

THE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN A
PROVINCE: THE CASE OF THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE OF KAYSERI

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ABSTRACT

THE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN A PROVINCE: THE CASE OF THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE OF KAYSERI

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This thesis focuses on the Kayseri House experience in early republican period and aims to explore how the narratives of national culture and identity were constructed in a so-called conservative province in the context of the Kayseri House. Through analyzing the Kemalist cultural policies of the 1930s and 1940s, the study attempts to reveal the interpretations, voices and nationalistic discourses of the House members on these policies and their acts of implementing these policies. In order to uncover the nationalist language used by the House members, the thesis will focus on the official texts of the Kayseri House and relating to the Kayseri province of the period. In this sense, the importance of the thesis depends on these languages and discourses for finding out multiple forms of individual experiences and practices in the case of Kayseri House.

Keywords: nationalism, province, the People's House of Kayseri, Kayseri, early republican period

ÖZ

TAŞRADA MİLLİ KÜLTÜR VE KİMLİĞİN İNŞASI: KAYSERİ HALKEVİ ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu tez, erken cumhuriyet dönemindeki Kayseri Halkevi deneyimine odaklanmakta ve milli kültür ve kimlik anlatılarının kapalı/tutucu olarak adlandırılan bir taşrada nasıl inşa edildiğini keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. 1930'lar ve 1940'ların Kemalist kültür politikalarını analiz ederek, çalışma bu politikalar hakkındaki Halkevi üyelerinin yorumlarını, seslerini ve milliyetçi söylemlerini ve bu politikaların uygulanışındaki edimlerini ortaya çıkarmaya girişmektedir. Halkevi üyelerinin kullandığı milliyetçi dili açığa çıkarmak için, bu tez Kayseri Halkevinin ve dönemin Kayseri taşrasını ilgilendiren resmi kaynaklara odaklanacaktır. Bu bağlamda, tezin önemi, Kayseri Halkevi örneğindeki çeşitli bireysel deneyim biçimlerini ve pratiklerini keşfetmek adına bu dil ve söylemlere dayanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: milliyetçilik, taşra, Kayseri Halkevi, Kayseri, erken cumhuriyet dönemi

*Dedicated to the memory of
my father Prof. Dr. Faruk Balkar
and my beloved grandmother Saniye Bekcan*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| PLAGIARISM..... | iii |
| ABSTRACT | iv |
| ÖZ..... | v |
| DEDICATION | vi |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | vii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | viii |
| CHAPTER | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1.1. Methodology | 4 |
| 1.2. Literature Review | 7 |
| 1.3. Organization of the Thesis | 13 |
| 2. BETWEEN KEMALIST NATIONALISM AND MODERNIZATION: THE PEOPLE'S HOUSES AS THE INSTITUTIONS OF CULTURAL INDOCTRINATION | 17 |
| 2.1. Identifying the Turkish Nationalism and Inventing the Modernized Way of Life: Kemalist Cultural Policies of 1930s and 1940s..... | 18 |
| 2.2. Functions and Organizational Structure of the People's Houses..... | 23 |
| 2.2.1. The Basic Characteristics of the Leading Branches..... | 26 |
| 2.3. The Issue of Center-Periphery Politics and State-Society Relations in the People's Houses | 29 |
| 2.4. Concluding Remarks | 33 |
| 3. THE POSITION OF THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE OF KAYSERI: REFLECTIONS ON THE LOCAL SOCIETY | 35 |
| 3.1. The Social Structure of the Kayseri Population: 'the Local People' | 37 |
| 3.2. The Role of the Republican People's Party Members and the People's House Actors in Kayseri | 40 |
| 3.3. Sociopolitical Relationship between the Centre and Locality over | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| the Kayseri House Experience | 45 |
| 3.4. The Areas of Cultural Activities: Branches of the Kayseri House | 51 |
| 3.5. Concluding Remarks | 56 |
| 4. A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ERCIYES JOURNAL OF THE KAYSERI HOUSE | 58 |
| 4.1. A General Overview of the People's House Journals and the Case of Erciyes..... | 59 |
| 4.2. Ideal Citizen: Education of the People in the Periphery | 70 |
| 4.3. The Argument of Secularism in the 'Conservative' Kayseri | 90 |
| 4.4. State of Art, Culture, Folklore: Modernized or Nationalized?..... | 98 |
| 4.5. Examining Turkishness through History and Language Reforms | 113 |
| 4.6. Desired Development of Villages in Kayseri..... | 123 |
| 4.7. Concluding Remarks | 135 |
| 5. VOICES FROM THE INSIDE AND THE OUTSIDE: REACTIONS, RESPONSES, COMMENTARIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE KAYSERI HOUSE | 139 |
| 5.1. Voices of the People's House Actors and Members..... | 141 |
| 5.1.1. Use of Membership: The Narratives of Active Participation..... | 143 |
| 5.1.2. Position and Involvement of Woman..... | 161 |
| 5.2. Opposition, Conflict and Discontent..... | 169 |
| 5.3. Voices of Woman, Peasant (Villager), 'the Ordinary People': (In)Visibility of Other | 177 |
| 5.3.1. The Kayseri People in Everyday Life | 180 |
| 5.3.2. What the Peasant Speaks..... | 190 |
| 5.3.3. What Woman Speaks | 196 |
| 5.4. Concluding Remarks | 202 |
| 6. CONCLUSION | 205 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 216 |
| APPENDICES | |
| A. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET | 237 |
| B. TEZ İZİN FORMU/THESIS PERMISSION FORM | 249 |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The narrative construction process of the Kemalist political language and official discourse covered on the Kayseri province in the early republican period was clearly shown in an invented joke:

-Is it true that the Kayserians do not read and write? -Rather, they say it because they do not want to boast. In fact, far from reading and writing in the past and today, those who teach all Turks to read and write are the Kayserians. -Excuse me? (...) Then, this means, the Kayserians are also our teachers.¹

What may be inferred from these statements is that this kind of expression establishes connection with the instructing and enlightening assertions of the Kemalist ideology to give self-confidence to the people of homeland for not being considered themselves as to be apart from progress, contemporary civilization and modernity. The national-popular education of Turks is taken into consideration not only without regarding the ethnic, regional and local elements but also without concerning class, gender differences and individual everyday conducts. In this sense, to be from Kayseri or to be Kayserian is not enough to be a civilized, modern citizen and is not as important as

¹ Kemaleddin Karamete. (1944). *Okumam Yazmam Yok Amma!... Kayseriliyim (Kayseri Nükteleri)*. Kayseri: Sümer Matbaası, p. 43-4. “-Yahu sırası gelince Kayserililer okumam yazmam derler bu doğru mu? -Bilakis, övünmemek için böyle söylerler. Yoksa eskiden de bugün de okuyup yazmak şöyle dursun, bütün Türkleri okutup yazdıran Kayserililerdir. -Anlamadım? (...) Desene okutup yazdırmakta da Kayserililer öğretmenimizdir.”

literacy.² The homogeneity and enlightenment of ‘the people’³ which are embodied in the modernization and secularization processes and in the nationalist narration of the official discourse eliminate the provincial characters. “The wrongness that makes an understanding of *primitive provinciality* attached to the people of the Kayseri city” is then removed for the survival of the newly constructed republican educating ideals to be learned and internalized. The Kayseri province whether before the Republic was proclaimed or afterwards seems to show almost same political, ideological and even cultural patterns, preferences and attitudes about its commitment to the modern and national transformation processes and political changes of Turkey. Korat (1997: 20) hence entitles the Kayseri people as those who “are always on the side of water which is very large and flows by loudly rumbling”. Besides, the neglect of provincial, local, regional and social dynamics of the country in general and the Kayseri province in particular points to ambiguity of the official ideology⁴ which blurs the lines between populism, nationalism, conservatism and even modernism. This means that while the Anatolian culture is the primary aspect of the Turkish nation in the Turkish province, the elimination of backwardness, modern (bourgeois) lifestyle and rationality of economic development are also required to mark on the ways which the selected (Kayseri) people experience in their invented lives. This is why both the nationalist-populist and elitist discourses in the texts of literature of the early republican period whether written by those in the center or by those in the periphery assert that “a backward nation could modernize itself while preserving its own cultural identity” (Chatterjee, 1996: 71).

² Subaşı M. İ. (2003). *Bu Şehrin Hikayesi*. Kayseri: Kayseri Ticaret Odası Yayınları, p. 279.

³ Bhabha (1990b: 297) points out a conceptual ambivalent split in the nationalist narratives between the people as “the historical subjects of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin or event” and the people who are “subjects of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principle of the people as that continual process by the national life is redeemed and signified as a repeating and reproductive process”.

⁴ See Kadioğlu, A. (1996). The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity. *Middle Eastern Studies*. 32(2): 177-193.

From this perspective, the thesis aspires to find out the answers of two main questions:

- How were the narratives of national culture and identity constructed or represented in the People's House of Kayseri, its branches and its cultural activities?
- How were these narratives developed in the interpretations, discourses and practices of the House's members/actors and responded in social and cultural life (everyday practices) of the local society?

