, academicians like professor of education management *İbrahim Ethem Başaran* former graduates of village institutions.

Important people stemming from villages are impossible to count! The third president *Celâl Bayar* came from the village of *Umurbey*, *Gemlik-Bursa*. In his testimony he insisted for his museum’s location in his village. (I visited the beautiful green coastal village and the museum eight years ago). *Hacı Ömer Sabancı*, a peasant boy from *Kayseri*, built an industrial empire.

In January 15, 2010; on *Kanal Türk* TV screen, movie actor *Cüneyt Arkın* (a physician by education and trade, coming from the city of *Eskişehir* and with the actual name *Fahrettin Cüreklibatır*) was given an interview. At a certain point he proudly said: “I am a village boy (!) and therefore I am resistant against hardship”. This is an astonishing revelation on his part.

Could his renowned good looks ever have anything to do with the peasantry? Let the peasants alone, he does not even look like an Anatolian. He could even be taken as a fellow European man by a foreigner not knowing him.

Indeed, as he narrated the very same evening, at the time, when he had volunteered for the part of the legendary Central Asian hero *Karaoğlan* (literally, the dark complexioned boy) in a prospective movie; he had been turned down by *Suat Yalaz*, the illustrator of the comic strip and also the

would-be producer of the movie; merely due to his lack of Asiatic facial features. *Yalaz* had notified him that he, as a “mixture of *Alain Delon* and *Marçello* [*Mastroianni*]” (“*Alain Delon-Marçello kırmısı*”, as the actor pronounced with an obviously pleased grin) could only be the least suitable candidate for the role in question! (The producer’s choice went with *Kartal Tibet* instead, opening him the gates of a long acting career).

#### **57.4. A Peasant-like Person**

##### **can be Admired by Townsfolk**

An alert, charismatic but nevertheless village-like or provincial move on the part of a person; on occasion can emerge as the impressive role-model action in contrast to the submissiveness of a dull, spiritless citizen.

I was once getting prepared to cross *Bağdat Caddesi* in Istanbul at *Kızıltoprak* district and was in obvious hurry. The traffic was heavy and I began to get impatient on the pavement.

Nearby was a middle-aged elegant gentleman, who was obviously long conditioned to wait for the green light without any complaint whatsoever. Finally the green light flicked and the two of us began to walk.

On the way I gave him a sidelong glance and couldn’t help saying, half to him and half to myself: “It will be peasant-like attitude; but I would rather f\*ck (\*) such an avenue!” Suddenly the man looked up at me with open respect and admiration. For a moment I was indeed proud of my practical formation leading to my deeply-rooted provincial background.

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\* I was not so vulgar as to use the actual Turkish equivalent verb in its full vernacular form. Rather, I softened the verb by saying “*sin kaf ederim*”. (“*Sin*” and “*kaf*” are the Arabic counterparts of the Turkish consonants “s” and “k” respectively, in the Ottoman scripture. Nowadays, only an educated person at a certain age is familiar with this usage). s.ç.

#### **5.7.5. A Man from a Village is More of a Family Father**

We had previously mentioned about the merciful heart of the peasant. We might as well elaborate some. To begin with, the villager is more merciful to and more protective of his own children. (Sometimes fights break out because of children). The villager even spoils his children, especially sons. In cities, more often fathers are usually stern with the discipline of their sons.

I remember a religious festivity day when I woke up early and went straight to my father. Relying on the importance of the day to come nearer to him in all respects I grabbed his hand to kiss it and put on my forehead in the customary respect sign.

My father was in his pajamas. He did not let me abuse the day to slacken the parental discipline and said to me: “Well, good but can’t you do a proper timing instead of kissing my hand just when I was about to itch my ass?”

On a summer vacation I took a job as interpreter on a petroleum drilling firm just outside the village of *Karakavak*, near *Hayrabolu-Tekirdağ*. One day the overzealous watchman caught a 13-yr-old village boy near the rig. (I did my best to mitigate his fears; I felt ashamed in the name of the company).

The tower-chief warned the boy not to come near any more. Displaying a lot of moral courage, the father of the boy later came to the rig to ask accounts. The first thing he said was that his son was a junior high school student and no less than that!

The man especially went after an Italian geologist. The boy said he had threatened him with a gun. The Italian used his sense of humor to save the situation. Brandishing an iron machine piece in his hand he said “this is my gun”.



He finally retorted to an Arabic expression which he had picked previously elsewhere on the deserts and said “*elhamdülillah*” (thank God), stretching his now bare hand for a cordial handshake. Only then the villager was appeased.

At the age of eight, my leg broke and I stayed at *Şişli* Children’s Hospital for ten days with my leg in a cast (We were yet in Istanbul then). One day my father came and brought me fruit and comic strips and went.

A sick peasant boy in my age in the same ward came to me and expressed his astonishment over our cold, official father-son relationship. (Obviously somewhat envious of a just retired officer’s son) he said that he was the precious son of his father. His father always patted him and embraced him as if he were baby, he explained! His father would not just leave a material present and then go away like mine did, the boy emphasized.

German novelist Konsalik’s wonderful mother-character constitutes the Spanish equivalent of an altruistic peasant mother. The setting is a village in Spain in 1950s. Anita’s husband is dead. Juan is her tender son, different from his crude and strong brother. He is a secret painter and sculptor, who furtively works in a cave with inadequate materials. The country practitioner-doctor cures him once and discovers his talent. The doctor notifies the art circles in Toledo. The peasant boy is taken to an art academy. But it turns out that he happens to have a heart disease incurable at the time.

A daring surgeon in Madrid decides to operate on him. But he needs a sender from whom he can transfer some heart tissue. Mother Anita accepts the offer. She is taken to the capitol by a helicopter. The operation is realised; the son recovers at the cost of the loss of the mother. The sensational operation even becomes the subject of a judicial inquiry (where the chief judge is a military one —General Franco is ruling Spain at the time). Given the circumstances and

the national hope placed in Juan (maybe another *Goya* or *Velasquez* of the future?) the claimful doctor gets acquitted in the end.

#### **5.7.6. A Rich Villager “Summons” Respect**

When I was a tailor apprentice, a peasant customer, a half-bent, thin, worm-like man with frog eyes entered the shop and was received with exceptional care by our craft master. They had coffee together. After the man left, the craft master turned to his two journeymen (*Geselle / kalfa*) and said. “This man surprised me the other day when he talked about his last trip to Istanbul. Gee! I would never think *he* would do all that !”.

This villager, just after a good harvest took his family to Istanbul. For a week they attended the show business night programs at then famous *Çakıl* Casino at *Aksaray*. Upon first arrival the headwaiter ignored or even despised the looks of the lot.

But he was loaded with money and the *dough* began to talk for itself (*kaymeler oynadı*). The headwaiter realized very soon who was worthwhile of good service at his table. He left the *papion*-tied businessmen’s tables and concentrated on the table of that heavy tipper from the second night onwards.

#### **5.7.7. A Villager Makes a Better Soldier than a *Citadin***

When I was a lieutenant; on guard one night; I was taking the row call and a private was absent. This was trouble, announcing a sleepless night for the whole battalion. I asked the corporal in charge who it was. “*Ö. Pinç* from Istanbul,” came the reply. We marked him absent and lingered for a while, in hope that he will show up late. An hour passed and his absence became a certainty.

“Any news?” I asked the corporal. A heavy accented private from among the ranks answered for him: “He must have deserted, my commandant; we might

as well call him ‘*piç*’ instead”. (With one letter omitted his last name happens to mean ‘bastard’). Everyone laughed. I could not help laughing either. The name got embedded in my memory.

Before that in a military institution I served as a librarian in twin assignment with the rank of sub-lieutenant under major *Ural*. One day new furniture arrived to be replaced with the old. Man power is scarce in headquarters and other institutions in contrast to troops.

Besides, recruits from more elite social layers end up there for the service. The major could obtain two soldiers with difficulty. One complained that he quit university and here he was carrying loads. The other said he was subject to bronchitis since childhood and unsuitable to carry weight.

The major sent them away impatiently and asked for two others. Only one arrived from the support services platoon. He said he thought some type-writing was the task.

The major drove him away in a rage and came close to a nervous breakdown: “Isn’t there a single real soldier?” he yelled: “A strong, robust, coarse (*balta*) dear peasant-boy with calloused hands, for God’s sake?” He, I, and the other sub-lieutenant *Güven*, we all three carried the new equipment ourselves up the stairs!

#### **5.7.8. The Proud Villager is his Own Master**

The peasant, especially if owner of some land though very small in size, is different from the laborer and even the small officials in his immense pride! He does not like to get orders! He does not want to accept things and stay grateful. On the contrary, he seeks to offer and help. My travel friend from the return trip from *Denizli* is a representative one in that respect. In *Aydın* bus terminal

our driver gave a fifteen-minute break. Entrained from a few days ago I quickly took him to the terminal grocer and seated him to a table.

The seller boy recognized me. I bought a kilo of fresh figs, washed them under the tap in the shop and brought them in a borrowed plate for the enjoyment of both of us. Later at the second break near *Ayvalık*, this time for half an hour, *Ahmet* insisted on treating me to soup and bread and I had to give in.

He chose the tomato soup and I the vegetable soup. *Ahmet* started with the holy opening word “*Bismillah*” (with the name of *Allah*) and spooned his soup with good appetite and without affectation and he wiped the remaining smear from inside the bowl with a morsel of bread held by three fingers.

He then mentioned about the praying beads which he bought for his 87-year-old mother-in-law. So he was in touch with her after his wife died. This humanly attitude moved me deep inside.

I just realized that I was bringing no gifts for anybody from my travel. I plunged into the souvenir shop and bought decorative olive oil soap clumps, intending one for my mother-in-law. I took *Ahmet* as a role model in this respect and did the same.

My late paternal uncle (he was known as the jockey since he rode racing horses in his youth as his hobby besides farming) completed his military service and returned home. Soon, some influential acquaintances who knew the rope could obtain a worker position for him at *Alpullu* sugar plant, very near to his village.

This meant a regular salary, social benefits and even a lighter labor with respect to the alternative of farming in his fields. However he soon hated to be rough-handled by his foreman. In the service one had no choice. Here, one could quit if he wanted to and this he actually did so and took up farming again.

For a certain time in 1960s he would serve as the *muhtar* (headman) of the village.

#### **5.7.9. A Villager as a Fair Play Role Model in Sports**

In our junior high class section in my senior year we had a classmate, *Ali Aydın* from a nearby *Alewite* village. In gym class during warm up sessions before the teacher's arrival, he would stand on his hands and cover considerable distances in this manner! (this reminds me of the closing scene in the movie *Trapeze* when the two acrobats, played by Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis, just walk away on their hands in the street).

As for *Tuncay*, he had been practicing weight-lifting in his town-house garden since a couple of years.

He was very muscular and very proud of his physical strength. (His ear drums were partly damaged from birth, though).

The two teen-agers put their arms in position on the empty teacher's table and began the sideways push motion but neither could stick the other's forearm on the surface despite minutes passed. The first bell rang for students to enter the classrooms. The group leader playing the role of the referee announced a draw and separated them.

I then noticed that *Tuncay*, his eyes bulging and bloodshot, hit with the back of his open hand on *Ali Aydın*'s chest once, twice out of pure reflex! *Ali Aydın* pretended to look into distance. He did not get provoked. The second bell rang for the teachers and *Tuncay* retreated to his own section and the matter was over.

Some years later I reflected about this match in retrospect after I came across a true story written by *Haldun Taner*. *Ali Aydın* was like the unforgettable character, *Hâcettepe Club*'s gentleman player *Ases*.

*One can not call Ases tall. He is more like a small stature man. But in a collision he does not fall. He who collides with him does. Ases plays for his team, not for the spectators. I have never seen another football player in better control of his own anger. Ases' lungs are like bellows. His father is a plumber. His mother does laundry. His sister has tuberculosis. Why am I so obsessed by him? Why did I write about him? This is not a football story. He represents one my own elements inside me (H. Taner 1971, 2006: 141-142, 145, 152).*

*Can [Bartu] had just returned from Italy and he was all cheeky. He was undergoing his most impertinent days. His team played with Hâcettepe. Ases made futile all of Can's attacks and Can grew furious. He fell down because of his own mistake. He stood up and slapped Ases before all those spectators. Ases raised his hand, to retaliate, we all thought. But no, he calmly gripped Can's wrist to prevent another slap. That was all. The referee came running. Could he dare to throw Can out? Ases left the wrist he had been squeezing but Can kept rubbing his wrist until the end of the game (H. Taner 1971, 2006: 141-142, 145, 152).*

#### **5.7.10. A Compassionate "Villager"**

While I was a boarding student at *Bosphorus* University, a student from another university once approached me on the terrace and asked if I knew a certain student from *Antalya*. I said "sure I know; if you just sit in the canteen for a few minutes, I'll go call him for you".

He gave his name and said: "I wonder if you are a country boy". I got upset and most probably looked somewhat puzzled. The cultural climate of the *Bosphorus* campus was quite different from the rest of Turkey. It was an "ivory tower" with its own norms and value judgments.

There, being a hick (*hanzo*) was the worst stigma for a student. Especially students coming from provinces were constantly preoccupied with such ideas and were always over-anxious to disprove their possibly alleged *hickish* ways!

My peer was quick-minded and he quickly added the following explanation: "Because you are as humanistic as any village boy could ever be!" I went all the way to the dormitories and notified his friend of his arrival.

### 5.7.11. Some Wise Village Men Love Foreign Politics

Some elderly Turkish peasant men like to discuss politics in coffee shops. Even in former days such village men used to listen to the big lamp-operated radio sets in serious mental concentration about the recent political news. In fact the coffee house has always been a place of free-reigned talk and unconstrained debate historically both in cities and villages:

For the famous historian, Naima (1652-1715), political discussions concerning public policies, state affairs, and public administrators formed a significant part of coffeehouse conversations (1968, 1221). According to D.Ohsson.s (1791, 82) observations, young idlers spent the whole day in coffeehouses talking about the latest news and state affairs. Coffeehouses had a remarkable role in facilitating public debate. Their widespread popularity meant the creation of a public domain, where news and ideas as well as people could circulate more freely than ever before. In Jean Chardin.s opinion the degree to which freedom of speech was allowed in the coffeehouses of the Orient was unique in the world (cited in Dawud 1992, 1).