Through analyzing these two questions, the thesis aims to explain three basic subproblems: How the Kayseri House influenced the relations between state and society or between center and province/periphery; who constituted the local society in Kayseri and what were their positions in the House; and how the Kayseri province (*taşra*)⁵ reacted to the construction, representation and diffusion of the invented cultural traditions and norms of the early republican regime. Although it is seemed that the state transformed the province with a planned and organized controlling top-down mechanism and province adopted to the policies without producing any forms of response to negotiate and cope with the state, the acts of introducing the central state's policies and reforms with society were differed according to regional and local identity of the province. Specifically, the 1930s and the 1940s, on which the thesis rests, are open to inconsistencies and fluctuations between being modern and being committed to the local identity. Thus, it may be claimed that province has influence on the state and its existence in peripheral regions. The borders of center-periphery relations or dichotomy begin to be vanished and province itself reveals its own local state-society relations and manifests different social dynamics inside of it. Besides, in the construction and definition of province, the official discourses reproduce themselves

⁵ The word 'province' is examined in some particular sources: T. Bora (eds.). (2005). *Taşraya Bakmak* (Looking at the Province). İstanbul: İletişim; A. Çiğdem. (2001). *Taşra Epiği* (The Epic of Province). İstanbul: Birikim Yayınları; Z. T. A. Süalp and A. Güneş (eds.). (2010). *Taşrada Var Bir Zaman* (A Time in the Province). İstanbul: Çitlembik Yayınları; Kitaplık. (2004). *Taşra* (Province). *Kitaplık Dergisi*. Issue: 73; Hece Öykü. (2010). *Taşranın Öyküsü, Öykünün Taşrası I-II* (The Story of Province, The Province of Story). *Hece Öykü Dergisi*. Issue: 40, 41.

and are represented in the looking of local urban elite who symbolizes the province in the elite oriented and nationalist texts (Laçiner, 2013; Türkeş, 2013).

In this sense, the thesis aims to examine how the Kayseri people received the modernization, secularization and nationalization policies of the republican regime but mostly by concentrating on the People's House experience in the periphery. The case of People's House of Kayseri situates in a highly important position for understanding social relations and daily dialogues between state, the local elites, city dwellers and society, the local people or peasants. It may be asserted that even today, because Kayseri, as a case/sample for making research on its local society about a professional elite class in terms of industrial and urban development and about the everyday practices of the people in the city and villages, is worthy to be taken into consideration, the image of the local society of Kayseri together with the Kayseri House in early Republican era is also noteworthy to uncover structures of provincial/local authority (local politics) and the provincial elites; practices of everyday life of the defined local society; and acts of spreading the Kemalist (political, economic, social and cultural) policies in the Kayseri province. Thus, it may be said about what the thesis implies that province was not deprived of the instruments to express itself and striking forms of peripheral subjectivity were highly visible in this so-called conservative (*kapalı*) province.⁶

1.1. Methodology

The research method of the thesis is composed of historical documents and primary sources relating to the Kayseri House and the Kayseri province. Therefore, texts which the House members produced during the period between 1930 and 1950 are considered in line with the Kemalist official discourse and limited to accounts and expressions of

⁶ “Now the task is to trace in their mutually conditioned historicities the specific forms that have appeared, on the one hand, in the domain defined by the hegemonic project of nationalist modernity, and on the other, in the numerous fragmented resistances to that normalizing project” (Chatterjee, 1993: 13).

the educated people; however, they will help to see the local/provincial dimensions and motives in the processes of national culture and identity constructed via the House.

I will try to develop assumptions on the People's House experience in the locality and on the related years when the Kayseri province met, faced and coped with the state and state imposed projects and social and cultural policies not just by relying on the data of the State Archive but by using a broader range of necessary sources such as the provincial newspaper and the House journal and also personal history sources (memoirs). There are also some sources including the House publications; contemporary local sources dealing with the local history of Kayseri and recent sociological-critical studies of Kayseri; and even novels telling the story of the Kayseri's early republican era.

First of all, the data on Kayseri and the Kayseri House as key words for the period between 1930 and 1950 was collected from the *State Archive*. The catalogue of the Republican People's Party was the one I reviewed. In the analysis study of this data, the Kemalist nationalistic narratives and discourses were searched and the interpretations of the House members were selected for understanding the language used by them and exploring the history of subjective practices in the House experience. The activity reports, inspector reports, and correspondences between the party center and the Kayseri party organization and between the party center and the Kayseri House were most studied and examined resources. The reports on village trips, selection of the House members or generally about the cultural-local studies and practices of the House were focused on during the thesis study. As for correspondences, some of the request and reply letters of the House members were reviewed and in these letters, the main focus was on the search for individual voices of the House actors. Also, there were many inspector reports about the Kayseri province written during the period. Since it was difficult to select the right and valid information on the Kayseri House, the data on the reactions to the local social change processes and if available, responses to the Kayseri House were scanned and the information found as relating to the the thesis was used. The other historical data relating to works of the provincial party organization (such as provincial elections) and of the provincial state agencies which

were considered not focusing on the House and its activities were excluded while analyzing the archival resources.

One of the most important sources utilized is the *Kayseri Vilayet* newspaper, a provincial newspaper published in Kayseri between 1925 and 1952. In the thesis, because the period the thesis relies on was between 1930 and 1950, articles (texts) in the newspaper that I employ included the social and cultural policies carried out in the Kayseri province and the Kayseri House; about local activities of the House and its branches; and about the interpretations of the authors who were mainly parts of the local society, composed of local supporters of the provincial party organization and also the members of the Kayseri House. None of visual materials in the newspaper were scanned and used in the thesis.

Another source which is highly cited in the thesis, the Kayseri House journal, *Erciyes* published between 1938 and 1950 is consisted of 7 volumes and 85 issues. All volumes and issues were reviewed and for understanding the construction of national culture and identity, I found some articles of the *Erciyes* journal worthy of notice. In this sense, the thesis separates the articles which are narrated in nationalist and republican ideals of the new regime into three categories in the context of local or provincial dynamics. The first category emphasizes the intentions/desires and claims of the authors on the questions of proper citizenship, folklore, art, local history, local dialect, religion and even the village question. It analyzes their discourses and narratives on these questions by re-explaining them in the contexts of nationalism, Turkishness and provinciality. The second category dwells on the answer letters of the journal editor to readers which are written especially in the late 1940s. It can be seen that readers make voice about the desired policies and interpretations of the authors and the editor. Therefore, they are worthy of notice to find out the discourse behind the responses of the House members and the people to each other. And the third category tries to discover whether there is any voice of the ordinary people or the people who are not members of the House and its branches and even frequenters of their cultural activities.

In this regard, except the official sources, texts of local people who do not take part in the House or its activities may give information about the period and the province and

contribute to *non-official* literature of the People's Houses, even though they are very scarce because finding and collecting them needs to make a broad research. The lack of non-official historical sources causes to reread the state and elite oriented literature of the Kayseri province and the Kayseri House for revealing voices and experiences of the ordinary people. In this sense, it will be tried in the thesis to critically analyze the narratives and interpretations of the House members presented in their texts.

1.2. Literature Review

The thesis focuses on to what extent the ruling party and the central state affected the local society and how the local society welcomed the state, the state-imposed social and cultural policies and its mediating institutions. In this regard, it attempts to contribute to the studies which examine the nationalization of modernizing and civilizing processes and policies in the localities with much more local, regional and social history oriented analyses and approaches. That is, the language employed by the locals and their everyday experiences and practices which refer to different forms of subjectivity and identity formation will be discussed by detailing them in the case of the Kayseri province and mainly by relating them to the Kayseri House experience.

The studies and researches which approach to the literature of the early republican period alternatively have emphasized the importance of the local and social histories and thus the role and position of everyday encounters in the situations of using and coping with (or make do with⁷) the Kemalist policies and the state's educating and enlightening ideological spaces. Therefore, these studies I will illustrate briefly are worthy mentioned because they offer more comprehensive and inclusive approaches to the social transformation projects this thesis endeavors to make in the case of the Kayseri province in the reform diffusion period of the early republican Turkey. For

⁷ For a better understanding of 'making do' in the subaltern studies, see Necmi Erdoğan. (1999/2000). Devleti 'İdare etmek': Maduniyet ve Düzenbazlık. *Toplum ve Bilim* 83: 8-31.

instance, Hale Yılmaz (2013)⁸ evaluates the state initiated social and cultural reforms produced for making the nation modern and receptions of the people at the provincial levels. She examines the everyday actual experiences of woman, man and youth, meaning to how they negotiated with and responded to the Kemalist reforms and modernizing and nationalizing processes. Yılmaz focuses on these experiences in the cases of women's and men's clothing regulations, alphabet and language reform attempts, collective participation of citizens to the national holidays. Gavin D. Brockett (2011) analyzes the provincial newspapers in the Anatolian provinces because as Brockett (2011: 8-9) stated "these newspapers facilitated a negotiation between the elite nationalist vision of the nation and popular conceptions of identity". Another important study made by U. Ümit Üngör and based on a particular locality presents a broad aspect of the nation-building processes and nationalist homogenizing policies of the Young Turk regime in the period between 1913 and 1950 in the Diyarbakir province (Üngör, 2011)⁹. Üngör (2011: 200-4) also attempts to explore popular reception of educational and cultural policies and even questions the memory construction in Diyarbakir. In a recent study (Adak, 2015), everyday practices of the local elite and ordinary people while coping with the unveiling campaigns have been argued, while in another study (Metinsoy, 2010a), for uncovering the history from below, more detailed analysis of the ordinary people including mostly the working class and the peasantry has been made to show how the ordinary people responded to the state imposed measures and policies through their challenging and reappropriating tactics and practices. In all these studies, practices, 'voices' of the local elites and the ordinary people in the provinces expand scope of the literature of the early republican period by exploring beyond the state-centered, elitist accounts and official and nationalist narratives and discourses in order for "drawing our attention to those easily obscured, but highly significant, recesses of the national culture from which alternative constituencies of people and oppositional analytic capacities may emerge – youth, the

⁸ The title of her dissertation, published later as a book was "Reform, Social Change and State-Society Encounters in Early Republican Turkey (University of Utah, 2006)".