Coffeehouses were prime social centers for the expression of various opinions, social contempt, public disapproval, and rumor. During bread shortages, for example, the dervishes of the Kalenderi order, .went to the local coffeehouse, gathered the people, and predicted doomsday. (Barkey 1994,127). Authorities aware of the disruptive potential of rumor, perceived coffeehouse conversation as a threat to the social order and tried to control or suppress it (Kömeçoğlu 2005: 9).

Poet *Behçet Kemâl Çağlar*, our Turkish Literature teacher in high school, one day talked about a diplomatic excursion he had participated in years ago. During the early years of the World War II a group of German delegates had an Anatolian tour to get an idea of the thoughts of the countryside about the war.

On that trip one peasant turned to the interpreter and said: Tell *çelebi* the following: We are peasants. We don't know much about microbes. But we don't drink water from a pool whose bottom is not visible. Now, the bottom of that pool is yet invisible". *Behçet Kemâl* embellished the proud air of the peasant who did not condescend to look at the faces of the Germans, taking

only the interpreter as his interlocutor. He said that not a single diplomat could have given an equally effective reply!

Both of the fighting factions were in fact eager to win Turkey as an ally in World War II. The British party won over towards the end of the war but *İsmet* Pasha the president was too wise to commit Turkey into an engagement and kept temporizing to the end. In the beginning of the war *Franz von Papen*, the German ambassador, was working his way frantically in Ankara. Germany's trump was to emphasize the alliance in the previous world war (a disaster for Turks in result). The relationships of the later Ottomans with the German military steadily grew stronger.

*Çetin Altan*, in his autobiographical novel (the French version's title is *etroite surveillance*) narrates his memories about his pasha grand father, who speaks German fluently with his guests. He had been trained in Germany as a young Ottoman officer.

While preparing his *pavillon* for the reception of the German guests, the pasha engages in a frantic search for the missing small bust of Wilhelm II, a former souvenir of his days in Germany. The entire household get to work and finally they discover the tiny statue in one of the toilets. The pious grand mother had dumped "*that profane idol*" there once and forgotten all about it!

#### **5.7.12. A Village-Man Attracts the Envy of a *Fonctionnaire***

A city-dweller may get jealous of a villager easily when a comparison occasion comes up. Years ago, my younger maternal uncle had driven to his parental house in *Lüleburgaz* in his newly bought automobile. He wanted to sacrifice a ram to commemorate his car. He, his elder brother, I, and my aunt's son drove to a nearby village in the same car and went around until we could fix the purchase of a ram.



The first sheep barn we came across made us jovial with the look of its well-fed lambs. But the owner was away on a trip and his brother said he was not liable to sell his animals in his name in his absentia.

Then my elder uncle turned around to us and said: “You all see that? The c\*nt-of-a-peasant (*a\*cık köylü*) went on a trip, which I can not possibly afford to do, a chief government official as I am!”. His brother smiled and put him off. “The man is just free to go wherever he feels like!”.

### **5.7.13. A Villager as a “Correction” Provider**

One day while changing the glasses of my horn-rimmed glasses in an obstetrician’s workshop, the obstetrician got to talk with his visiting friend. The conversation drifted to his military service. The *Istanbulite* man had his service in *Sivas* in late 1970’s. When he first arrived at his unit, a corporal met him as the acting commandant (The non-commissioned-officer was away for a short duration). The corporal, an obvious peasant man asked the obstetrician about his hometown. He proudly replied: “I am Istanbul-born and Istanbul-bred!”

The corporal said: “One can see that! Snobbism is dripping off your bloody face!”. Then he said: “Go to that senior private over there and get registered, then pick up your equipment!”. The young obstetrician gave the corporal a menacing sideways glance and began to stagger towards the directed direction.

The corporal yelled from behind: “Don’t walk, but run, you bastard! Run, or else I will screw you without spit!” [without lubricating my prick with saliva].(This “ingenious” swearing format is not classical at all; it was perhaps coined by somebody and quickly got into mode in those years and then fell into oblivion).

The peasant, relying on his single red stripe on his arm, took the upper hand and made much of this opportunity face to face an Istanbul youth.

This narration is interesting in two other respects. Firstly, he told all of it in a casual, matter-of-fact way, without a sign of grudge! He nearly meant “I was a spoiled, rebellious youth in need of some correction and it did me good”.

Secondly, while many ex-conscripts only embellish their heroic deeds in the service omitting unpleasant memories, this obstetrician confessed to his demeaning experience.

*Dr. Belli*, as an associate professor of (forensic) psychiatry, used to converse with us at the chair, referring to all walks of life and throwing in psychiatric interpretations usually from a Freudian outlook. One day on a certain occasion he said “if they eloped me to a mountain top I would never ever talk about it”. “If circumstances really pressed me to publicize such an event at most I would perhaps say something like ‘they attempted to rape me’ and go no further than that”.

“But if the same thing happened to *Zeki Müren* [the famous singer was yet alive] he would probably eagerly talk about it or even broadcast it,” he added. (As a matter of fact, modern science of *Victimology* does talk about the secondary victimization a victim of a sexual offence would suffer when her case is brought to open even if confined to the circle of official authorities).

#### **5.7.14. A Peasant Defies a State-Prosecutor!**

Black Sea people are known to be very proud, hot tempered and also spiteful (*rancunier*) when they are wronged by others. *Dr. Belli*, narrated an incident in the town of *Borçka*. He features as a secondary hero in the story while a peasant features as the main hero. *Dr. Belli* was in his young days then, serving

as the unique practicing physician of the district. A young peasant man had been shot dead by the rival feuding faction.

The state attorney had been on very bad terms with *Dr. Belli*, always provoking him and causing him trouble. The dead man's father earnestly requested *Belli* not to cut open the body in the autopsy.

The doctor conceded, merely measuring the depth of the bullet's *trajé e* by intruding a wire into the wound. But the nasty attorney appeared before him, swinging a piece of chain in his hand in an insulting manner and told him in a patronizing manner to "pierce open that carcass" ("*deş şu leşi!*").

The doctor immediately confronted the state attorney with the dead man's sorrowful father and quoted his demeaning words in regard to the young dead man. The attorney blushed and got prepared to mumble an indirect diverting thing but the doctor insisted straight to the point: "Did you or didn't you utter these very same words? Did you or didn't you?"

The entrapped attorney now found it hard to deny his own words and just kept silent. For a moment the dead man's father kept moving his fiery look from one man to the other. Finally he formed his opinion about the truth of the doctor's statement.

Then he deliberately and slowly spoke to the attorney through a harsh, bitter, guttural voice while rotating the whites of his sleepless bloodshed eyes: "Mr. Attorney, Mr. Attorney, one more dead person from the same household wouldn't matter so much in this affair and I tell you that I *bone* (*f\*ck*) your elegant wife for those words!".

The doctor's resentment was assuaged and the powerful state attorney had no choice but putting up with the swear word of the middle-aged peasant! (*Belli* left this district for his military service. He ran into the attorney's family a few

years later in Ankara when he undertook studying psychiatry. The incident was not even alluded to when they talked for a few minutes on foot).

#### **5.7.15. A True Story of Achievement**

Finally here is a wonderful success story of a peasant boy, born in 1938 in the village *Belemedik* of the county of *Karaisalı* in *Adana*. *Mehmet's* father died when he was six.

His mother died when he was ten. There was not a school in the village. When he reached the age of fourteen, a boarding primary school was opened nearby, recruiting students from a total of ten nearby villages.

An uncle took him there for registration. The director said “Do you confuse this place with an army headquarters building? Who is this grown-up, anyway?” The boy said he had learned some reading from a cousin but he could not write. They gave him a reading exam and registered him to the second grade, skipping the first grade. When April came they had their summer vacation (much earlier than the city schools).

The director told him that he would soon turn fifteen and be expelled in accordance with the written law. Only one solution was possible. He should get his official age altered with a court decision. The same uncle went to the county and consulted a somewhat educated relative.

They went to the city club, where all the officials and notables gather and talked to the judge about an age alteration. The judge first asked if they were after a delay of the military service for the future (The conscription age is twenty and males get drafted then). They explained the schooling problem. The judge gave his consent and taught the procedure.

The next day they went to a petition-writer and got a petition typed. They came to a court hearing with two witnesses from the village. The claim was that *Mehmet* was born in 1941 but he took on the birth certificate of a dead older brother. His claim got approved. They issued him a birth certificate indicating his new age.

The boy graduated from the primary school in three years. For further schooling he applied to the non-commissioned-officer school in *Mersin*. His friend got accepted but he was rejected for having an age alteration in his personal history. Another choice was the boarding Mechanical Apprentice School under *Yıldız* Technical University [then *Yıldız State Academy of Engineering and Architecture*] in Istanbul.

He won the exam in *Adana*. He also took the entrance exam to the state boarding junior high schools and won. His teachers recommended the second choice. He got assigned to *Denizli* in the Aegean region, *Adana* boarding schools being full to bursting. First the fellow students thought he was a new teacher. The female Turkish teacher appointed him as the head student of the classroom.

The school gave him room and board and a suit to wear every year. In summers it was now possible for him to get clerical jobs in *Adana* factories. (Formerly he was a child hoer on the cotton fields in summers. He used to walk a few miles carrying his own hoe on the shoulder to the cotton fields.

The wage was one-third of the adult wager and he had to work hard to keep the job. Labor was in abundance and the field owners quickly dismissed those who did not do satisfactory work).

Three years passed and he graduated. He went on to the boarding high school division in *Denizli*. When he graduated he took the university entrance exams

and his grade was high enough to enroll any study, including Medicine. At that time

Turkey was in much need of Agricultural Engineers and immediate scholarship was granted only for that study; (for others a delay was in question) so, he chose the Aegean Faculty of Agriculture. Upon registration they told him that this Faculty graduated master engineers in five years; but *Ankara* and *Erzurum* counterparts graduated engineers in four years. Used to the Aegean region he opted for the longer way.

*Mehmet Bey* is now a retiree of a district directorate of agriculture. His son is an officer; his daughter is a bank manager; his wife is a retired teacher (and a secondary cousin of mine).

## CHAPTER VI

### DEBATE AND CONCLUSION

*Scholars like Linda Dunleavy reject any spatial (\*) reference for the terms urban and rural, claiming “the loss of clear-cut rural life style for today”. That is right: Agriculture was the basis of rural ways and agricultural employment now much shrank in proportion. But agriculture preserves its high local importance and social relations emanating from the days of agricultural dominance are still at work in our day. Even the rural laborers are different from those in industrial areas (paraphrased from Cater and Jones 1992: 207).*

Indeed, the peasant, even in rural wage position at least does not sink below the bread line. Initial source of food, that is, cereals, are grown by his efforts. Despite all kinds of possible deprivation nobody literally starves in a village.

A proverb says “has anybody ever seen a starved person’s grave?” (“aç mezarı gören var mı?”). Plain bread is available for all except for some famine years. Besides, peasants are merciful and altruistic to feed any hungry person without a fuss. If there is a simple-minded village-idiot somewhere around, they collectively take care of him too.

Let alone the compassionate Turkish village communities, it seems that even the European peasant environments used to be quite suitable for poverty-stricken members to get by and somehow survive, if only thanks to gleaning cereals from the harvest places.

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\* The assertion is very true in the following example: On one hand; a city person goes and lives in a village as a teacher, doctor, geologist, archeologist. and stays a city person. On the other hand; Istanbul born-and-bred gentlemen and ladies probably rightly complain about the invasion-like rush of provincials into the city and feel as if they were a minority their own places. Many new-comers cling to their non-urban ways deliberately and stubbornly (Theorist Gans’ term “urban villagers” is very appropriate here). S.Ç.

A marvelous poem in English (whose poet is not indicated) dealing with this theme appears in a century-old grammar book (\*). Little girls in shedders collect the left over grains. They try not to be tempted by the colorful flowers since they know that old grandma is waiting in the cabin for the “loot”. The poem goes as follows:

*“Through the stubble to and fro, / Mark the little gleaners go, / Radiant, rosy as the morn’, / Seeking for the scattered corn; / Glad some most when they espy / Where the ears the thickest lie. / See the merry gleaners go, / Through the stubble to and fro”. /*

*“Damp with dew is all around, / But they know their harvest ground / Richly will repay their toil, / And they’ve nothing on to spoil. / They’ve no fear of any hurt, / Sodden shoe or draggled skirt: / Thus the little gleaners go / Blithely, briskly to and fro”. /*

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\* The book was written in 1919 (!) by *Adrien Baret*. The title is: ***La deuxième année d’Anglais à l’usage des élèves***. On the thirty-first edition on pp. 83-85 the sentimental poem is given in full text with the French translation as follows: *“À travers le chaume ça et là, / Regarder aller les petits glaneurs, / Rayonnants, roses comme la matin, / à la recherche du blé répandu / Joyeux surtout quand ils aperçoivent / [l’endroit] où les épis gisent le plus épais. / Voyez les joyeux glaneurs aller / à travers le chaume ça et là”. / “Tout est humide de rosée alentour, / Mais ils savent (que) leur terrain à moisson / les paiera richement de leurs pleines, / et ils ne portent rien qui puisse s’abîmer / Ils ne craignent pas de se faire mal, / de mouiller leur souliers ou de crotter leurs jupes:/ Ainsi les petits glaneurs vont / gaîment, vivement ça et là”. /*

*“Par ci par là un coquelicot rouge / les tente avec son éclatante tête; / en approchant de la haie, ils voient / maint (fleur) favorite fleurissant en liberté, / Mais pour des fleurs, ils n’osent pas s’arrêter / Les glaneurs ne doivent pas se laisser aller à jouer. / Aussi les enfants empressés vont à travers le chaume ça et là”. /*

*“Quand ils auront fini et porteront leur froment / Jusque dans la rue du village, / contente sera la pauvre grand’mère chérie, / Quand leur bras débordants paraîtront, / et les yeux tout ouverts d’étonnement diront sa louange ainsi que sa surprise: / C’est ce qu’ils se représentent en allant / à travers le chaume ça et là”. /*



*“Here and there a poppy red / Tempts them with its flaring head/ Nearing to the hedge, they see / Many a favorite blooming free / But the flowers they dare not stay; / Gleaners must not yield to play. / So the busy children go / Through the stubble to and fro”. / “When they’ve done and take their wheat / Up into the village street, / Glad will be poor grandma dear, / As their brimming arms appear, / And her praise with her surprise: / This they picture as they go / Through the stubble to and fro”.*

The urban wager, however, when out of work, faces a real threat of hunger in the literal sense of the word. It is just for this reason that communists furtively despised peasants while for the sake of tactics they paid him lip-service in hyphenated “worker-peasant” clichés.