⁹ The title of his dissertation was "Young Turk Social Engineering: Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey, 1913-1950 (University of Amsterdam, 2009)".

everyday, nostalgia, new ‘ethnicities’, new social movements, ‘the politics of difference’” (Bhabha, 1990a: 3).

As the mediating institutions of the ruling party and the central state in the romanticized Anatolian provinces, the People’s Houses were imagined and founded as a socialization, meeting places in order to diffuse the social and cultural change policies and projects to the people and indoctrinate the new national and cultural identity of the republican regime in the minds and even the souls of the masses. The masses were targets of modernity, civilization and progress but mainly of nation-building discourses and narratives. In this regard, in the official discourse (literature) of the Houses, they were designated to bridge the gap between the intellectuals and the people and between the city dwellers and the peasants and thus between the state and the society. However, this conceptualization of bridge reproduced the categories of backward and modern or illiterate and civilized and even center-periphery dichotomy in the discourses used by the official texts narrating the story of the Houses, its organizational structures and the House nine branches and their cultural activities. The sources including the House bylaws, activity reports, the House publications and the House journals appear like information handbooks of what the Houses are meant to be in the context of nationalist discourse. And studies and works on the Houses and their activities have also been stuck on the state-centered and elite oriented accounts of these sources.¹⁰ The questions of voices of the local society and the ordinary people and responses of them to the provincial House experience have not been argued and neglected.

Besides, there are some works which critically analyze the House project in Turkey by focusing on the Houses and their activities from state centered or regime oriented perspectives. K. Karpat (1963, 1974) evaluates the Houses, their organizational

¹⁰ Some of them are as follows: Türk Tarih Kurumu. (1974). *Atatürk ve Halkevleri*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi; Bayraktar, N. (1999). *Halkevlerinin Ülke Kültürüne İnsanın Gelişimi ve Dönüşümü Açısından Katkıları*. Ankara: Halkevi Yayınları; Çeçen, A. (1990). *Atatürk'ün Kültür Kurumu Halkevleri*, Ankara: Gündoğan; Özacun, O. (1996). Halkevlerinin Dramı. *Kebikeç*, Vol. 2, Issue: 3, pp. 87-96; Türkoğlu, Ö. (1996). Halkevlerinin Kuruluş Amaçları, Örgütsel Yapısı ve Bazı Uygulamaları. *Kebikeç*, Vol. 2, Issue: 3, pp. 97-103; Öztürk, A. A. (1999). Cumhuriyet İdeolojisini Halka Yayma Girişimleri: Halkevleri ve Aydın Halkevi. *Tarih ve Toplum*. 31(182): 42-50; Yüksel, A. (1996). Merzifon Halkevi ve Taşan Dergisi. *Kebikeç*, Vol. 2, Issue: 3, pp. 169-188.

functions and top-down mechanism between the central journal, Ülkü and other House journals. N. Güz (1995) mentions the ideological impact of the House journals and the controlling aspect of Ülkü. A. Öztürkmen (1994) and Y. Kaptan (2006) evaluates the Houses and their folklore studies by dealing with transformative policies of the House journals in modernizing folkloric elements. M. A. Karaömerlioğlu (1999) mainly argues the peasantist policy produced in the Houses and S. Şimşek (2002, 2005) evaluates the Houses as the regime's reform project for ideological mobilization of the nation. N. G. Yeşilkaya (2003), E. Ari (2004) and Ö. Çeliktemel-Thomen (2015) assess the House project in terms of its ideological roots and influences by dwelling upon subjects such as theatre, cinema and architecture. They have not specifically mentioned the ways that local social actors, local urban elites and mainly the ordinary people experience the Houses and use functioning of the Houses in the provinces. It is argued that the Houses did not manage to bridge the gap between the state and society and the Houses hardly influenced the lives of the people (or peasants) and became just the meeting places of the republican elites, party members. It is emphasized that the ruling party had huge impact and control on the Houses. The questions of what actually local people reacted and how they coped with the House experience in the provinces are not discussed. On the other side, the work of E. B. Fındıklı (2014) deals with the problematic sides of state centered perspectives on the House experience of Turkey and mentions that voices of individuals are neglected in the historiography of the People's Houses. The position taking of the House members and even those not taking part in the Houses has been missing in the literature. His work does not disclose individual positions in the Houses but he underlines need and importance of interdisciplinary researches relating to subjectivity in the Houses.

In this respect, there is a need for studying on how both the House members/actors (e.g. appointed state officials, civil servants, local urban elites) and local ordinary people received and responded to messages conveyed by the central state and the party center; the Kemalist cultural modernizing and nationalizing policies introduced through the provincial Houses; and practices/activities of the provincial Houses in the periphery in terms of incorporating the Turkish nation based on modern and civilized citizens. This kind of need is significantly tackled in the thesis of A. Lamprou who

examines and evaluates the People's Houses in local social contexts and gives useful comprehensive information to develop my arguments with his analysis on the Kayseri House primarily for 'moving beyond' discursive categories and dichotomies of the nationalist texts. Lamprou's study¹¹ sheds light on, in his words, "the Halkevi as an arena, space, stage and medium through, within and upon which social categories, as well as related discourses and social practices, are enforced, contested, refused, evaded, reproduced, constructed, manipulated" (Lamprou, 2009: 21-2). He analyzes and assesses the People's Houses of Kayseri and Balıkesir as case studies in order for drawing the picture of the local society and mapping the presence of social actors (local and non-local) in the provinces and the local party organizations in the Houses. He questions social actors' use and consumption of the House experience in the provinces and attempts to explore the forms of everyday practices while involving in the House activities the social actors employed.

Lamprou makes arguments on the Kayseri House firstly by focusing on the individual positions taken by selected House members who were mostly bureaucrats and local notables. He selects six (three male and three female) House members and studies their texts in order to show how they experience the House project in Kayseri. He examines the texts of three non-local educated authors (the novel of C. Kudret and book of N. S. Örik) who comments on the Kayseri city, the local people and even the Kayseri House as to reflect that local and non-local actors behave differently when confronting with the local forces and the House project. And secondly, Lamprou dwells on the village trips of the Kayseri House and discourses on the village policy of the House. He asserts that the villagist (peasantist) discourses reestablish the border between the House members and villagers. In this sense, it may be stated that his evaluations on the Kayseri House mostly relate to attempts made throughout his dissertation to show that the House space is a joint place of state and society.

¹¹ Alexandros Lamprou. (2009). *Between Central State and Local Society. The People's Houses Institution and the Domestication of Reform in Turkey (1932 - 1951)*. PhD. Dissertation, Department of Turkish Studies, Leiden: Leiden University. For the book published based on the dissertation, see Alexandros Lamprou. (2015). *Nation-Building in Modern Turkey: The 'People's Houses', the State and the Citizen*. London: IB Tauris.

What distinguishes my thesis from Lamprou's study¹² in terms of making analysis on the Kayseri House is that my arguments focus on not only the Kayseri House, its actors as members and participants and their practices in the House but also the everyday life experiences in the Kayseri province as well as the local reception of nationalizing and modernizing policies of the regime in the 1930s and 1940s. I have also aimed and will try to shed light on the nationalist (or Turkist) and conservative modernist interpretations and discourses of local actors who engaged in the House experience, carried out the House cultural activities and besides sought to implement official regulations that the House bylaws and the party center demanded from them. The articles including subjects such as health (hygiene), sport, womanhood, religion and folklore in the Erciyes journal, for instance, are noteworthy to show this kind of discourses and voices of the local actors/authors of the Kayseri House. Therefore, even though Lamprou's study has significantly contributed to both the literature of early republican period of Turkey and the People's Houses literature in Turkey with his alternative perspectives, this thesis depends much more upon a specific (selected) Anatolian province in the 1930s and 1940s where the central state found a potential for introducing its statist policies and modernizing projects such as the Kayseri House and for using the local privileged (conservative) notables and elites to make the periphery more complied with the republican ideals but where the fiction met with the fact.¹³ This thesis also presents an alternative but limited (due to lack of non-official sources) analysis of the local social history of the Kayseri province by delving into the provincial patterns and peculiarities and the Kayseri House experience and thus will contribute the studies and literature based on the city, Kayseri.

¹² Lamprou mostly relies on the archival data especially on the complaint and request letters in his study on the People's Houses. For his articles on denunciation and petitioning in Turkey, see A. Lamprou. (2007). 'CHP Genel Sekreterliği Yüksek Makamına': 30'lu ve 40'lü Yıllarda Halkevleri'yle ilgili CHP'ye Gönderilen Şikayet ve Dilek Mektupları Üzerine Kısa bir Söz. *Kebikeç* 23: 381-397. A. Lamprou. (2017). Political Petitioning, Denunciation, and State-Society Relations during the Single-Party Period in Turkey. *Turkish Studies*. 18(3): 514-541.

¹³ J. S. Migdal. (2014). Olgü ve Kurgunun Buluşma Zemini. In Bozdoğan ve Kasaba (Eds.). *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*. 4th edition, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.

As for literature and works on the Kayseri House¹⁴, they evaluate the House experience in Kayseri in the same way as the official nationalist discourse on People's Houses imply. It is understood from these works that like the other Houses did, the Kayseri House made so many activities and publications (together with its journal, Erciyes) for achieving the aims of the party and the House's nine branches worked efficiently for ensuring national solidarity and spread of the reforms. These works reflect informative analyses of the Kayseri House in which the collected official data on reasons behind its establishment and closure; the House chairmen and some of lists of its members; its branches and activities and also on information about some of articles in the Erciyes journal are detailed in accordance with official language used in the House publications, bylaws or activity reports. They all neglect the narratives of the House experience, voices and interpretations of the House members and do not rely on the local context.

1.3. Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized around four main chapters. Chapter Two focuses on the analysis of the Kemalist cultural policies of the 1930s and 1940s, the brief description of the People's Houses, their organizational and administrative structures and the House branches and their functions in the context of official texts on the Houses. Instead of detailing the policies and reforms one by one, the chapter interprets the reasons of why these imposed policies were initiated in the 1930s and 1940s, that is, the nationalistic history behind the establishment of the People's Houses. Then, the

¹⁴ A. Esenkaya. (2001). Cumhuriyet Dönemi Kayseri Kültüründe Halkevi Dergisi: Erciyes (1938-1950). *I. Kayseri ve Yöresi Kültür, Sanat ve Edebiyat Bilgi Şöleni: Bildiriler*. Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü Yayınları. Ö. Duman. (2003). Kayseri'nin Sosyo-Kültürel Yaşamında Halkevi'nin Yeri (1932-1950). *IV. Kayseri ve Yöresi Tarih Sempozyumu Bildirileri*. Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Kayseri ve Yöresi Tarih Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayını. F. Çalık. (2003). *Halkevi Dergiciliğine Bir Örnek Kayseri Halkevi Neşriyatı: Erciyes*. MA Thesis, Istanbul University. M. Şanal. (Fall 2004). Türk Kültür Tarihi içerisinde Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri. (1932 - 1950). *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, Issue: 161; M. Şanal. (2006). Atatürk Döneminde Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri (1932-1938). *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 22: 261-292; M. Şanal. (2007). *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*. Kayseri: Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları; M. Şanal. (2011/2). Atatürk Döneminde Kayseri Halkevi Tarafından Düzenlenen Köy Gezileri. *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 31: 299-315.

organizational structures of Houses, the official regulations on how the House was administrated and carried out and also the House branches and their aims are discussed in the chapter in order not to draw the general framework of the Houses but to show that the Houses and the branches were given obligations and duties they had to fulfill and to question to what extent they actually fulfilled these duties. The chapter, lastly, turns the focus to the state-society relations but also center-periphery dichotomy in terms of the Houses because the thesis mainly argues social dynamics of locality and their impact on the House experience. Therefore, the questions of how the state affected the society via the Houses and what kind of society was imagined in the Houses are dealt with in the chapter.

Chapter Three firstly draws the picture of the local society in the Kayseri province, dwelling on the influence of the provincial elite families and the local party members on the House operation and administration in the periphery. It is attempted to question whom was supposed to be and included in the local people. Then, the position of the provincial party organ and the importance of party membership in the Kayseri House is discussed along with social actors of the House and their weight in the House membership and administration. The House actors who coped with the House experience and took part in the activities were sometimes composed of civil servants, teachers or sometimes farmers or landowners; because of that, the chapter attempts to look at the presence of local and non-local people and their professions. Also, the chapter discusses and questions the dimension of the party center's control over the House administration, functioning and its activities. It is argued that the party was severely authoritarian on the way the House operated and carried out or the party center was somehow indifferent to what the House members did for delivering the message of the state to the local people. Lastly, the chapter focuses on the Kayseri House nine branches and their cultural activities. Particularly, the related branches of the House the thesis has found worthy to mention are dealt with so as to show how the House activities were adapted to the geographical, social and cultural (or folkloric) conditions and elements of the Kayseri province.

Chapter Four mainly examines and analyzes the selected articles of the Erciyes journal, designated for the claim of being local speaker of the House and its activities. The journal is quite important to see the voices and interpretations of the House members and actors on the local (popular) reception of the Kemalist cultural policies and to observe how the moralistic-nationalist discourses were employed by the authors of the journal. In the first section, the answers of the journal to its readers are discussed and with these answers, the voices of social actors and their reactions to the House and its journal are heard. In the second section, the perceptions of writers about the issues such as the national and physical education of youth, hygiene, eugenics, degeneration and even the gendered roles of woman imagined as the modern civilized mother, daughter and sister of the Turkish nation are dealt with. The third section explores the secularizing discourses used by the writers in the Kayseri province and the voices of the House members on the nationalization of religion. The fourth section dwells on to what extent the nationalist modernist official discourse was included in the writings of the journal authors on the folkloric materials of the Kayseri province, folk poems and poets and also on theatre or theatre stage. In the case of theatre stage, the presence of woman is also worthy questioned so as to understand the local women's response to the House experience in the province. In the fifth section, writings on the language and history reforms are examined. In these writings, primarily use of the label 'Turkishness' and the implementation acts of writers on the purification of language are main points the thesis deals with. And the last section focuses on the village policy of the Kayseri House and its narration in the House journal. The images of village life, peasants or the Turkish countryside and the looking of writers and members of the House at them from the peasantist perspectives are questioned in the context of representation and definition of the villages and villagers.

Chapter Five is composed of three leading sections that trace the distinct voices of the House actors, reveal discontenting language of the local people and besides decode the silent (hidden) practices and invisible acts (tactics) of those by whom the state imposed policies and reforms were reappropriated, negotiated, accommodated, avoided, consumed or used and reused in the Kayseri province. The first section of the chapter attempts to manifest the ways the House members, as the social subjects of everyday

practices in the House, engaged in and received the House experience and its activities and find out reasons of why they seemed to voluntarily participate in the House project and why woman membership became problematic in the context of the Kayseri House. The involvement of woman in the House activities and even presence of woman are discussed in detailed in this section. The second section focuses on the opposing and conflicting circles of the local elites who interpreted the House experience in different ways and on competing interests of local groups and individuals for possessing supremacy in local politics and obtaining power in the province. In the third section, the thesis aspires to uncover the untold history, history from below, mainly, the voices and daily practices (mostly resistances) of peasants, workers, the poor and ordinary woman in the Kayseri province. These people as the targets of the republican regime and state initiated policies and measures expressed themselves not directly but through the official languages employed in the sources the thesis has relied on. Also, their personal narratives are taken into consideration in this section in order for showing the actual stories behind the acts of implementing and adopting the cultural policies and even experiencing the House and its activities.

CHAPTER 2

BETWEEN KEMALIST NATIONALISM AND MODERNIZATION: THE PEOPLE'S HOUSES AS THE INSTITUTIONS OF CULTURAL INDOCTRINATION

The ideological motive behind establishment of the People's Houses bears on the implementation, adaptation of the cultural reforms; smooth enforcement of principal aims and rules; and representation and reproduction of invented traditions, all of which were in accordance with demands and myths of the newly emerged regime and the ruling party. The party's ideologies are deemed materializing in the social activities and programs of the Houses. The basic targeted goals of the Houses such as reaching to the supposed exalted people, eliminating the alleged gap between the Kemalist republican intellectuals and the people, fusing the subjects of an imagined Turkish nation under a cultural umbrella and also creating good and civilized-educated masses (from adults to the youth) are situated in the position and role taking attempts of the House officials. This understanding, as a matter of fact, points to the official language in which the standard normative statements used to show so-called successes and controlling force of the Houses in the periphery reveal the Kemalist aspect of the House experience. In the Kemalist and nationalistic outlook of the Houses, the people are the subjects of national education, homogeneity of culture, and formation of the ideal Turkishness that is, the process of to be a nation-state and to have a common history and language. In this respect, to find out reasons behind the acts of making the Houses directed towards the people, it is worthy to discuss the nationalizing and modernizing meanings of the Kemalist policies of 1930s and 1940s. Analyzing the period between the 1930s and 1940s will be important to answer the questions of what the Kemalist bureaucrats and intelligentsia envisaged for the Houses, how the party center influenced and monitored them or why it needed such a cultural 'public' space.