Looking from the opposite angle of approach, it is again just for this reason that the peasant can not be so easily abused and mobilized for actions subversive to the established order.

The argument reminds one of a poem by *Orhan Veli Kanık*: The street cat says to the butcher’s cat: “We can not get along. Yours is a wet dream while mine is about meat”. The other retorts back: “So, you are talking about hunger. You must be a communist, then. You must be the culprit of all those crimes of arson; what a pig you really are!”

*Statistics [from the Second Development Plan] display that; city-centers increase in size and number; on one hand; while people tend to choose to live in big cities on the other hand (Tütengil 1984: 163).*

*The fact that even for the moment, two-thirds of the population of İstanbul (Turkey’s biggest city) is made up from “those who were born elsewhere”; is the hardest evidence that İstanbul is invaded by “provincials”. No doubt, this invasion will continue with a growing acceleration in the years to follow. The*

*funny thing is, the affirmation of “being an Istanbulite” is also very common among those who had moved to İstanbul from outside* (Kongar 1992: 55).

The topic taken up to study proved to be more complicated than it was at first sight. On one hand; no doubt nowadays many areas can best be described as “shaded regions” in terms of human behavior. The black-and-white contrast which used to define the city-village dichotomy appears to have long vanished.

It is said there was a time when the Istanbul gentleman and the lady was really representative of their “sorts” and eagerly chosen as role models in manners and speech by the few on-comers (higher education students and officials and the in-the-process-of-formation bourgeois comprised of enriched artisans moving in). It is also asserted that now the coming floods sweep over and impose their own norms on to Istanbul instead.

On the other hand, especially among the young generation peasant-like vestiges —the good ones as well as bad ones since it is important to distinguish between the two— have almost disappeared. Thus, a clear-cut dichotomy of village versus city or at least big city versus province seems possible. Many examples can be brought up:

Already a decade ago a female student of mine in an Istanbul Higher Vocational School had gained extra credit from me being the only one in class to know the meaning of “*kepenek*” (coarse shepherd cloak) (It was a common rule I had instigated that “you gain extra credit in that instructor’s class if you prove that you know something which nobody else in the class knows” as one female student once explained to a new-comer in the first row).

When I was a prep student at Robert College *Lycée* Division, literature teacher *Münir Aysu* gave us a (non-credit) fill-in type of general culture exam, which he had prepared himself for his own curiosity as he expressed it. Three of the questions are embedded in my memory since they, in my opinion, were

particularly interesting in differentiating between city and province boys. (At the time the girls had their own division at *Arnavutköy* nearby).

One of those three questions required us to give the name of the famous female spy who had worked for the Germans during the First World War. Another asked the name of the special saddle-creature the Holy Prophet had mounted on his journey to ascend the heavens.

Still another asked the name of the special leather trousers worn by oil wrestlers. After the exam, outside of Albert Long Hall (the clock tower building), we all came together to discuss and pool our efforts to attain the correct answers.

Boarding boys from provincial Anatolia (many of them scholarship students) were amazed at the difficulty of the first question while for the day students (*Istanbulites* in other words) the reply “*Mata Hari*” was only a piece of cake. For the other two questions it was just the other way around. The replies “*burak*” and “*kıspet*” were no problem for most of the provincial boys.

Mustafa, my classmate at the same school, had been a scholarship student at *Gaziantep* Private College <sup>(\*)</sup> (like *Enver*) {neither could get an exemption from spending a preparatory year; though on the first days in the dormitory Mustafa once complained: “I don’t know how come I made the mistake of coming here and messed up (*b\*k ettim!*) my good previous [British?] English!” and caused everybody to burst into laughter} before his arrival.

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\* Up to early 1980’s a private *kolej* was a high school or a junior high school combined with a high school, where no prep class existed. The difference from the state schools was a more weighted English course, usually ten hours per week rather than three. *Şişli Terakki* and *Kültür* were such schools with the *kolej* standing. Only foreign schools, *Galatasaray* and the state-owned *Maarif* Colleges (later so-called *Anatolian Lycées*) had prep classes even then. s.ç.

Anyway, once in the painting and drawing class good old Mustafa had made a picture of the earthen heating furnace (*kümbet*) in his grandparents' village house and showed it ostentatiously to all his *Antep* classmates. Neither the teacher nor the other students could not make out what such a thing was. It was not a metallic coal or wood stove, so what was it?

Delaney (1991: 257) who studied a village in 1980's writes the following interesting passage in her book: "A friend in Ankara was teaching a course on rural sociology at Middle East Technical University and conducting a survey of 'fringe' villages around Ankara. As a comparison she asked if she could bring her class to survey our more remote village. [When the class arrived] for many of the students, it was the first time they have ever been to a real village".

Maybe the classification above as 'fringe' and 'real' villages is very true and meaningful. Villages just in the periphery of a city have changed their characters and resembled more and more to neighborhoods of the city. *Hadımköy* in Istanbul is an example.

A boarding student, *Enver* mentioned just above, once noticed that many *quartiers* (*semt*) in Istanbul had the suffix *-köy* in their names like *Bakırköy*, *Yeşilköy*, *Safaköy*, *Alibeyköy*. A day student noticed this "discovery" only then for the first time and got astonished. Those urban centers were sheer villages long ago.

Let us also note that the first of those four consecutive places, one of the most crowded administrative districts in downtown Istanbul means different things for a peasant and a full *Istanbulite*. The former suddenly remembers the mental hospital there but the latter does not even think about it when the name is uttered. The old generation used to refer to this institution as the lunatic asylum.

The older ones even referred to it by the name of the founder as *Mazhar Osman*. [*M.U. Usman* (1884-1961) is the founding psychiatrist]. Being "crazy"

was a fearful thing <sup>(\*)</sup> for people long ago and this term stigmatized all psychological disorders or even problems whatsoever.

Regarding transformation of villages nearby the cities; *Berkes* (1942, 1985:175) predicted such an outcome for a village about twenty kilometers from Ankara at the time of his research: *It appears that a change in structure will go on with acceleration and this village will stop being a village in the sense that we know; it will be a slum area resembling Mamak quartier, where city laborers and petty officials will live.*

### **6.1. Confirmation of the Starting Hypothesis**

Along the course of development of this dissertation; the original hypothesis stipulating that ever since the beginning of the republican regime, a narrowing down of the total distance between the rural and urban parts of Turkey in regard to all aspects of a modern understanding of life, did come true. Putting it another way, the change within the average city had been much less than the change, or rather, the transformation, in the countryside throughout recent decades.

The latter had gotten much closer to the former, with respect to bygone decades, at the rigorous attempt to catch up with. It should be mentioned that

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\* In a slum area coffee-shop in Istanbul a village-originated man with a heavy accent once said to his card-playing mates in self-important airs: “Listen to this very famous diction: ‘Rather than taking advantage of a lunatic, it is better to offer oneself to a sound-minded person’ Have you ever heard this before?”. Of course he said the diction in heavy vernacular style, using the dirty words involved.

The proverb emphasizes the value of intelligence and the horror felt about insanity. It also reflects the importance attributed to virility as they understand it. As Delaney (1991: 50) records with reference to *Dundes, Leach & Özkök*; *even in a perverse relationship the active role is valued while the passive role is devalued.*

“*rurbanity*” (using the newly-coined American word, meaning getting somewhat rural) on the part of the urban centers themselves, through intensive migration, is not to be neglected in this comparison, either.

## **6.2. Conclusive Remarks**

Let us reduce the issue to a mathematical representation of sets and subsets, also making use of two basic colors: Red and white. The color red represents the peasant while the color white stands for the city person.

Red, white and pink regions are all present as sets of an encompassing main panorama. Ever since the abolishment of the Ottoman sultanate and the establishment of the republic; the originally almost non-existing pink region has kept expanding, drastically along the course of time. The formerly thickest red region, in parallel, incrementally got thinner and thinner.

The formerly very narrow snow-white region enlarged enormously; but it also got to be somewhat non-uniform due to certain slightly pinkish sprinkles in certain areas. For that matter, the red region itself got some whitish tinge spread all over, intermittently.

This metaphor with colors and simple graphs best describes the half-a-century-long adventure of the peasantry as well as the presently existing situation regarding respective rural-urban relationship, in Turkey.

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“Come, let us return to our village.  
Le us folkdance at *Fadime*’s wedding”

(“*Hadi gel köyümüze geri dönelim.*  
*Fadime’nin düğününde halay çekelim!*”)

—The refrain sentences of a song by *Ferdi Tayfur*—

# APPENDICES

## (A, B, C, D)

“She had put henna on her hands;  
She had smeared kohl on her eyes.  
And so, the peasant beauty,  
Had stepped into the high society!”

*(“Ellerine kına yakmış ellerine.  
Gözlerine sürme çekmiş gözlerine.  
Sosyeteye girmiş  
köylü güzeli!”)*

—From a pop song by *Hâkan Peker*—

# Appendix-A:

## Aegean & Thracian Rural Scenes

“Grew verdant once more  
the hazelnut branches.  
And what will ever be the state of affairs  
with the beloved one?  
Waving are her pinkish baggy pants,  
caught in the wind.  
Come along girl, with all your  
*Schminke* freshened!  
Wrap my neck with those  
white arms of yours!”

(“*Yine yeşerdi fındık dalları.  
Acep ne olacak yârin halları?  
Dalgalanıyor pembe şalvarı.  
Kız, allan pullan gel, gel yanıma!  
Beyaz kollarını dola boynuma!*”)

—From an anonymous Black-Sea ballad—

## Appendix-B:

Pictures from a Black-Sea-House exhibition,  
displayed by *Derepazarı (Rize) Society*, at  
*Vâlidebağ* (Istanbul) Teachers’ Club, in  
July 2009



“Do not take me to the city.

I am content with my village.

I am the daughter of the soil!

In the city they’d mock me,

Saying I were provincial”

*(“Götürmeyin beni kente.*

*Köyümden râzıyım ben.*

*Toprağın kızıyım ben!*

*Kentte herkes alay eder*

*‘Taşralı kız’ der bana”*

—Words and music belong to late *Reyman Eray*;  
the song itself was once popularized by *Selmâ Devrim*—

## Appendix-C:

Scanned Artifacts & Other Objects in  
Usage in Rural Areas & a few Drawings

# **Appendix-D:**

## **As a Dialectical Approach, The City!**

In accordance with a comparison; in order to grasp the genuine atmosphere of a village better; one might as well go ahead and understand the ambiance of a real city, which is the diametrically opposite entity. Now; a sheer city was best epitomized by Istanbul, until up to a few decades ago.

Therefore; three city-poems are followed by an eulogy in prose, dedicated to the former-İstanbul.

## Appendix A



An Aegean rural coffee-shop (top) and  
a Thracian rural coffee shop (bottom)

## Appendix A



Thracian village houses



## Appendix A



A tomato field in the Aegean region (top) and  
a sunflower field in rural Thrace (bottom)

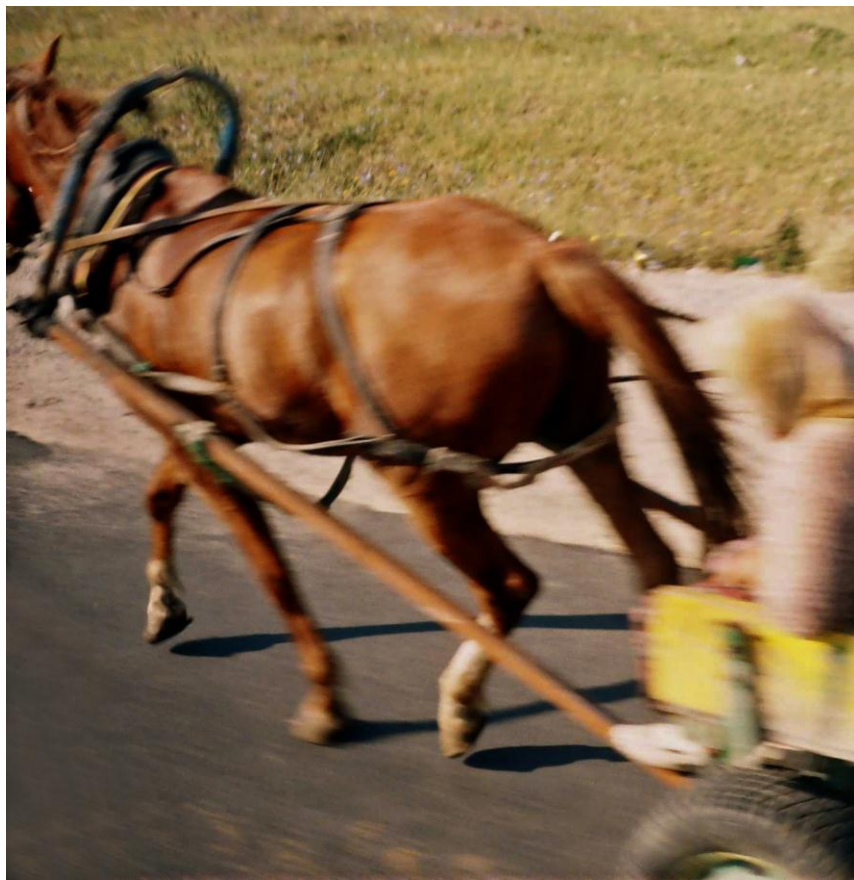
## Appendix A



A sickle for reaping cereal stems in harvest (top)  
and a shepherd cloak made of felt (*kepenek*)  
for sale on an Aegean Market (bottom)



## Appendix A



Horse-driven carts

## Appendix A



Bee-hives for honey production in two different locations

In rural Thrace(top and middle);  
bee-hives in Aegean region (bottom)



## Appendix A



Announcements for fields on sale in Thrace

## Appendix A



Cattle grazing in three different locations in rural Thrace

At the bottom the Turkish “cowboy” wears a baseball cap and blue jean pants. Even this is an indication of the swift contemporary changes of the peasantry. Former shepherds wearing baggy pants sewn at home from hand-woven cloth, are destined today to remain in the novels of *Yaşar Kemal*, only.