Also, the period is important to grasp whether the Houses became or were not able to become the party center's cultural divisions or ideological state apparatuses in the provinces of the homeland. In this chapter, then, institutional structure of the House project and functioning of the House branches will be stated briefly in order for having related them to the local dynamics and settings of the House politics. Lastly, through conceptualizing and contextualizing the term 'province', the debates dealing with relationship of the center and the periphery and the claim of state-society connection will be argued. From the provincial perspective of the argument on the House experience, it will be meaningful to assert that the localness of the Houses gave rise to multiple, ambiguous and non-dualistic interpretations and that the desires of the state were reversed when it came across with the actual conditions and the everyday practices.

2.1. Identifying the Turkish Nationalism and Inventing the Modernized Way of Life: Kemalist Cultural Policies of 1930s and 1940s

For a new definition of Turkish culture, the Kemalist (official) ideology drew the boundaries of the national identity, the state of being a proper Turkish citizen or who are the Turkish people. The mythical image of the supposed Turkish people was constituted in morally and socially entailed categorizations of national culture and placed in the conceptions of the sense of belonging, unity and even solidarity. With newly created cultural meanings and symbols on the imagined Turkish nation for covering the backwardness, narrow-mindedness and belatedness of homeland, the Kemalist nationalism tended to bring the people into more civilized and modern levels. In a reversed and reshaped public sphere in which having strong sturdy body, following the republican morals and feeling responsible for the Turkish revolution were prevailing, the exalted people would be pedagogically educated, committed to the republican ideals and filled with national sentiments, causes to fulfill the desired nationalist and patriotic duties. The people, members of the holy Turkish nation were assumed the owners of culture and civilization existing earlier in the Anatolian

peninsula. Ziya Gökalp who marked an idea of synthesis which is bounded on a 'modern Islamic Turkish identity' also gave inspiration to the official nationalism for the construction of national official culture. This myth of the Turkish national identity had been considered as a consolidating ideal for the new regime in the establishment of the Republic (Parla, 1993). There had been no any obstacle to civilize and enlighten an imagined nation in which both the Western and Islamic elements would complete to one another and combine with each other. Nevertheless, the Ottoman and Islamic past, ashes or remains were not in harmony with the renewing and reconstructing aspects and principles of the Kemalist nationalism.

The nation-state building process was firstly attached to the political centralization of power in the locality through the symbolization of Turkish people and the Anatolian culture but by excluding the backward-superstitious beliefs and thoughts. Secondly, it was based upon a cultural transformation through modernizing ideologies of the Western civilization. Beginning in the late 1920s, the state issued socially and culturally absorbing reforms and challenging policies that were assumed to awaken and guide the supposed people for future of the Turkish revolution. According to the Kemalist cadres and intelligentsia, the common history, language and thus collective consciousness were required for progress in the mind and soul of the people. In other words, formal introduction of the Kemalist defined cultural polices was characterized in rediscovery of what was good and right and bad and uncivilizing (immoral) for the exalted Turkish people. From men to women of the Turkish people, every good citizen needed to conform themselves to the state imposed cultural reforms by learning the tenets of the new regime and being educated according to them.

In this respect, introducing new cultural meanings to religion and to the Islamic identity of one "who is saying I am Turk" was accompanied by secularizing education, language and even everyday life. Though it was supposed to "dethrone Islam in favor of a secular national identity" (Cagaptay, 2006: 52), on the other side, it was to transform/reform and regulate or rearrange the predominant systems and manners (peculiar to Ottoman-Islamic legacy) or moral and religious social traditions of the population. The depiction of Islamic sociopolitical order as the prominent element of

backwardness or "the past" was replaced by the depiction of revolutionary sociopolitical order as the fundamental structure of modern secular national enlightening Turkish state. That is to say, "republican reforms contained anti-religious themes or in the words of Mardin showed a clear distaste for religion" (Kadıoğlu, 1996: 188); however, the Turkish Republican state preferred to "politicize religion by taking it under state's own control" (Kurtoğlu, 2009: 619). In this sense, it is stressed that secularism was not simply to separate religion from state or to repress the people's religious traditions because the Kemalist founding cadres, keeping in mind the religious Islamic roots of the population, perceived religion and religious way of life as the leading symbols and allegories of order in general to enable the adoption of nationalization of Islam¹⁵ and in particular to legitimize nationalist secularizing discourses, rhetoric and assertions of the Turkish state and the regime party on national identity and culture.

Kemalist principle of secularism and state-led secularizing reforms were developed in the modernization (modernity) process in order to nationalize religion, but also to transform the public sphere and social practices meaning "worship", 'everydayness' of the ordinary citizen. This indicates that the endeavor to promote a Turkish national religion (and Islam) was put on the agenda politically but mostly due to political worries about reception of the secular reformist policies especially in interwar period. Besides, after the death of Atatürk and in the aftermath of the second world war, the question of religion and Islam would be reviewed by the Kemalist discourse in order for lessening the increasing effect of social reactions and public opposition. The secular policies of the RPP on religion and Islam awakened the traditional, conservative and Islamic disempowered circles and strengthened the area of the conservative-nationalist political opposition. The debates of the late 1940s on secularism also occupied the political agenda of the (party) center which remarked that "the RPP's [Republican People's Party] new political strategies concerning religion in the context

¹⁵ For a discussion of nationalization of Islam, see Tamer Balci, (2009). From Nationalization of Islam to Privatization of Nationalism: Islam and Turkish National Identity. *History Studies: International Journal of History* 1(1), pp. 82-107.

of competitive multi-party politics had contradicted its own commitment to secularism" (Azak, 2010: 64).

The Kemalist intellectuals had worry and unease of getting disconnected from "our traditions and the past" because of some disruptive changes or trends believed to affect the pure Turkish language and national culture especially damaging the future generation, the republican youth. This worry arose from the conservative, in a certain extent, anti-American but also anti-communist (and also anti-materialist) mentality (Cantek, 2013: 60-3). As a matter of fact, the conservative interpretations were derived from the populist connotations, early republican conservative discourses¹⁶ (İrem, 1997; 2006) of the late 1920s and the 1930s and were nourished through nationalist imaginations and representations for the survival of traditional Turkish folk cultures and of the exalted pure Turkish people in the 1940s (Bora and Erdoğan, 2006; Çınar, 2013).

The cultural revolutionary policies of the state were situated in a mythical narration of language and history in both republican and nationalist discourses of the Kemalist intelligentsia. The imagery of the pure Turkish citizen was designated with dramatized narratives of the pure authentic Turkish language of the existing Anatolian people. Within symbolic guidance of the Turkish nationalism, the map of Turkishness involving a national consciousness, national language and a newly created common memory was redrawn with "the constitution of a "national" past in Turkish history". "The fact that both the spoken and, more fundamentally, the written language were transformed and the script changed from Arabic to Latin, meant that historical memory became excessively difficult to maintain" (Işık, 2011). And, the enthusiasm for a symbolic past entailed in ethnic and historical superiority myth of the Turkish race or tribe continued to be a given state of interest in slogans of both the republican and conservative nationalist discourses between the thirties and the early forties. In this sense, it was given a particular importance to reveal the relationship between the Turkish tribe and the Anatolian people so that the regime's aim to construct the

¹⁶ According to N. İrem (2002: 100), the early republican conservative approach to the Kemalism focused mainly on "national folk tradition as a historical source for the new code of religiosity".

national unity and raise romantic nationalist sentiments would be survived via the sense of belonging to an imagined homeland (Bora, 2007). The process of constructing Turkish national identity needed to be maintained and suited with the exaggerated image of Turks who are great, civilized, noble citizens of a nation and with the activities and some basic means awaking the national sentiments of the people (Bora, 1996: 189-190).

On the other hand, the nation-building process and the enforcement of the cultural policies were seemed not to be reaching and touching to the people in the provinces and countryside as planned and aimed. The ideal nationalist goals to disseminate national culture and fuse the nation-state with the Turkish society led the ruling party to take more authoritarian and controlling measures at the local levels. The RPP paid its attention on the consolidation of power in the state-controlled institutions and even in newly established provincial culture centers in the mid-1930s. The party regulated measures were dependent upon control of the center to public and private lives of the ordinary people in the locality and upon demand of mass support for “the sake of unifying forces” (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999: 68) and for creating a joint society. The myth of populist and ideological mobilization gained impetus with the idea of founding public spaces where the party social programs and principles, the cultural policies and reforms would be received through popular education which was to eliminate the people’ ignorance about the Turkish revolution. In this sense, a picture of the People’s Houses was depicted as new public spaces for providing cultural unity but intentionally bridge the gap between the intellectuals, republican elites and the ordinary people. While it was decided to establish the Houses, the position of the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*) which were also aiming to spread nationalist consciousness became controversial and as Karpat argues, the Hearths “seemed to have lost touch with the pulse of life in the Republic”. They were closed and replaced by the Houses which was more based on “expanding modernization in all fields” and “indoctrination of the nationalist secularist ideas” (Karpat, 1963: 55-58).

2.2. Functions and Organizational Structure of the People's Houses

Coupled with the official educational institutions, the People's Houses were the fundamental centers of national education ideology (Sakaoğlu, 1993: 51). The Houses officials and members would practice many activities in order to ensure a homogenous mass in which every person would be belonging to the common identity, culture, history (origin) and language. They would educate people to be moral, civilized, patriotic or proper citizens (Üstel, 2004: 174-5). Furthermore, as the written resources of the new regime, textbooks, magazines, newspapers and the House journals were the main ideological means to creation of the new citizen employed by the Houses. All of them put excessive emphasis on fields and spaces that the state could not enter directly and easily. The re-establishment of the new true Turkish nation with the revolutionary/modern policies, reforms and new values led to the re-definition of many core issues involving youth, woman, health, sport and even morality. In addition, art was rearranged and reviewed according to the national ideals and modernization projects; culture was considered in terms of diffusion of nationalization and modernization into the local folk Anatolian culture and traditions; and folklore or folk culture was seen as the main instrument to educate the public, raise the national sentiment and transform the popular consciousness into its invented and shared national modern and secular version. This is why the paradox based on the duality between the modernized and the nationalized has brought many important arguments to the literature of the early republican period. It resembles the contradictoriness of Turkish nationalism which focuses on, as A. Kadioğlu points out, “the adoption of a Westernization project while at the same time clinging on to distinctive cultural traits” (Kadioğlu, 1996: 185).

In functioning of the Houses, it is understood that the perpetuation of the republican state was depended on the faith and loyalty of the young and adult people. For instance, although the Houses were designated to educate adults, the youth was also seen as the most considerable study area for testing the changes and reforms of the regime. Because the youth was perceived as the young masses shaping the future and inclined to adopt the new regime with all its principles, acts and practices carried out to create

the republican children. Therefore, national education/pedagogy in the Kemalist context of the Houses is concerned with both the "old" and "new" Turkish person (Kasaba, 2014).

Enabling the declared nationalization and modernization motives and projects to become easily accommodated in provincial and rural areas, the People's Houses employed the official ideology in the socio-cultural activities of their branches and the journals published or the House publications written on different topics of Kemalist populist-nationalist myth making in the periphery. Each House was regarded as the cultural organs in which the local public would engage in and incorporate into the social transformation and regulation policies of the party regime. They carried out works and took actions for giving strength to the civilization, Westernization and progression (positivist approach) processes in the context of unifying the public nationally. "Among the widely practiced activities of the Houses were conferences and orations, concerts and music courses, theatrical performances, entertainment and family meetings, daily excursions and visits to villages, ceremonies, festive events and processions, public courses and exhibitions, contests and races, radio broadcasts and film shows" (Şimşek, 2005: 78).

The Houses undertook the national duties and causes to convey the ideological messages of the party center to the Anatolian provinces. And in order to teach the local people about the official ideological messages, it was needed to have educated privileged people who would conduct the Houses according to the rules, orders and obligations as dictated in the House Bylaws. Because the Houses were considered under the direct influence of the republican party and the state, those educated people were mainly composed of the members of the local party organizations, governors, schoolteachers, civil servants, that is, the local enlightened urban intelligentsia of the country. The House chairmen were elected by the local party administrative committee and the local party administrative committee members had a duty of electing the chairman of the Executive Board of the Houses "composed of the heads of those activity sections having more than ten members. The Board members and the heads of the activity sections were also members of the Party" (Karpat, 1963: 59-60). Besides,

in 1932 Bylaws, the local party organizations were obliged to approve and inspect the budget and financial situations of the Houses but in 1940 House Bylaws, the executive board of the Houses were given right to keep the House's accounts and record them in the registerbook.

The Administrative Committee of each House communicates with the Party's Provincial Administration Boards on financial and local administrative matters, and with the Party's General Secretariat on issues related to the duties and activities of the Sections shown in the regulation books of the sections. The budget of each House is ratified by the Party's provincial Administration Committee (as quoted in Lamprou, 2009: 49-50).

The Executive Boards of the Houses were also required to send the activity report of the House branches to the General Secretariat of the party. And the Houses chairmen were responsible to send the hardcopy of the House budget to the General Secretariat.

Furthermore, the money for constructing buildings of the Houses was to be given by the provincial party administrative committee. In this respect, for solving problem of the House building, a bureau dealing with the construction of the new House buildings and preparation of the House building projects was founded in the General Secretariat. This bureau was carrying out a building program and with this program, the Houses would acquire the money they needed to construct a new House. However, complexities of and criticisms on financial spendings on the House buildings gave rise to malfunction of the program and slowdowns in the construction processes (Yeşilkaya, 2003: 136-7).

Consequently, the People's Houses were regarded as the cultural agents of the party in the provinces, inviting the people to take part even when they had spare times:

Outside domestic and working life, a new meeting space is constituted. New entertainment understandings, dance, music, theatre are employed as tools for dissemination of the Kemalism. Ballrooms for musical family meetings woman and man coexist, music halls; theatre halls for indoctrinating; sport halls and courts for sturdy, healthy new generation; meeting halls for new generation who listens, thinks and talks; activity rooms of the branches for

working and producing together; libraries for indoctrinating the pleasure of reading are designed (Yeşilkaya, 2009: 114).

2.2.1. The Basic Characteristics of the Leading Branches

In the Houses, nine branches were formed to make the party programs and ideologies attached to the different fields of activity and make the citizens internalized them by taking part, participating in the activities and working for these branches. The administrative committees of the House branches were able to prepare their own activity programs and regulations and each branch was entitled to set up sub-committees for solving problems relevant to their activities (Şimşek, 2002: 79). The Houses contained such branches as follows: Language, History and Literature Branch; Fine Arts Branch; Theatre (Drama) Branch; Sports Branch; Social Assistance Branch; Public Classes and Courses Branch; Library and Publication Branch; Peasantism (Village Development) Branch; and Museum and Exhibitions Branch. In the 1940 bylaws, the first and the last branches were changed. The title ‘history’ was given to the last branch in order to associate archeological examination of the Turkish history with museum studies and the title ‘exhibition’ was removed.

The Language and Literature Branch is to hold conferences, lectures, national and remembrance ceremonies and arrange speeches dealing with the party principles, the Turkish revolutionary attempts and popular education. These conferences and speeches are broadcasted on radio to make them reachable to the local listeners. It is also a cultural instrument to carry out the duty of implementing the language reform in the locality by collecting pure Turkish words and making researches on the local accents and dialects for purifying the Turkish language of the people. It is also the place where the House publications and journals were drafted and printed (Şimşek, 2002: 80-1; Yeşilkaya, 2003: 81-4; Lamprou, 2009: 50).

The Fine Arts Branch is obliged to ensure the national songs and marches being learned by the masses. Art is under the influence of the revolutionary spirit and nationalized on the behalf of raising the culture level of the people. The taste of the

audiences is rearranged for accepting the Western musics and instruments. It is aimed that together with national dances, western dances are performed. Also, the branch organizes concerts, music nights and programs or art exhibitions and works for teaching painting, sculpture, that is, modernized art forms in accordance with national sentiments and values. And it is not acceptable to use *saz* (an Anatolian stringed instrument), *ut* (a kind of lute) or *ney* (a kind of reed flute) while singing the folk songs (Yeşilkaya, 2003: 85-93).

In *the Theatre Branch*, it is important to write and perform national and patriotic theatrical plays. This branch is required to have a theatre group containing both male and female members. It is even not acceptable to give female roles to male members. In addition, the branch ought to have film projector to show approved and ideologically political films for conveying the party principles to the people. The stage plays are also carried to the villages in order to inculcate the republican values and ideals in the mind of the Turkish villagers (Yeşilkaya, 2003: 94-8).

The Sports Branch pays attention on the physical education and health of the people who are needed to have sturdy, strong, robust or brave bodies. National sports like wrestling, javelin throw on horse, hunting are supported and developed. The modern sports are also to be taught: “fencing with the assistance of army officers, boxing; moreover, cycling, winter sports and skiing in particular, and sea sports, especially swimming” (Lamprou, 2009: 51).

The Social Assistance Branch is obliged to give guidances to the society for raising their helping emotions and for finding ways to help the needy people. Medical treatments, finding jobs, fighting against beggary or teaching people about hygiene and public health are the issues concerned by the branch (Şimşek, 2002: 84; Yeşilkaya, 2003: 100-1).

The Public Classes and Courses Branch make the Kemalist local enlightened people in charge to give everyday life practice oriented information and professional training to the masses in order for eliminating the people’s ignorance. Insead of the Persian or

Arabian languages, courses on foreign languages are deemed suitable to reach to the civilized levels (Yeşilkaya, 2009: 116).