## Appendix A

“Ballads clink on the threshing field.  
Each beater keeps turning like breeze!  
And the archaic mill rattles on  
As if telling old tales to the valley!”

(“Çınlatır harmanı türküler.  
Yel gibi döner her döven!  
Vâdiye sanki masal söyler  
İhtiyar değirmen!”)

—From a school song—



A thresher (*bateur*) now used only as a decoration in a café

## Appendix A



*Fonctionnaires* of Edirne Village Services Department  
in their leisure time on weekend, in their official social club

The Village Services (*Köy Hizmetleri*) establishment was founded in 1984 by combining the three previous establishments Roads, Waterworks and Electricity (*Yol-Su-Elektrik, YSE*); Soil-Water (*Toprak-Su*); Soil-Settlement (*Toprak-Iskân*). It provided public services for the improvement of the infrastructure and the betterment of life conditions, in rural settlements. In 2005 such services got incorporated into the works carried out by district special administrations (*il özel idareleri*) except in Istanbul and Kocaeli, where the big city municipalities (*büyük şehir belediyeleri*) took over the responsibility, instead. (As of March 2013, the number of big cities increased up to 30).



In the toilets of the club, as if in accordance with the frugal peasant culture, an outdated turn-off type of electrical switch (instead of the new commonly found push-on type of switch) is still in use!



## Appendix A



A tractor-driven hoe (top) and a tractor-driven plough (bottom)



Researcher Çaya himself clad like a peasant-man with a peaked hat (*casquette*), thick felt trousers and “*muhtar*” waistcoat



## Appendix A



A Thracian peasant woman with a dignified-facial-expression selling her own garden's products at the weekly market



An elderly Aegean woman getting off the train at a village station



## Appendix A



Return trip to village on an open tractor trailer  
(The younger woman in pants represents  
the social changes in the direction of modernism).



A barn in rural Thrace



## Appendix A



Aegean rural scenes

## Appendix A



An Aegean village where a cabin used for tinning copperware as indicated by capitalized lettering in red, on its wall.



An Aegean quilt-making-shop. The majority of the customers come from villages. Peasants hate blankets and fabricated bed coverings; but they like traditional woolen quilts, instead. Until recent times quilts were all homemade. Nowadays they usually buy them; but at least, they can order them according to their own specifications, especially to build up dowries for young girls.





Thracian watermelons to be sold in the city



A sitting bench belonging to an agrarian credit cooperation



## Appendix A



The left placard says “wheat is bartered” and the right placard says “bran (cereal-husk) is available”



A sheep-skin spread on the inside engine hood of a village minibus

## Appendix A



Thracian sheep herds



## Appendix A



Elderly peasant man on walk



An Aegean village



Former oil-wrestler and later dry-mat-wrestler in America, *Koca Yusuf*, was world-famous. He got drowned in 1898 during the return trip by ship. This life-size cardboard-cut-off of the wrestler is in the Wrestlers' Museum in Edirne.

Oil wrestlers are like the idols of villagers. Until a few decades ago villagers used to follow their adventures given in serial by some conservative newspapers.

## Appendix A

In April 1970 Robert College arranged a wrestling championship with METU in the big gymnasium. Two undergraduate wrestling fans, *Ekrem* and *Alâaddin*, provincial youths with Anatolian accents, instigated the event and a team got improvised, some weights being filled by students from the *Lycée* division. METU displayed a wonderful team depth and the result was a general disaster for the college. Though good at volleyball, basketball and athletic branches (the college used to have an annual field day), wrestling was not the college's cup of coffee!

One wrestler from the METU team, as we inferred from the cheers of the visitor-side, was *Mustafa*. He had huge biceps and forearm muscles, the mere sight of which openly demoralized his opponent, *Apostol* from Mersin. The College could gain a third weight thanks to the *Lycée*'s contribution. *Ahmet* from our dormitory, a peasant boy from *Serik-Antalya*, crushed his rival on the mattress and grabbed the cup! Stout and firmly built, he was also good at gymnastics.

He was a few years older than what his birth certificate indicated and was given the nickname "*Asker*" (soldier) because he looked like a conscript among other adolescents. The gymnasium echoed with the cheers "*Asker! Asker!*" and a spectator, a janitor from the college engineering building, took him as a real soldier. On that day the village boy saved the face of his school along with his personal victory.





Late Retired Teacher *Makbule Hanım* next to the in-relief-bust of Wrestler-*Hüseyin* from *Tekirdağ*, at the Wrestlers' Museum in Edirne

This wrestler had a white complexion and a proportional body structure. He was very handsome in facial appearance. Besides oil wrestling, he was also good at dry free-style wrestling, which endeared him to city people, as well as to peasantry. In 1940 he competed with an Abyssinian opponent on the mattress and beat him. The game was arranged in *Lüleburgaz* during the animal fair festivities. My grandfather, the namesake of the champion, took his eight-year-old daughter, my future mother, to watch the match. She cheered for her hero like the other spectators until she got a hoarse voice. It was an unforgettable day for the little girl.

## Appendix A



Thracian peasants

The man and the woman, in wait for the minibus; let alone avoiding each other; had been chatting freely until the man looked up a little and posed for the photo. In Thrace there is no habit of *kaç göç* (opposite sexes avoiding each other's company in the social scene).



Traditional *saz* on sale in a shop



An Aegean establishment for drying and packing figs



*Alpullu* Sugar-Plant

Built in 1926, it is one of the first sugar plants of the Republic, along with *Uşak* and *Turhal* sugar-plants. The plant processes the sugar beet produce of the surrounding areas. It had been boosting the socio-cultural level upwards as well as providing permanent and (during the work-heavy season called the time of campaign) temporary jobs for town people and also for the nearby villages. Sugar plants constitute a good example for the republican principle of *etatism*.



## Appendix A



An Aegean peasant family on the field



A small village cemetery in the Aegean region



A village cemetery in Thrace



A sheep-herd shepherd from a village of the town of *Meriç*



## Appendix A



Elderly peasant man peddling sweet yellow gourd (winter squash) to Edirne  
City-women in front of a pharmacy

He is wearing riding trousers with buttoned legs made of very thick felt cloth. Such narrow trouser legs do not get tangled in bushes and thus are also convenient for hunting. A commonplace sight about half a century ago, those pants now constitute an extremely rare sight, indeed worth of capturing and preserving on photographic film!



A Black Sea village just nearby the city of Zonguldak



Men with traditional towels wrapped around their heads in a suburb of the Aegean city of *Manisa* in 1990

At the time, impressed by the sheer anthropological charm of the sight, it had been impossible for me to resist the temptation for taking a snapshot. Nineteen years later, during a tour around rural Aegean regions, I deliberately searched for a man with such an authentic headgear. To my disappointment, I could not locate a single one. s.ç.



A peasant woman in her loud floral dress





A stand selling accessories (leashes, neck-bells, ornaments) for livestock

## Appendix A

“Let’s go to the *halva*-seller  
Help ourselves with some *halva*!  
God Almighty gave us health  
Just be thankful for that!  
*Halwa*-seller, *halva*!  
Sugary, delightful *halva*!  
Full of hemp seeds, *halva*!”

(“*Helvacıya gidelim;*  
*Biraz helva yiyelim.*  
*Allah bize sıhhat vermiş.*  
*Ona şükür edelim!*  
*Helvacı helva!*  
*Şeker lokumlu helva!*  
*Kendir tohumlu helva!*”)  
—From a folk song —



A *Halva* Stand

*Halva* is the favorite dessert of peasantry, especially because it is durable and thus usually available at the village shop. A diabetic peasant man at a village tea-shop was cursing the doctor who had ordained him strict abstinence from that delicious delicacy! Lamenting over the “probable threat of death” he kept asking his friends: “*Won’t the doctor himself die?*”

An old adage exclaimed by reflex when something good gets spoiled, is: “So, the rosy flax candy is all burnt up!” (“*Yandı gülüm keten helva!*”).





A Couple of Peasant Men at *Kırkpınar*  
Oil-Wrestling Festivities (July 2011)



## Appendix A



The most enthusiastic ones among the spectators of *Kırkpınar* Oil-Wrestling days are indeed those, who had come all the way from their villages, to the festivities. July 2011.

## Appendix B



A swinging type of churn (top) and a beat- and-whip type of churn (*yayık*) (bottom) for separating butter from diluted yoghurt





Mobile plates (*sefer tası*) for carrying meals, especially to the shepherds, on the lower shelf and a coal-iron from non-electrified times for pressing laundry, on the upper shelf

Despite recent temptations pumped by new consumption trends and the media, villagers are essentially frugal and they hate waste. This is why old-fashioned objects are more likely to be found in a village.





Dried, emptied water pumpkins used as mugs (*maşrapa*)



## Appendix B



Various cauldrons (*kazan*) and metallic jugs (*güğü*)



## Appendix B



Bags (*heybe*) to be hung astride a horseback



A traditional bedroom

## Appendix B



A dowry chest



A traditional couch (Even in English a similar seat is called an “ottoman”.)



## Appendix B



A cradle



Dried peppers and eggplants, corns, Black-Sea roll-bread without sesame

## Appendix B



A low stool (*kürsî*) and a gasoline stove



A sieve, baskets, home-made moccasins (*çarık*)



## Appendix B

"I wore my moccasins  
Come, tie their laces!  
I am about to leave for ever  
*Bayburt's* mighty mountains!"

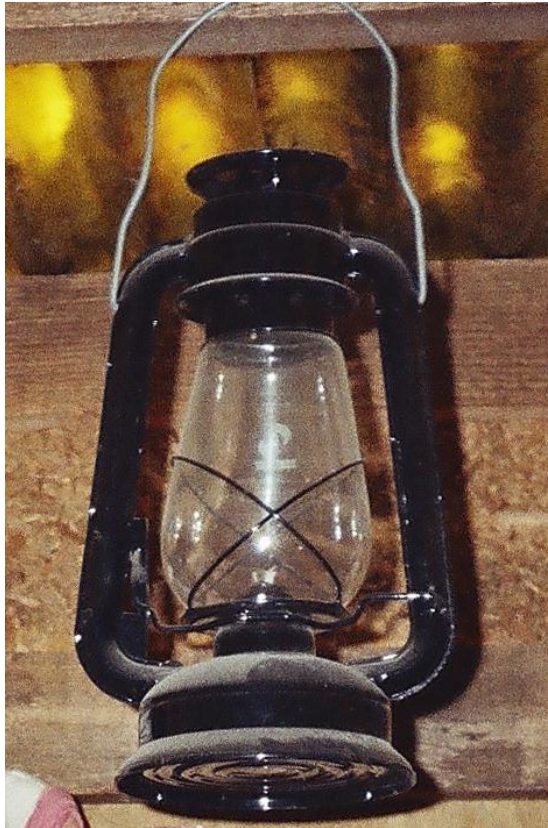
(*Giydim çarıklarımı  
Gel bağla bağlarını!  
Terk ettim gidiyorum  
Bayburt'un dağlarını*)

—From a folk song in the  
collection of *Ruhi Su*—



Home-made moccasins, another pair

## Appendix B



A wind-protected gasoline sailor's lamp



A kitchen shelf





A saddle (*semer*) for a donkey or a mule as well as  
some tinned copperware kitchen utensils

## Appendix C

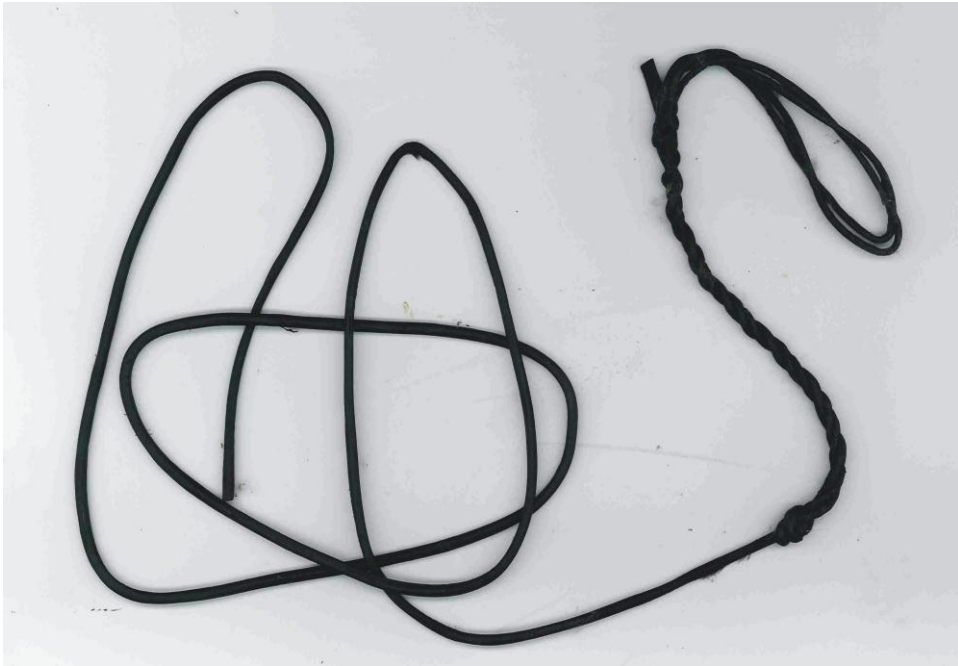


A pocket mirror dating back to 1950s, from the rural paternal house  
(Its equivalent with the picture of Prime Minister *Menderes* got broken).

Peasant youths used to carry such pocket mirrors. A folk song goes like: “My lion is robust like the chip of an apple / And carries his mirror in his right pocket, yes he does” (*Elmaların yongası, aslanım aman! / Haydi sağ cebinde aynası*”).



## Appendix C



A leather horse-whip



Woolen half-socks (*çetik*)



On long winter nights, the village room (*köy odası*, *la sale commune*) used to serve as a meeting place, where fluent and plain stories praising religious figures and folk heroes were read aloud, by literate villagers and highly enjoyed, publicly.



A colorful water glass which appeals to peasant tastes

## Appendix C



Hand-made *Bursa* pocket-knives with horn handles

A pocket-knife is, like a mirror, among the “component parts” of a male outfit, in the countryside. In a sense, it is for the Turkish peasant, the equivalent of what that famous short dagger (*jambiya*) means for a Yemenite lad or man.



A *muhtar*-lighter popular among peasants  
(Those old-fashioned gasoline lighters never get out of order).



Appendix C



Village drummer and festivities (by late painting teacher *Muazzam Bey*)

## Appendix C



A ceramic bowl and a glazed earthen bowl



Authentic shepherd flutes (*kaval*)

Shepherds used to carve their own flutes from tree branches. A school song says: “The wind blows cool / The meadows are full of scent / He plays a said tune with his flute / And the village road gets dusty!” (*Rüzgârı eser serin serin / Kırların kokusu dolu / Bir kaval çalar hazin hazin / Tozlanır köy yolu!*)

Shepherds suffer constant loneliness and playing the flute alleviates the lonesome feeling.



## Appendix C



Elderly peasant women carry their cash in small bags.



If a sheep gets lost, the bell clings from its neck  
And the shepherd finds his sheep easily.

## Appendix C



Peasant children love to eat sugar coated chick peas.



Traditional kitchen utensils



After the home-made moccasins got forgotten, for many a years, Villagers used to slip their woolen-sock-covered feet into cheap black plastic shoes in summer and plastic boots in winter.



## Appendix C



Peasant men like to clack rosaries against boredom even though their primary usage is in praying; rich peasants have expensive rosaries made of precious stones or even silver but most use praying beads carved of wood.

## Appendix C



One might as well talk about a tobacco “culture” along with certain “rituals” like the use of cigarette-holders and tobacco-cases



The Turkish Monopoly used to produce snuff (smokeless tobacco-powder) besides cigarettes. Tobacco-addicts in villages had a hard time to obtain snuff, since it was not readily available at the village shops; so they had to stock their orders beforehand.



## Appendix C

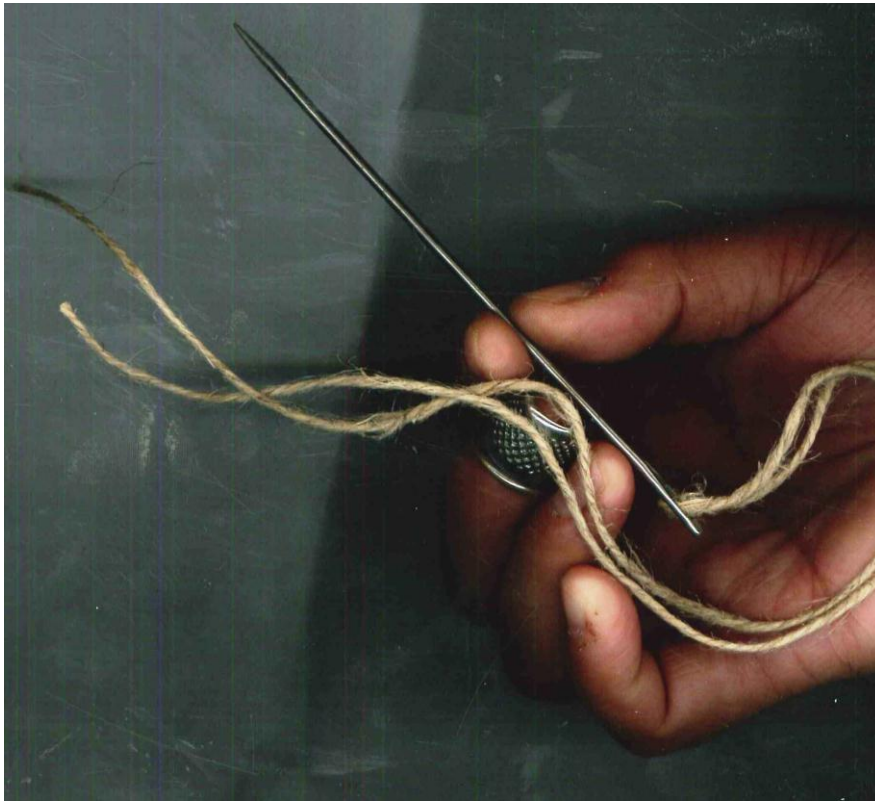


The opening formula of Islamic prayers (In the name of Allah,  
The Compassionate, The Merciful) carved of wood



A colorful plate made of zinc

## Appendix C



A gigantic needle (*çıvaldız*), usually used for repairing rugs



Puppets representing peasant girls





A miniature carpet

Peasant women love colorful rugs and carpets and they manually weave them in many regions. Towns like *Bünyan*, *Gördes*, *Hereke* are world-known focal points in carpeting.



By sheer convention, the village-watchman makes much of certain outfits and insignia; in order to reinforce his semi-official outer image. He is also entitled to carry a hunting rifle. The watchman is a type who really enjoys his militia-appearance. He has no government salary but villagers pool their fiscal contributions to support him regularly. Nowadays smart watchmen attempt to get insured to guarantee a retirement pension. Some even sue the entire village for their past services.



## Appendix C



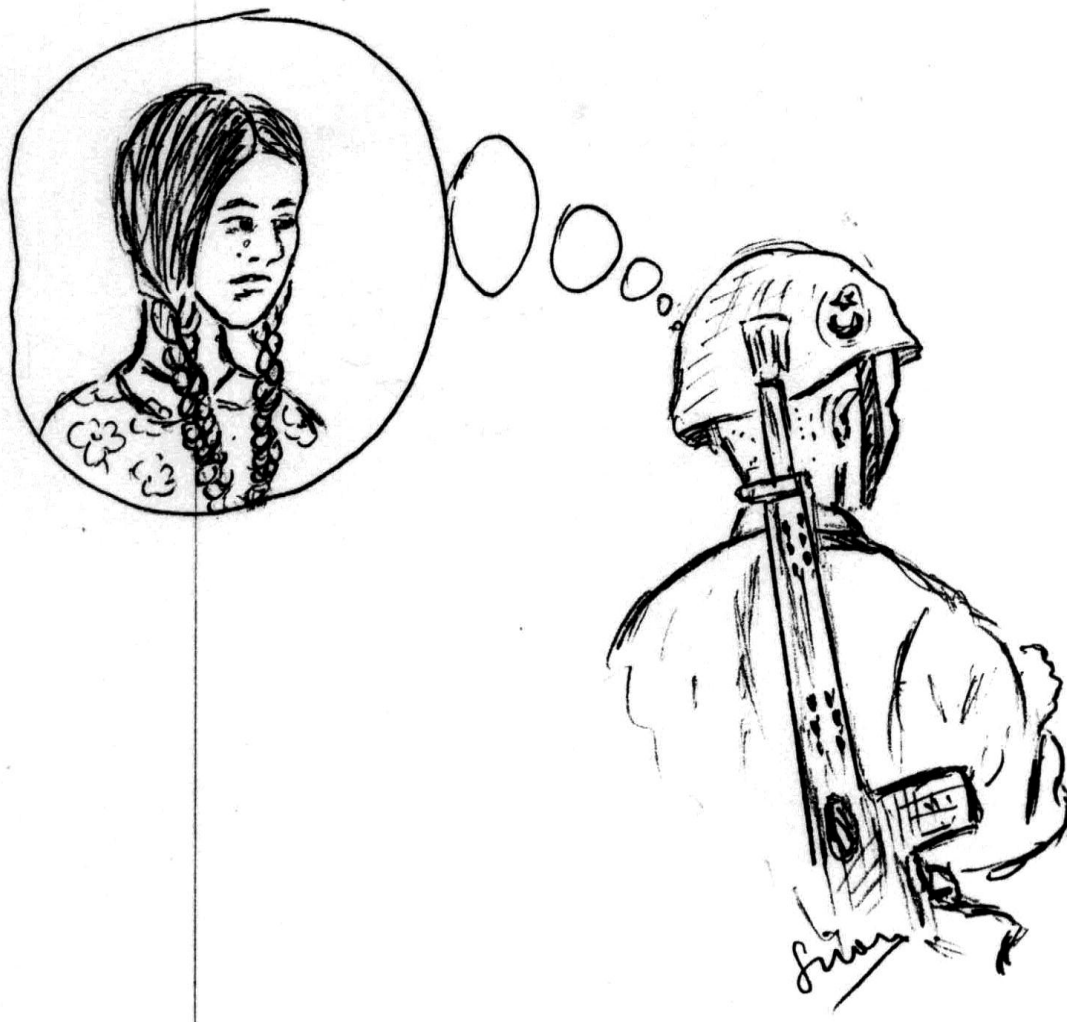
An *Alewite* medallion with the picture of Apostle *Hadrat Ali* on one face and that of Saint *Hadrat Hadji Bektash* on the other face.





A peasant youth as an army conscript

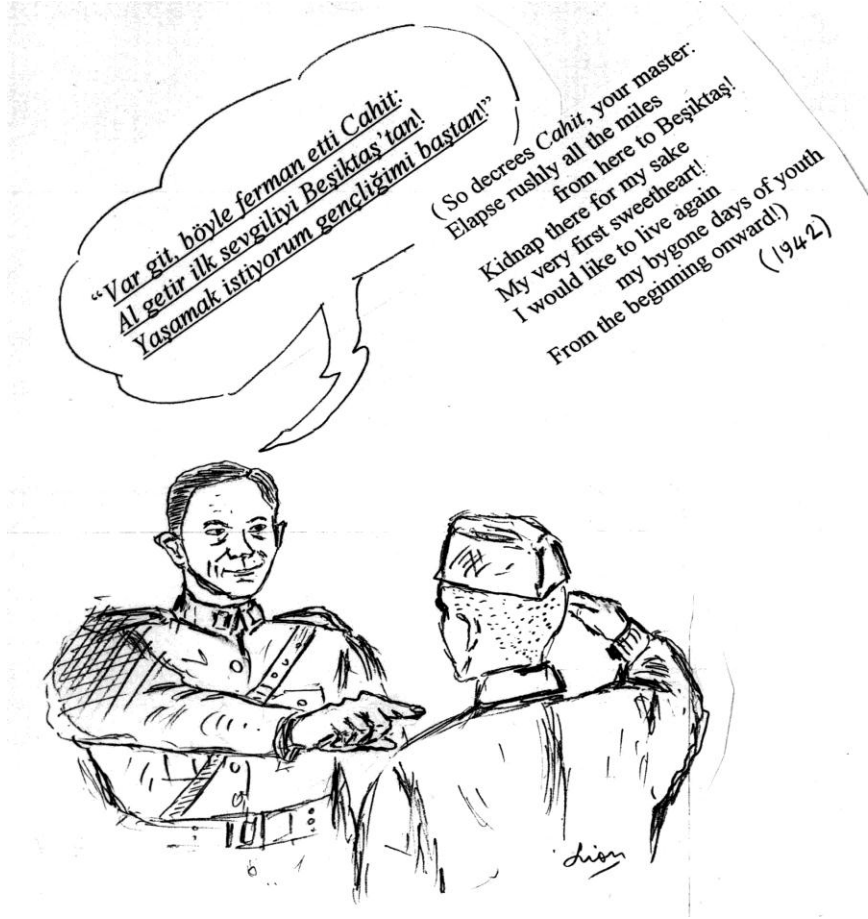
A peasant, if bestowed with one or two red strips on his arms in the army, immediately sends his uniformed photograph home. The rank sticks to him as a life-time title. Up to 1960s, a borrowed wristwatch used to further enrich the picture.



Conscripted young peasant daydreaming about his wife left at home

In Thracian villages, as a rule of thumb, families never give their daughters to suitors before their completion of the service. In other regions they mostly do so. This practice also serves the purpose of insuring the young men's return but it renders the service all the more difficult.