In *the Library and Publication Branch*, it is aimed to replace coffeehouses with libraries. The people needs to read books allowed and approved by the party. In the House Bylaw, instruction that "what kind of books" ought not to be found in the People's House library is openly dictated:

Books of religious nature, [books] that do not comply to the ideology of the Turkish revolution, that depict foreign regimes and ideologies, that aim at [spreading] superstitions that run contrary to the overall national and realist opinions but at [spreading] backwards and reactionary mentalities, that inspire pessimism, that depict crime and actions like suicide, works that increase the inclination for lust and greed and encourage the youth to harmful habits (*CHF Halkevleri Talimatnamesi* quoted in Lamprou, 2009: 52).

As one of the most important branches of the Houses (Karpas, 1963: 60), the *Peasantism Branch* is in charge to provide mutual solidarity and unity between the peasants and the city dwellers or bridge the gap between the intellectuals and the people and work for sanitary, social and aesthetic developments of villages. The branch is mostly concerned with organizing village trips. In these village trips, together with the theatre branch, the national plays are staged, shadow and puppet shows are performed and national dances are exhibited; via courses branch, reading-writing courses are opened; and with the help of social assistance branch, the health problems of villagers are tackled. The official business of villagers in the provinces and cities are dealt with. Teachers, dentists, veterinarians, agriculturalists or directors of local state institutions attend to these trips and listen the problems of peasants; warn and give advices to them about deficiencies identified by these officials. The hygiene and public health of villages are handled and official messages of the Republic are conveyed. Besides, the village teachers are deemed as the members of this branch because they carry out the national duty of developing villages and educating the villagers by living and settling in the countryside and experiencing the conditions of villages. Moreover, village monographs are written by members of this branch in the

House journals and even published in the form of village survey brochures. This village monographs or surveys include general information about village's social, educational, economic, cultural and sanitary situations or historical and folkloric information (Yeşilkaya, 2003: 104-6; Yeşilkaya, 2009: 116; Lamprou, 2009: 53, 255-6).

The History and Museum Branch tries to collect the local historical materials and products of the regions the Houses are invented for developing national culture and history. The local Turkish history of the country is exhibited in museums of every province and in museums, historical monuments of the Turkish ethnography are preserved.

2.3. The Issue of Center-Periphery Politics and State-Society Relations in the People's Houses

All 'working' branches of the Houses appear to perform their activities as formal obligations, aims and duties are required. However, in practice, the fragile legitimacy and uncertain position of the party over the Houses raise questions on the activities and performances of the branches and on the House experience in the periphery. The Houses were not carried out in disciplinary and orderly ways and the ideal of political indoctrination was just an expectation or illusion and a desire or wish. The party did not prefer to present the Houses as the authoritarian indoctrination centers (Şimşek, 2002: 96). There was a lack of "strong indoctrination policy" (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968: 153). For example, a mass participation in the activities of the branches and cultural programs in the Houses did not reflect the actual practices. There were even pressures to make the people take part and involved in the Houses. Karpat (1963: 65-66) states that the public became indifferent to the Houses because the people were regarded as objects to be served for "the state's abstract objectives" and secondly "the Houses were new experiment in Turkish society", that is, the local people avoided¹⁷ to

¹⁷ "One of the most preferred ways of escape is to be away from the public sphere that is mostly open to direct control and intervention of the state" (Cantek, 2016: 37).

take part in the House activities at the beginning, since the conservative notables “depicted them as tools for the destruction of the traditional way of life”. “The ordinary people of the cities and peasants of the countryside never became actively involved in the activities of the People's Houses. The members of these institutions were usually officials of the central government, intellectuals, landlords and 'prominent citizens' of the region” (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999: 84). Başgöz and Wilson (1968: 157) also point out the absence of the ordinary people in the Houses who were “refusing to accept the Houses as their activity centers” and mention that the chairmen of the Houses made falsifications while showing the number of membership in their annual reports.

On the other side, Başgöz and Wilson (1968: 157-8) emphasize that the criticism of the Houses as the centers of the RPP propaganda was not so justifiable, although the connection with the party and the government had seemingly impact on their expansion and administration. Fındıklı mentions that the People's Houses, both as spatial expressions of the social and spaces of political symbolism, held on to sort of authoritarian discourses and policies; nevertheless, they also provided individuals of the country opportunity to express themselves in a new public sphere. The Houses constituted a symbolic meaning (significance) system with “multilayered power and resistance practices” and differences were allowed to be expressed only through the rules and principles of Kemalism. Thus, multiple House experiences revealed different Kemalist approaches¹⁸ and various forms of resistance. According to Fındıklı, though there was a formal unity of the masses and the image of a unified and systematic House functioning, there was also diversity in the meanings and practices (Fındıklı, 2014: 56).

In this regard, relations between the state and the local authorities also imply complexities and ambivalences of practices and experiences in the context of the Houses and roles and position taking in the Houses. In the provinces, local/provincial elites were needed to easily penetrate into the society and to diffuse the reforms and policies within the local public, though they were considered not trustful. The certain

¹⁸ “Everyone is Kemalist; and Kemalism, which everyone becomes partisans of it, aims to the reestablishment of state, nation and character. The primary problem, nevertheless, gets complicated in the question of what is Kemalism” (İrem, 1997: 60).

status and existence of the local prominent families in the local party organs, municipalities and the People's Houses led the center to make concessions in the centralization policies and in return, the local notables preserved their alliance and negotiations with the ruling party or the Republic (Lamprou, 2009: 54-64; Adak Turan, 2015: 100-12). The party's policies and ideologies and the official discourse would be introduced and employed in the Houses and their activities by these wealthy powerful local notables. From this perspective, influence and control of local elites in the periphery point to the potential power politics and struggles in the provinces. And it forms assumption that conflicts of interest between the local notables, local notables and the non-local state officials or among the state officials turn the Houses into the places of power relations.

In addition, the provincial elites, "middlemen between the state and population" were able to be members of the provincial party administrative committees and presidents of the local party organizations, but also actors of the Houses, participants of the House activities, members of the House committees and hence presidents of the Houses. They were composed of either educated-enlightened urban elites or merchants, artisans and landowners (Lamprou, 2009: 56, 95). In this sense, along with the local party organizations, members and actors of the Houses were expected and obliged to work for conforming the local people's minds and their daily practices to the cultural and social revolutionary ideals in order for reducing the possibility of any social opposition or reaction in the periphery and eliminating obstacles the periphery could produce against the nationalist and secularist tendencies of the state. However, when the actual situation came to the surface, the act of implementing policies and aims of the central state and the party was constituted according to interests and attitudes of the local dominant bloc.

At local level, political opposition was just the reflection of both debates taken place inside/within the ruling party between the local interest groups and between the local authorities (for instance, between the state officials and the provincial party members) and their struggles for gaining the control of the provincial party organization (Metinsoy, 2010b). However, the conflicting sides inside the party did not express any

sort of criticism against the single party regime in their competing views specifically (Uyar, 1999; Çınar, 2013). The recreation or resurrection myth of the Turkish nation were always in their minds to maintain their relations and coordination with the state and in return, the state was in collaboration with the local notables or landlords who were considered as the mediaters between the state and society to make the reforms and policies known to the local people and even to the peasants (Ahmad, 1993: 72-101). When the question of democracy started to be argued in the center, the local urban elites and the urban petty bourgeoisie of the provinces were also influenced by the political debates. A direct opposition to the ruling party and to its initiatives ‘against traditional values’ in the local social life gained impetus. It was believed that this opposition was in a sense produced by those who were regarded as ‘the conservatives’. This is somehow associated with what the literature of province calls “conservatism of province” (*taşra muhafazakarlığı*) (Laçiner, 2013: 22-4; Türkeş, 2013).

Conservatism of province lies in the assumptions and connotations of official (Turkish) nationalism. While it emphasizes conversation of traditional and local culture (claiming nativity), unspoiled life of Anatolia and pureness of peasantry in the context of a nationalistic and romantic imagination, it also reflects the holy Turkishness of homeland filled with Muslim population. This meant that as the post-1945 period gave way to the rises of both the Turkist and religion-based accounts/criticisms, the tension between modernization and authenticity intensified within the provinces and province was redefined by giving new meanings to the national forces and determinants of traditional identity. On the other hand, the formulation of a nationalist-conservative province is basically developed from a reaction to modernist tendencies of a westernizing Kemalism and not considered apart from the nationalist narratives of the Kemalist discourse (Bora, 2013; Özdoğan, 2001).

Conservative appearance of the local or the periphery seems to be complied with the center-periphery cleavage in the context of Turkish modernization process and specifies the structural clash between the center and the periphery. Yet, for F. Açikel (2006), the categorizations of authoritarian-bureaucratic state and democratic-

conservative masses bring about dualist and culturalist accounts or perennialist understandings. Açıkel states that center and periphery analysis may be much more attached to multidimensional scope of power and power relations, and multilayered elements of social relations and opposition/resistance. For analysis of the early republican period, this means that the conservative (Islamist) circles was not ‘certainly’ opponents of the state and Kemalism. Rather, the nationalist (traditionalist)-conservatist discourses on Kemalist ideology created new modernist meanings and interpretations for construction of the Turkish nation. (İrem, 1997: 93). Therefore, opposing and conflicting ideas and acts of the local society within the party structures and especially in the Houses reflected the multiple practices and experiences of the members, actors and those people who were somehow involved in the Houses and in the party and state institutions at the local level.