## Appendix C



When conscripted; peasant youths become loyal, obedient, capable plain soldiers in the army. Poet *Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı*, while he was a reserve lieutenant in *Edremit* in 1942, had an orderly from *Midyat-Mardin*, named *Abbas*. The poet regarded his *naïve* soldier as the *jinn* inside *Aladdin's* magic lamp, ready to execute any issued command. Some of his famous poems are addressed to this very soldier directly, as the following one:

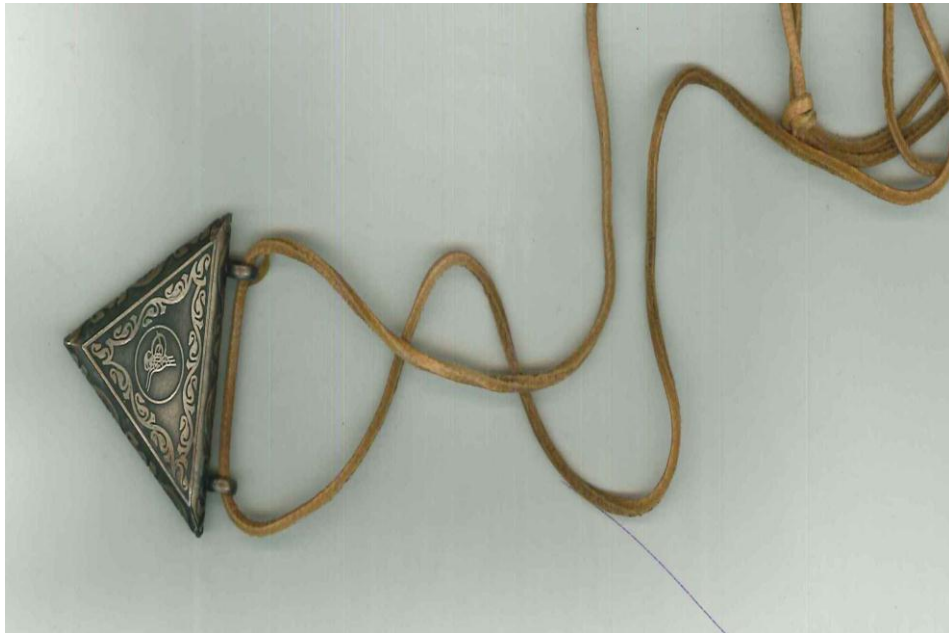
“Comon Abbas, it’s the right time / The evening time, I mean / Do prepare our snack! / Along with the drinks / Go notify the moon / It should shine as full moon in the sky tonight! / Whip the magic praying rug, will you? / Show us that, time as well as distance / Indeed respond to your wishes!” (*Haydi Abbas, vakit tamam; / Akşam diyordun işte oldu akşam / Kur bakalım çilingir soframızı / Aya haber sal çıksın bu gece / Görünsün şöyle gönlünce! / Bas kırbacı sihirli seccadeye / Göster hükmettiğini mesafeye / Ve zamana* “



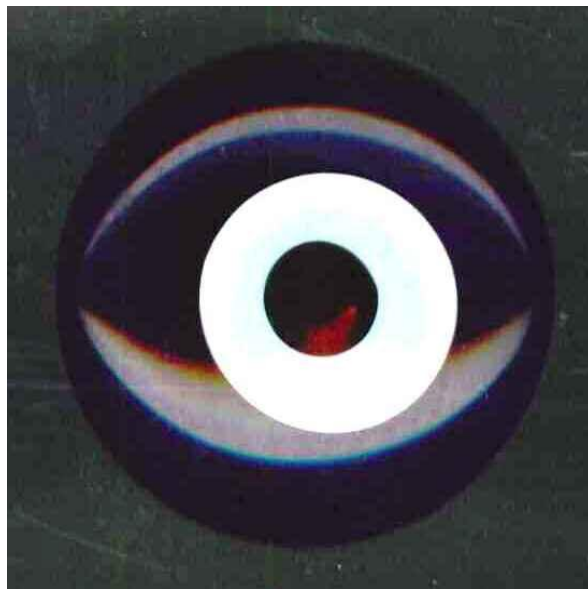
Photo: S.Ç.

(In the drawing, *Tarancı's* true face is depicted by me, from his photograph. S.Ç.).

## Appendix C

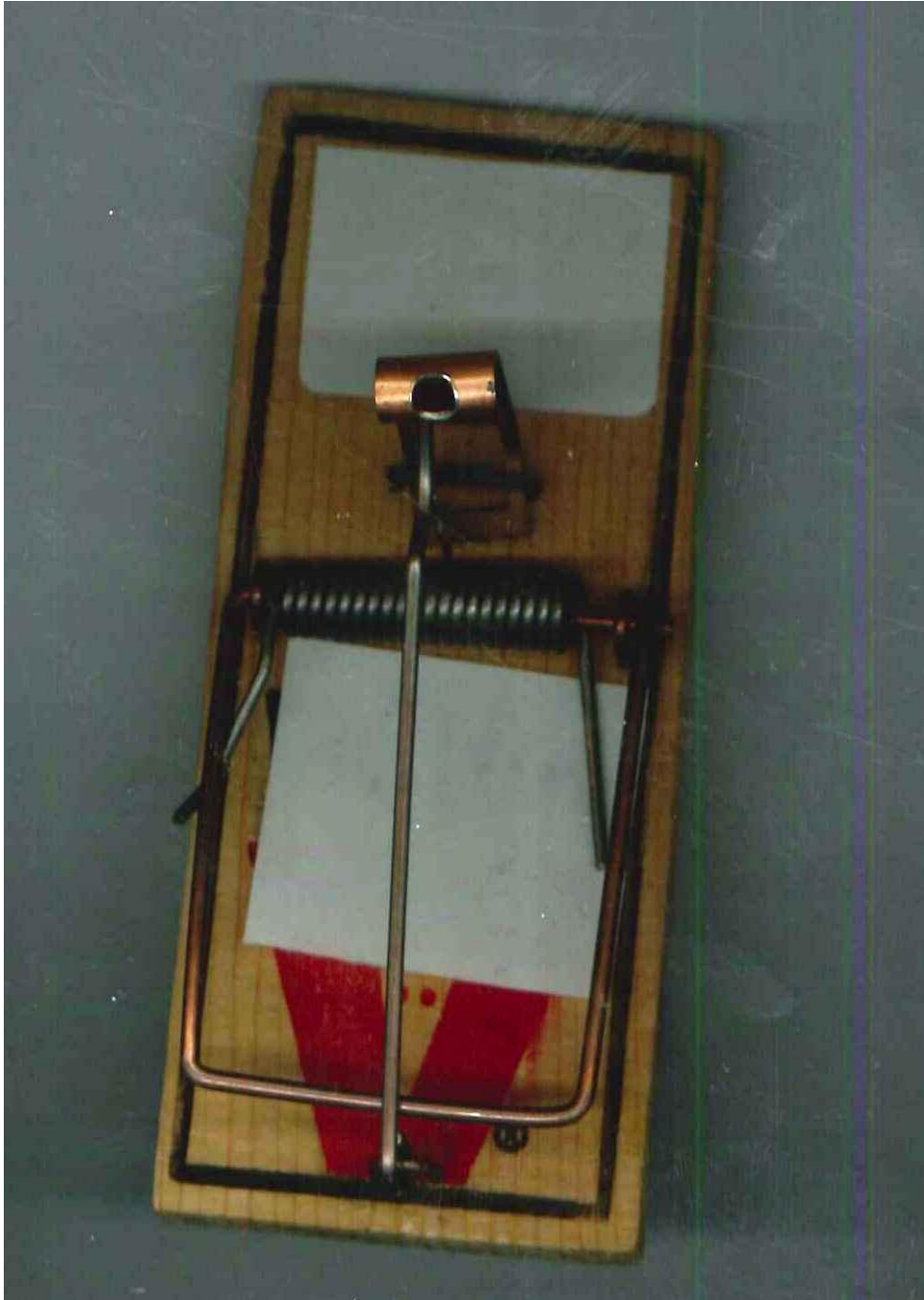


An amulet containing prayers, for hanging around the neck



A talisman allegedly good for expelling the harmful effects of evil eyes

## Appendix C



A trap set up to catch a rat



A nut-cracker cast from molten brass





A decorated tinned copper bowl



## Appendix C



Rugs are much cheaper than fluffy carpets; nevertheless, they may be almost equally picturesque and beautiful.



A fairly expensive, horn-carved, thirty-three-bead-long *chapelet* (rosary) very much in taste of a prospective *agha* (The pen is included only to emphasize its considerable size).





A common market deception had been “cutting” genuine coffee by powdered chickpeas (*nohutlu kahve*). Thus, many coffee-addicts used to grind their own coffee beans in hand mills, to escape the possibility of drinking impure coffee. Even though such hand mills had long ago fallen into oblivion in city centers, they are still available in some village houses, in accordance with the traditional principle of a frugal life style, which is almost totally indifferent to and even frightful of new consumption modes. Moreover; “rituals” pertaining to coffee are so important that even the family of a suitor (gentleman-caller) initially judges a would-be bride’s worth as a housewife, from her sheer coffee-making talent.

**THREE POEMS IN TURKISH DEALING WITH PEASANTRY:**

**Zevk Sahibi Bir Köylü**

Lise birde okurken  
Bir tatil dönüşünde  
Köylü bir ağa düştü  
Otobüste yanıma.

\*

Ben ders çalışıyordum  
Yabancı dil sözlüğüm,  
Kitap ve defterlerim  
Bir öbek kucağımda...

\*

Yolcu, boyuna benim  
Sözlüğü dikizliyor;  
Tiril tiril incecik  
yabancı kuşe kâğ'dı  
sayfalar çevrilirken

Ağzı bir karış açık;  
Müzik gibi dinliyor,  
Kafayı buluyordu  
sanki hıştırtısında!

\*

Sonunda ağzındaki  
baklayı kusuverdi:

*“Bu kitabın içiyle  
Amma tütün sarılır!  
En az iki-üç kışlık  
sarma cıgara çıkar!*

*Pamuklu cıgaralar  
Yaramaz oldu zaten.*

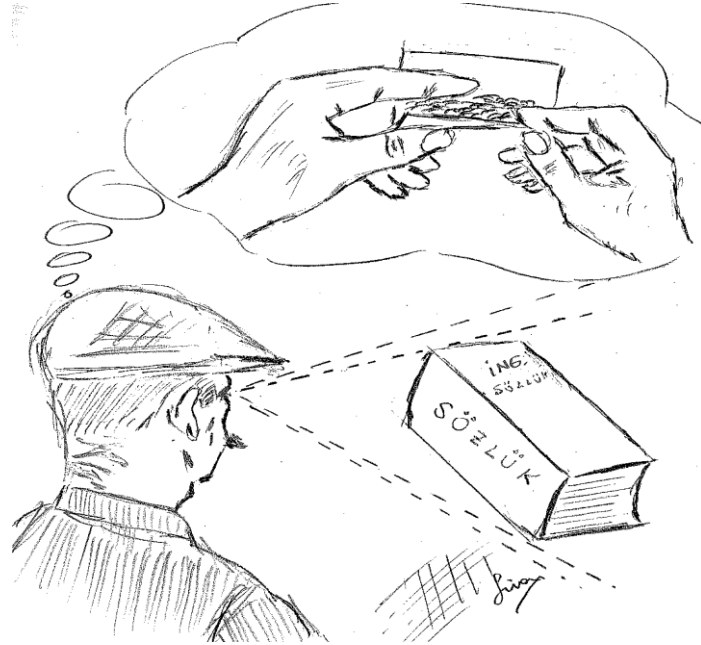
## Appendix C

*Bunu bana satmanın  
Mümkünü yok mu acep?”*

\*

Tüylerim diken diken  
bakmışım ben adama.  
Toparlandım sonra da.  
Empatik bir bakışla,  
haklıydı adamcağız.  
Bozmamalıydım onu.  
Birazcık düşündüm ve  
Şöyle çıktı yanıtlım:  
“Yedeği olsa idi  
—satmak da ne kelime—  
Armağan eder idim;  
Amma hem bir tane hem  
şimdilik bana lâzım”.

S.Çaya



## Appendix C

### Kültür ve Öncelikler

Köy kökenli bir çocuk

Nakil geldi sınıfa.

Dalgaya aldık hemen.

Seçtiği kelimeler

bile ne kadar farklı:

Dolmakalemde *boya*

Parkta tahta *oturak*

Tuvalette *işemik*

Telefonda “*af buyur?*”

*Limon yerine zırtlak*

*İncir yerine yemiş*

(“Hastaya *amaliyat*”

“Tarihte *Amarika*”

gibi telâffuzlara

aldırmasak bile biz).

Buna rağmen köylümüz

Zeki çıktı cin gibi!

İyi de eleştirmen!

Okulun teftişinde

Mutfakta nöbetçiymiş.

Müfettiş neden orda

Fayanslar eğri büğrü

diye sorguya çekmiş

müdür muavinini.

“*Gelse de bir köy görse!*

*Fayans kimmiş köy kimmiş?*

*Anlasa saçmalığı*

*Çok önemli sandığı*”

diye hayıflanıyor.

S.Çaya

### Yeni Komşular

En üst kata “*hoşgeldin*”e uğradık.

Evin reisi bizi

koltuğa dâvet etti.

Kendisi de bir sedirin üstüne

Bir ayağını altta

çiğneyerek ilişti.

İlk bu hoşuma gitti!

Sohbet koyulaştıkça

Daha kanım kaynadı!

İçtenliğinden tut da;

Pratik zekâsına,

Uyanıklığına ve

İnsancılığına dek

Ne köylü erdemleri

döküldüler ortaya!

Dönüşte ben karıma

“*Nasıl köylüler amma!*”

diyecek oldum bir ara.

Yanlış değerlendirdi:

“*Öyle,*” dedi “*sonradan*

*gördükleri besbelli !*”

S.Çaya





Miniature leather-pants (*kıspet*) for oil-wrestlers

## Appendix C



Tiny flasks with fragrant scent, for men

Itinerant essence vendors sell them in glass-paned wooden boxes.



## Appendix C



*Bauernmädchen*—(German) farmer-girl

The way the trinket is depicted, she is not very different from her Turkish counterpart with her plaided (if only blond) hairstyle; colorful top clothing; long conservative skirt and even naive, plain facial expression.



Relativity in Evaluation: Today's Turkey may appear quite modern when viewed from the angle of many peripheral countries. However, the same Turkey may still be perceived as a basically peasant-like land by some circles in Western Europe, for instance.

**THREE POEMS IN TURKISH DEALING WITH THE CITY:**

MİSAFİR BERKETİ

Çeltikçi eniştemiz  
Biraz kaba sabaydı  
Lâkin para babası!  
Halamı tedâviye  
Bizim eve geldiler  
Seneler önce bundan  
Birkaç haftalığına  
En güzel odamıza.  
Nisaiye işleri...  
Hayli zengin ettiler  
Yakındaki hekimi.  
Biz üçüncü kattaydık.  
O yıllar Beşiktaş'ın  
Arka sokaklarında  
Üstlerde oturanlar;  
Ekmek, gazete gibi  
Mûtaad alışverişi  
Sepetler sayesinde  
Aşağı inmeksiz  
Hallederlerdi çokluk.  
Telâffuzu peltekçe,  
“Yavşak” sesli satıcı  
Nasıl bayram yapmıştı!  
O bile ihya oldu:  
Her sabah muntazaman  
Bir düzine açmayla  
Yine bir o kadar da  
“İs-tan-bul i-şi ga-le-ta”  
Çekiyoruz balkona!  
Adamcağız sokağa  
“Şimitley sıcak tâje!”  
Nidâsıyla birlikte  
Zıp zıp seken bir serçe  
Misâli girdi bir süre.

S.Çaya

## Appendix D

### BEŞİKTAŞ HÂTIRASI

Yıl dokuz yüz altmış beş.

Beşiktaş'ta bir sokak.

Yaşım sekiz içinde.

O sıra karşı cinse

Sadece plâtonik

sayılacak düzeyde

Alâka besliyorum.

\*

Kar tutmuş İstanbul'da.

Beş-altı parmak kadar.

Orta birli bir *abla*

Kartopları yapıyor

Ve fırlatıp atıyor

Abbasağa Parkı'na.

\*

“*Hayalî bir düşmana*

*karşı gölge savaşı !*”

diye ilk spikerlik

denememi yapıyo'm.

Paylıyor dönüp beni:

“*Sana ne kartopumdan?*

*Sersemim zoruna bak!*”

\*

Sonra seki sekiveriyor

Cümle kapısına dek

Apartmanlarının.

Bir mızıkâ aranıp

Blucin ceplerinde

Üflüyor pervâsızca

Kapı aralığında.

Tanıyorum ezgiyi:

“*A-me-ri-kan kov-boy-la-rı*

*Severler sevdiğini*

*Kız seni almaya geldim*

*Hâlini sormaya geldim...*”

S.Çaya

## Appendix D

### ŞEHİRDE İLK SENELER

Küçüklük günlerime

“*Kültür emperyalizmi*”

Biraz “*sâfiyetsizlik*”

Katmış olabilirse,

olacak artık o kadar!

\*

İlkokulun başında,

*Tekaüt* değilken babam,

Şehirdeydik biz bütün bir aile!

Beş on çizgi romanım;

Kartondan bizzat çizip kestiğim

*İngiliz askerlerim,*

*Nevada rangerlerim;*

Kabzasında dünya kadar su tutan

plâstikten tabancam

Ve yaldızlı kâğıttan

*Şerif yıldızım* vardı!

\*

Fanilâmın altına

Havlu koyardı annem

Koşup terlediğimde.

Önce bir kat margarin,

üzerine gül reçeli sürülmüş

dilimler kemirirdim

*Kovboyculuk* oynarken

komşu çocuklarıyla.

S.Çaya



***AN EULOGY FOR ISTANBUL, IN PROSE, IN TURKISH:***

***Bir Zamanlar İstanbul / Once Upon a Time İstanbul***

**Zaman ki o zamandı. İstanbul’da bayram zamanıydı. Annemin, *opalin* lûkumluğa, Ali Muhiddin [*Hacıbekir*]’den lûkum, bâdem şekeri ve Bebek işi bâdem ezmesini koyduğu; vişne likörüyle acı kahvesini de misafire hazır bulundurduğu o zamandı.**



*Murat Baykan’dan*

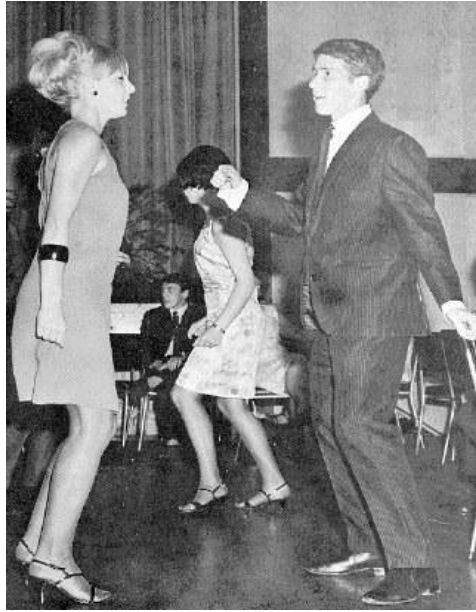
**Ceplerimin iki buçuk liralarla dolduğu; kara trene binerken “anneanneme gideceğim” diye içerimin heyecanla dolduğu; beylerin hanımlara, gençlerin yaşlılara, [*vesaitlerde*] yer verdiği zamandı.**

## Appendix D



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*

[*Serde*] **İstanbullu olmak vardı! Taşradan gelenlerin bile giyimini, konuşmasını [*ve hâlini tavrını*] düzeltmeye çalıştığı vakitlerdi. İstabullu olmak demek yalnızca istanbul'da doğmak demek değil; o kültürü özümsemiş olmak da demektir.**



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965"Videosu'ndan*

**Yenikapı'da babandan yüzmeyi öğrenebilmek; Rum arkadaşının annesinin elinden vişne likörü içmek; torik akını olduğunda lâkerdayı âdâbıyla yapabilmekti mesele. Vasili, Hırant, Avram, Josef, Todori, Olga, Onnik, Garbis, Arto, Luset, Vanda, Eleni vs. yani Rum, Ermeni, Musevî arkadaşların, dostların varlığı mevzu bahisti o vakitler.**

## Appendix D



Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

**İstanbullu olmak demek; Rum *manitan* Suzi ile Mimi'nin tavernasında *sirtaki*<sup>(\*)</sup> yapıp, Burgaz adasının Marta koyunda denize girmek; Ermeni sevgilin Dalita ile Samatya'da meyhane dumanında *topik*<sup>(\*\*)</sup> atıştırmak demektir.**



\*

Anthony Quinn & Alan Bates playing **Sirtaki** (From the movie **Zorba, the Greek**)



\*\*

*Topik, Ermenilerin perhiz yemeklerinden biridir.*

*Yedi hafta süren Büyük Perhiz süresince et ve süt ürünleri yenmez, zeytinyağlı yemekler hazırlanırdı. Topik de bu perhiz yemeklerindendir. Malzemesi: Nohut, tahin, soğan, kişniş, dolmalık fıstık, maydanoz, deniz tuzu, karabiber, tarçın, yenibahar.* Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

İstanbul'daki “topık” adlı yiyeceğin İzmir'deki mukabili ise, hâlâ dahi yaşatılmakta olan “boyoz” adlı börek çeşididir. Boyozu İzmir mutfağına, 15. asır sonunda İspanya'dan kurtarılıp İzmir'e iskân edilen Sefarad Yahudi toplumunun getirdiği ifade edilmektedir. Yılmaz Özdil, İzmir hakkında bir yazısında (*İlk Kurşun* Gazetesi 11 Ağustos 2012) “gece saat 3-4 gibi [sularında] boyoza dalmazsak, kan şekerimiz düşer!” demeyi de hiç ihmâl etmez. s.ç.



Boyoz Yaygınağdan (İnternet)



“Teoman” imzalı “İzmir “dosyasından” Yaygınağdan (İnternet)



## Appendix D

**Musevî kız arkadaşın Luset ile Büyükkada'da Lido'da [the orijinal Lido is the famous French cabaret located in the Champs-Élysées street in Paris Yaygınağdan] sefâ sürmek; Harbiye'de Jitan ve Hidromel'de dans etmek, evlerde parti verirken en güzel şarkıları plâktan dinlemektir İstanbulluluk.**



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*



Marta Koyu—Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

**İstanbullu olmak demek, Beyoğlu’nda İnci pastanesinden profiterol ısmarlamak; Pangaltı’da Yordan pastanesinin su muhallebisini, bilmeyenlere de öğretmek demektir.**

*Daha daha? Çiçek pasajında alkol-almayan “Entelektüel Cavit Bey”in (\*) yerinde, dostlarla beraber demlenmek; lâternacı [lâterna: Kolu çevrilerek çalınan, sandık biçiminde bir tür org Yaygınağdan] hanımdan müzik dinlemektir. Kumkapı’da klânetciye bahşiş verip arkadaşının kulağına kulyağına üfletmektir.*

**Eyüpsultan’ı , Piyer Loti’yi, Üsküdar’ı, Yoros kalesini [Anadolukavağı sırtlarındaki Doğu Roma döneminden kalma kale. İmparatorluk zayıf düştükten sonra Cenevizlilerin eline geçmişti Yaygınağdan (İnternet)] de bilmektir.**

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\*



“Entelektüel” lâkabını, 1952 yılında Sev-İç’de garsonluk yaparken, Cumhuriyet Gazetesi yazarı Doğan Nâdi koymuştu. Entelektüel-Câvit, “rakı içmez ama içirir” diye nam salmıştı. “Bulaşmayacaksın merete, bulaştın mı hancı sarhoş, yolcu sarhoş olur” derdi. Sigara da içmezdi. Hem Kızılay, hem de Yeşilay üyesiydi. “Çek ekselânsa bir arjantin, monsenyora çiroz getirelim, bol dereotlu” talimatları, yıllarca [Çiçekpazarı’nda sahibi bulunduğu] Huzur Meyhanesi’nin dört duvarı arasında çınladı durdu. Câvit Güneş, 2009 yılı ağustosunda 79 yaşında yaşamını yitirdi. Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

“Engin Ardiç her zamanki cerbezisiyle [cerbeze = aslında yalan söylemeden doğruyu kıvırtarak gerçeği saklamak] Câvit Güneş’in ‘işlevine’ değişik yaklaştı: Ona göre Câvit ve müşterileri hepsi aynı yolun yolcusuydu: ‘Câvit, Çiçek Pasajı’nda meyhane işletirdi. Başka da bir özelliği yoktu. Huzur Meyhanesi, diğerlerinden hiçbir farkı olmayan, sıradan, salaş diyebileceğimiz bir yerdi. Yani Câvit’in kuş konduracak hâli yoktu ve olamazdı. O da işi şaklabanlığa vurmuş, bununla bir ‘marka farklılığı’ yaratmıştı. Tutmuştu da bu numara’ ”. Taha Kıvanç’tan

## Appendix D

**Ayazpaşa'da [Gümüşsuyu yakınları] Cennet Bahçesi'nde [talebe] arkadaşlarla Boğaz'a karşı dinlenmek; Emek Sineması'nda sessizce film seyretmek; [Maçka'da] Küçük Çiflik parkında lunaparkta eğlenmekti. Her bayram kurulan atlı karıncalara binmek vardı o zamanlar.**



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*



## Appendix D

**Yeniköy’de kafa dinleyip Kanlıca’ya çatanayla [istimbot], yogurt yemeye geçmekti. Spor-Sergi’de basketbol seyredip AKM’de “Damdaki Kemancı” (\*) piyesinde Sütçü Tevye’yi izlemektir İstanbullu olmanın nitelikleri.**

*İstanbullu’nun harcıydı Gülhane Parkı’nda gölge oyunu izlemek, Etnografya’nın [Etnografya Müzesi’nin] bahçesinde çayını içerken resim çizimi çalışmak; Vefâ’da boza, sahlep yudumlamak; Şehzadebaşı’ndan Çemberlitaş’a kadar âheste adımlamak yolları.*



Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

**Köprü’de balık-ekmek ziftlenmek, dolmuşla Bostancı’ya geçmek; Sivriada’dan dalış dönüşü Moda’da güneşi buzz gibi gazoz içerken batırmak ve grubu seyre dalmak; Yeniköy İskele Gazinosu’na müşteri olmak ne imiş bilirdi İstanbullu.**



Suavi Karaibrahimgil’in “Sene 1965” Videosu’ndan

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\* Joseph Stein’in 1905 Çarlık Rusyası’nı anlatan kitabından uyarlanan piyes. Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

Cüneyt Gökçer başrolü oynamıştı. Müzikalin “If I were a rich man” şarkısı “bir zengin olsaydım” tercümesiyle büyük başarı kaydetmiş idi. s.ç.

## Appendix D

**Lüferli, plâkili, rokalı, kalamarlı, Kulüp sigaralı vaziyette dostların bezminde** [*sohbet meclisi, muhabbet yeri, yiyip içme, iş u nûş / sefahet, işret ve eğlence topluluğu* Yaygınağdan (İnternet)] **bulunurken; Berç Abi'nin akordiyonuna eşlik eden Gitarist-Hırant'ın ağzından** **Adamo, Juanito, Dario Moreno, Peppino di Capri, Luis Alberto del Paraná** (\*) [*Paraguayan singer and guitarist (1926–1974)* Yaygınağdan (İnternet)] **Luis Alberto "El Flaco" Spinetta** (\*\*) [*Argentine musician, (1950-2012)* Yaygınağdan (İnternet)], **Los Paraguayos grubu, Fecri Ebcioglu şarkılarına hafiften terennümle iştirak; o harika nağmelerle mest olup, sabaha karşı Apik'te** [*Apik Haytebeyoğlu'nun sahibi olduğu Dolapdere'deki ünlü işkembe salonu* Yaygınağdan (İnternet)] **işkembe çorbasını kursağına indirmektir bir bakıma İstanbullu olmak.**



*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*



Yaygınağdan (İnternet)



Yaygınağdan (İnternet)

## Appendix D



Yayınağdan (İnternet)



Yayınağdan (İnternet)

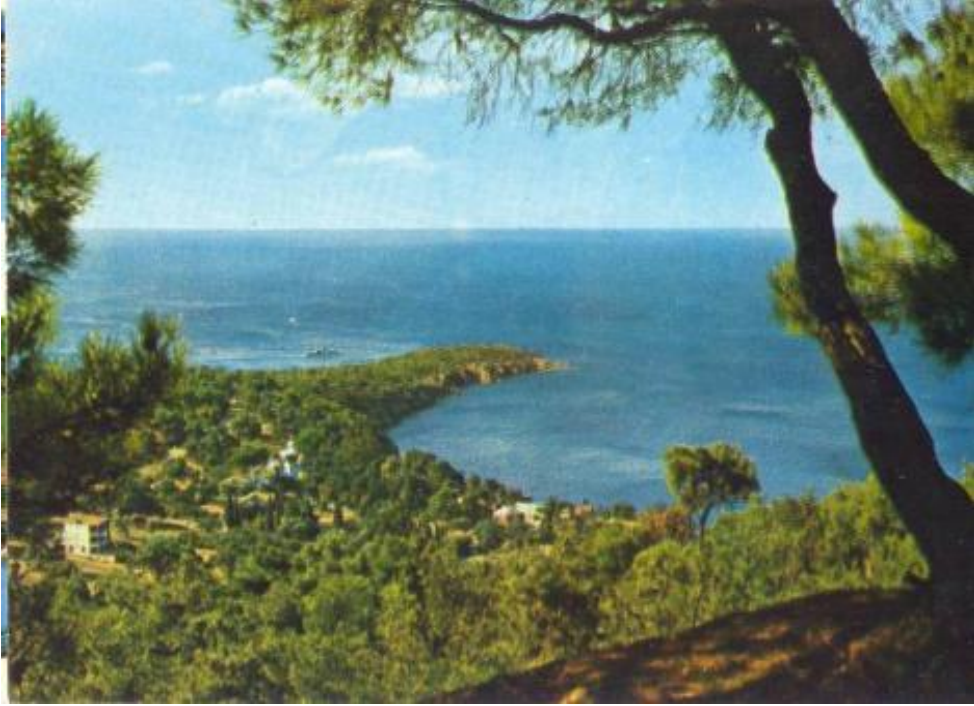


Yayınağdan (İnternet)

*İstanbulluluk*; sabahın ilk ışıklarıyla Sarıyer’de Telli Baba Türbesi’ne komşu çay bahçesinden su böreği ve poğaçadan ibâret kahvaltıyla puslu Boğaz’ı seyrederek güne “merhaba!” demekti.

*İstanbulluluk*; Florya-Güneş, Moda, Caddebostan ve Süreyyapaşa plajlarında, kız-erkek bir arada denizin ve plajın tadını çıkartmak, derine dalmak için tâ Sedef Adası’na kadar zahmet edip gitmekti.

**İstanbulluluk; “Heybeli’de mehtaba çıkmak;” —Üstâd Yesârî Âsım Arsoy’un güftesini yazıp sultaniyegâh bir besteye çektiği nefis mısralara bir kinâye (allusion)<sub>s.ç.</sub>— Çamlıca’nın güllerini koklamak; Büyükada’nın Dilburnu’nu sandalla dönerken mâziyi anmak; akşam vapuruna binerken patates köftesi veya kadın budu köfte tıkmaktı.**



Dilburnu Yaygınağdan

Aksaray’dan Taksim’e yağmurlu bir günde *Leyland* marka trolleybüsle giderken, sevgilinle birlikte elektriğe çarpılmak *da demekti* İstanbullu olmak. Çengelköy bâdemini [hıyarını], Beykoz cevizini, Alibeyköy mısırmı, Bayrampaşa enginarını, Alemdağ tereyağını *bizatihî yerinden edinmekti üstelik.*





*Suavi Karaibrahimgil'in "Sene 1965" Videosu'ndan*

**Taksim-Maksim’de Zeki Müren’i dinlemek, Caddebostan Grand Maksim’de Muazzez Abacı’nın saz takımını program sonrası balıkadamlar klübüne getirip hep birlikte şömine başında “güzel olmak”tı [“Güzel olmak”: Kur yaptığınız karşı cins yanibaşınızda oturuyor ve olumlu sinyaller gönderiyorken, üçüncü boş bira bardağını masaya bıraktığınız dakika yaşanan ruh güllaçlaması hâli. Ekşi Sözlük’ten, Rumuz “aziz kedi”, 20.8.2001]**

**“Benim güzel manolyam” şarkısını Bebek parkında sevgiliye okumak; baharı erguvanlarla Boyacıköy’de karşılamak; Sulukule’de her ne kadarsa parasını bayılıp [Jitan] hâtunları saç saça baş başa dövüştürmekti [kayıkçı kavgasına sevk etmekti]. O Jitanlar ki Suriçi’nde sokak sokak Müzeyyen Senar ve Zeki Müren’in şarkı sözlerini klârnet ezgileri eşliğinde satarken; bir yandan da beşinci kat balkonundan kendilerini seyreden hanımlara çubuk şeker fırlatırlardı. İşte o zamanlarda İstanbul’da bayramın da kendine *hass* bambaşka bir tatlılığı vardı.**



Çubuk Şeker Yaygınağdan

**(The preliminary version of the text is obtained from the digital environment as it had been provided by insurance-agent, İstanbul-gentleman *Murat Baykan*. The spelling and punctuation is thoroughly revised. Some small changes are also affected within the context in *italics*. Many explanations and pictures are further incorporated into the text. s.ç.).**

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **Personal Information**

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### **Education**

1967-1971 Robert College Lycée Division

1971-1977 B.S. in Chemical Engineering at Bosphorous University

1990-1992 MBA. in Organizational Behavior at Marmara University

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### **Work Experience**

1997-2013 High School Chemistry Teacher; Engineer at State-Owned Chemical Plants (Fertilizers, Pulp and Paper); Academic Personnel at ukurova Medical Faculty, Chair of Legal Medicine; Military Service; Instructor at Beykent University-Vocational Higher School; Part-time Instructor at Doęuő University; Part-time Instructor at Marmara University.

### **Research Interests**

Rural Sociology, Forensic Social Sciences, Leadership, General Education, Social History.



## TURKISH SUMMARY

Geleneksel toplumlar, öncelikle iâşe bakımından tarımın önem kazanmış bulunduğu toplumlardır. Anılan toplumlar bu anlamda kırsal ve köylü özellikleri taşırlar. Üretkenlik ve rasyonellik dahi elde mevcut ziraât teknolojinin imkânlarıyla kaimdir, sınırlıdır. Beşerî tekâmül de ona göre yavaş olur.

Köy sosyolojisi bu gibi toplumları incelemeyi esas alan bir disiplin olarak öne çıkmıştır. Türkiye’de de ilgili sosyal bilimciler tarafından ana sosyoloji şuurunun yerleşmesinden bir süre sonra ortaya çıkıp gelişmesine devam etmiş; kimi zaman edebiyatta köycülük akımı ile kenetlenmiştir.

Türkiye toplumunun en ziyade şehirleşmiş kesimlerinde bile köy menşeli bir tarihçenin ve kollektif anıların, tastamam modernleşmiş bir başka ülkeye nispetle günümüze kronolojik yakınlığı ve zenginliği asla yadsınamaz. Bu bağlamda kırsal izler ve alışkanlıklar, âdeta hafif bir eşeleme sonrası hemen ortaya çıkacak bir saklı varlık misâli “yüzey”e yakın seviyelerde gizlenmiş unsurlar hükmündedir.

Hemen bütün dünyada kırsal hayat ve kırsal mekânlar, bir çok anlamda ve noktada ortak hususiyetleri haizdirler. Ziraât iktisat bilgini *Alexander V. Chayanov*’un (1888-1937) ifade ettiği gibi *kırsal alanda motivasyon kapitalist ortamdakinden farklı olup bütün çalışma kazanç sağlamaktan ziyade ailenin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak istikametinde odaklaşmaktan ibarettir.*

Araştırmacı; danışman hocasının önerdiği konuyu benimseyip içselleştirmiştir. Kendi özgeçmiş arka plânında; orta tabaka menşeli bir birey sıfatıyla; köylü-şehirli dikotomisi açısından yıllar yılı nasıl bir zihnî meşguliyet içersinde bulunageldiğini; bir içe bakış yoluyla çözümlemeğe koyulmuştur.

Köy ve köylülük ile ilgili mütalâaları, çelişkileri, kendince ve etraftan yakıştırmaları, bizzat nefsinde yoğun halde yaşamış bulunduğu haberdarlığını yeniden keşfetmiştir. Vesileyle, önceki deneyimlerini bile yeni bir bakış açısıyla tekrar zihinsel süzgecinden geçirerek daha bir kuvvetle algılamış, yorumlamış, genel geçer kuramlar basamağına oturtmaya çalışmıştır.

Kısacası; evvelki tecrübelerini (sınıf öğretmeni annesiyle birlikte üç yıl köy yaşantısı; çocuklukta yaz tatillerinde çırağ edildiği terzi dükkânının eski eser kapsamındaki fiziksel yapısıyla —lüks mekânları ürküntüyle karşılayan— köylü yurttaşları kolayca celbetmesi ve bu itibarla dükkânın esas müşteri kitlesinin civar köylerden taban bulması gerçeği; Çankırı ilinde askerlik görevinde iç güvenlik şehitlerinin törenlerine katılmak üzere bir çok köye ayak basmış ve gözlemlerde bulunmuş olması) akademik değerlendirmelere tahvil etme gayretlerine yönelmiştir.

Önceki Osmanlı Devleti’nin geri kalan Türk-Müslüman kesimlerinin bağımsızlığı yolunda verilen Millî Mücadele’yi, Türk İnkılâbı (devrimi) izledi. Bir inkılâp; siyasal ve sosyal bir tekâmülden farklı olarak; âdeta sözlük anlamında “bir gecede” başlatılan âni ve köklü bir değişimi ifade eder. Türk Devrimi de, önceden hesabı kitabı yapılmamış, birdenbire ve kılıgısal bir nitelikte oluşmuştur. Cumhuriyetin maddî kazanımları ile beşerî değişimleri ve yeni düşünceleri şehir merkezlerinde; hemen olmasa bile kısa sürede kendisini göstermiştir.

Ancak devrimin uç niteliği ve hızı, onun çevreden benimsenmesini daha gönülsüz ve dirençle mümkün kıldı. Böylelikle merkez kesimlerde kısa sürede başarılanlar; kırsalda daha uzun zamanda, direniş ve doğal engellemeleri aşarak; daha çok zaman ve çaba pahasına gerçekleşebilmiştir.

Kırsal alanda modernleşme yolunda iki önemli kilometre taşı; Köy Enstitüleri denemesi ile tarımın makineleşmesi olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Köy Enstitüleri; dünya ölçeğinde özgün bir uygulama sıfatıyla; başka bazı ülkelerin dahi öykünmelerine sebep teşkil etmiş; ayağı yerine basan eğitime önem vermiş bir

takım kurumlar idiler. Köylü gençlere modern tarım ve hayvancılık yöntemlerinin yanı sıra duvarcılık, arıcılık, marangozluk gibi zanaatları da kazandıran ve böyle muhteşem bir donanımla onları tekrar köylerde eğitimliğe ve öğretmenliğe sevk eden seçkin yuvalar idiler.

Tarımda makinalaşma evresine gelince; binlerce traktör 1950'lerde köyün hayatına girmiş; kol gücünü ikâme ederek sayısız köylü yurttaşın şehirlere göç akınına sebebiyet vermiştir.

Köylüyü köyünde tutup ona kendi ortamında refah sağlamaktan devletin âciz kalmış olması hakikati; şehirlerde de bir çok yeni problemler ortaya çıkartmıştır. Bu sorunların seğırdimleri günümüze kadar yansımaya devam etmektedir.

Köy; geleneklerin hüküm fermâ olduğu ve çelişmeler hâlinde yazılı yasaya dahi üstün geldiğı, bir küçük cemaat toplumdur. Kültür esasen sözel olup özellikle *naif* şiir merakı revaçtadır. Kişilik yapıları açısından bakıldığında bile; tarihsel kökler ile paylaşıla gelmiş sosyo-kültürel deneyimler; bir bakıma insanları ortak bir potada bir şekilde yoğurup biçimlendirmiştir. Türk köylüsü, kendisini kasabalı ve şehirlilerden ayırt etmeyi mümkün kılan bazı toplu özelliklere elbette sahiptir.

Bu bağlamda köylü; pekâlâ; kılışsal, cömert, az çok tecrit edilmiş bir anlamda sırf yakın çevresini umursayan, samimî, yardımsever, tutucu, ağır tütün tiryakisi, muhafazakâr, sert erkek sıfatıyla ağzı küfürli sözlere meyyal, temizlikten yana biraz ihmalkâr, ancak büyük aile ve hısımlar içinde emniyet hissi bulan bir fert diye betimlenebilir.

Köylünün kafasında hurafelerin bir yeri varsa da bu zihnî meşguliyet sadece köylüye inhisar etmez. Köylülerin diğer inanışları ise esasen dinsel iman konusu kapsamı içine düşer. Halk hekimliği olgusu bazı inançlarla koşut gitse de temelde hastalıklara karşı ilkel ama iç tutarlılığı olan mantıklı bir müdahale hükmündedir.

İnsanlar bu yollara başvuruyorlarsa sebep esasen çağdaş yöntemlerin ulaşılmazlığıdır. Üstelik halk hekimliği yerini giderek modern tedaviye bırakmaktadır. Günümüzde köylüler ekseriya uyanık, dünyevî, ayağı yere basan insanlardır.

Mağrur kentsoylu züppece bir edâyla bütün köylüleri aynı kalıp yargı içinde “damgalayıp” hepsini “köy insanı” diye aynı kefeye koyabilir; ama köylüler de birer birey olup aralarında en yoğun kent merkezindeki kadar birbirinden ayrı kişilikler, yetenekler, zihniyetler ve fiziksel farklılıklar saklarlar.

Muhtemel bir çok durumda şehirli ile etkileşimlerinde köylü, açık seçik bir horlanmaya mâruz kalabilir veya kolayca mağdur duruma düşebilir; zira bu karşılaşmada avantaj şehirlinindir. Mamafih şehirli ile münasebetlerinde; orantısız dezavantaj ve keskin mahrumiyet pozisyonuna rağmen; köylü birey sayısız durumlarda kendi küçük zaferini de kaydedebilir.

Türkiye; bir yandan, yakın zamanlara kadar, bir tarım ülkesi addedilmiştir; ancak öte yandan ülke, genç nüfusu ile ve yeni tesirler altında, kentleşme doğrultusunda hızlı dönüşümler kaydetmektedir. Her hâlükârda geleneklere bağlı kökler bazen örtülü bazen açık surette hayatîyetini sürdürmekte, icabında yüzeye vurmaktadır. Türkiye’nin bütünlüğünün lâıyıkıyla anlaşılabilmesi, ülkenin köylülük kökenlerinin iyi anlaşılmasıyla mümkündür.

Bu tez çalışmasının sonunda; hâlihazırda modernlik açısından, Türkiye’nin kırsal ve kentsel kesimlerinde mevcut ortalama düzey farkının, cumhuriyetin erken dönemlerine nazaran kayda değer derecede azalmış olduğunu öngören başlangıçtaki hipotez; doğrulanmış gözükmemektedir.

## TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : Çaya  
Adı : Sinan  
Bölümü : Sosyoloji

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : Modernism and the Peasantry: The Case of Turkey

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**