2.4. Concluding Remarks

The official imageries of the Turkish nation and the modern civilized revolutionist masses created the understanding of forming a cultural space where those supposed masses would play crucial roles and positions both during the decision-making and implementation of the reforms processes. For the definition and continuation of the ideal type or prototype of the Kemalist intellectuals and republican ‘people’, this kind of cultural space having been regarded to make the masses socialize and bring the supposed people together was introduced so that the concepts of progress, development, modernization and civilization would be gradually indoctrinated into the minds of those defined people. This space was considered as the fundamental source of the authoritarian modernist establishments to be employed for penetrating into the daily life, lifestyle, and world of ideas of the people. Internalization projects and programs of the state-imposed, secular and modern social and cultural policies became explicitly effective on the everyday practices of the local urban republican elites and notables who even approached the new experience of power space by not entirely transforming into the subject forms of desired codes and rules. However, ideological narration of the supposed people was actualized in the Kemalist nationalist-populist

discourses of the republican privileged, influential and prominent groups and individuals in the localities. The center's determination to change the periphery for not being opposed and rebelled affected the local societies' tendencies and responsibilities expressed to be seen as the followers of the Turkish revolutionary policies and regulations and as the providers of the dominant ideologies of Kemalism, official nationalism and republican modernism. And the exaltedly sacred cultural space of the provincial Republican People's Party (RPP) organ was needed to be activated by these local supporters for strengthening the newly born but limited (after the war of independence) link between the state and society.

E. Özbudun (1981: 94) mentions, "the People's Houses, although associated with the RPP, were conceived as a measure of social emancipation and of raising the general cultural standards, rather than as an instrument of political mobilisation or ideological indoctrination". However, such analysis is misleading because of the absence of the local social dynamics. What is important is that as the physical form of a holy cultural space, the People's Houses were established in the periphery and the peripheral reception of and reactions to nationalizing and modernizing reforms and cultural policies were tackled via these mediating cultural divisions of the Kemalist state together with the state's local offices and even schools. While there was a motive to make all the people in the country transformed and mobilized, in practice, the Houses remained open to the local urban elites, the provincial state officials, that is, those local people who supported the party and its cultural policies in the periphery or engaged in the activities and works of the Houses. And these House actors in the localities sought to implement and accommodate to the Kemalist ideology and its cultural policies but also tried to interpret them by producing multiple experiences and practices in accordance with their sociopolitical relations with the central state and with the local specificities and forces.

CHAPTER 3

THE POSITION OF THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE OF KAYSERI: REFLECTIONS ON THE LOCAL SOCIETY

The People's House of Kayseri was designated as the sacred gathering place of the intellectual local people to pursue the principal socio-cultural reforming initiatives of the new regime and national duties of being civilized modern Turkish nation. Thus, the Kayseri province which was restructured via local dominant bloc's constant influence and power and by the bureaucratic newly emerged bourgeoisie gave shape to the House. Like the other Houses did, the Kayseri House provided the state and the ruling party social organization zone for carrying out the republican ideals, reaching to the supposed people and disseminate the enlightening-educating (local conformity of) reforms and cultural policies so that the center could have control over the periphery's any 'reactionary' or 'backward' attitudes and tendencies. The nationalistic outlooks of the state would be penetrated into the periphery's romantic landscapes, physical spaces, the local population and even into the everyday life of the locality.

The Kayseri province, perceived as an important source of industrialization and modernization projects of the state, gave the local urban elites and state officials potential environment eligible to the spreading of unification and integrity illusions of the Turkish nationalism. In the official Kemalist language, the province was so conservative and under the severe influence of the bigoted, uncivilized local forces. This 'superstitious' practices of local backwardness had been strived to be infected to the local people (or the Anatolian children) and the Turkish peasants, but the republican revolutionary forces managed to suppress them on the behalf of the Kayserili people (the Kayserians), and the supposed Turkish nation in the periphery. The Kayseri House was to serve the national duty of conducting the change process of social life dynamics of the province together with the People's Rooms, the provincial

party units (after party-state integration) and the state industrial institutions introduced for the economic development of the country (such as Sümer textile factory, airplane factory in the urbanity and the Bünyan weaving factory, weaving looms/cooperative of Hacılar in the countryside).

In this regard, this chapter focuses firstly on the local population of the province in the 1930s and 1940s when the powerful local elites and notables became actively participant of the social transformation claims of the state and when their influence was so ambiguous in implementation of the reforms and policies because of the power struggles and interest conflicts. Therefore, the main cause of constructed distinction between the real local people and the imagined local society will be analyzed in terms of demographical and geographical situations changed after the nation-state understanding was constituted. Secondly, the weight of RPP's members in the local politics and in the Kayseri House administration, and the individual membership profile of the House, that is, the so-called local society's presence in the House will be specified. Thirdly, it will be discussed how centralizing acts of the state or the ruling party were received by the locality or the local powerful groups and individuals in the House and how flexible authoritarian communication between the center and periphery be maintained upon the House administration or implementation practices of the House activities in terms of local power politics. Lastly, general frame of the House activities introduced by nine divided but collaborated branches will be briefly drawn so as to indicate that the local society became involved in the Kayseri House of a province which was marked with conservative (local Anatolian culture) and Islamic elements but actually with different identities of those who looked and identified the Kayseri province.

3.1. The Social Structure of the Kayseri Population: 'the Local People'

The superficial scope of the local society in Kayseri, in a so-called conservative province¹⁹ was widened from the urban local elites and powerful local families (the prominent local notables) to the state's non-local officials (civil servants and the educated professionals) appointed for conducting the processes of nationalization and modernization to educate the local people about the new social and cultural guidelines and rules revised by the republican government for reconstruction of the periphery. Most of the local elites were composed of persons who received university education in İstanbul or absorbed the European lifestyles, ideas and probably habits. They were open-minded about combining the Anatolian local traditional elements with the modern (secular) concepts. Besides, among the local notables in the urban population, there were merchants, artisans or shop keepers, urban landowners. They seemingly displayed similar socio-cultural preferences of small provincial petty bourgeoisie in the country at that time and were brought to the offices in the municipality, the ruling party membership by the center and had a fragile cooperation with the ruling party. Also, due to the authority of local men on politics, industry and trade, the presence of woman in the list of local people was restricted or neglected in the Kayseri province. It was restricted, since those areas were considered as not suitable for woman and women regarded as daughter, sister or wife of a powerful wealthy family could just have place in the local power or in social and cultural spaces, as the Kemalist modernism and the republican ethos signaled woman's participation and involvement (Güneş Ayata, 2010: 127-189; Cengiz, 2013; Doğan, 2007; Lamprou, 2009: 68-82).

The demographical structure of the Kayseri province may be useful to figure out who the local people were before the Republic and after the Republic. In the 1914 census (before the first world war broke out), 184.292 Muslims and 78.782 non-Muslims were counted and in the non-Muslim population, there were 26.590 Greeks and 48.659

¹⁹ Gürsel Korat (1997: 19-20) points out that the label of conservatism for the province is originated from rejection of social diversity. The heroic Turkish myths are accompanied with national sentiments and Islamic values. And those who have financial capital and trade centered industrial hegemony could influence the everydayness and be forcible over the ideology and identity formation of the city: identical political choices and the state of to-be both Muslim and Turkish.

Armenians (Cengiz, 2013: 81). In the 1922 census, the Armenian population was counted about 5.916 Armenians. In the 1927 census, on the other hand, the number of non-Muslim population was counted as about 3.254 (Gözel Durmaz, 2015: 25-29). In the period between 1930 and 1950, population of the province began to be categorized according to their sexes, education background, ages, professions, languages and to some extent, according to their religion. For instance, in the 1935 census, “among the population of the city of Kayseri only a 24.5% was literate (could read and write according to the census), 37% for men and 11% for women (8881 and 2439 in real numbers respectively)” (Lamprou, 2009: 68). In 1945 census, the literacy rate increased and for men, it was 65.2% and for women, it was counted as 26.3%. While 1935 census illustrated 1939 non-Muslims in total (Doğan, 2007: 116), in 1945 census, the religion proportion of the city was weighted by the Muslim population (30.068 for men and 25.905 for women) and the non-Muslim population decreased 1889 persons (997 for men and 892 for women).²⁰ As for the records of ethnic origins, the 1945 census showed that those whose mother tongues, languages were Armenian, Greek, Jewish or Kurdish continued to reside in the Kayseri province and men of the Armenian population still seemed to engage in trade and industry and women predominantly engaged in agriculture, while both men and women of the Kurdish population worked in the field of agriculture mostly. Doğan (2007: 116) points as well to the significant weight of the Armenians in the decision-making process of local politics till the end of the 1930s. As a matter of fact, the question of census was the most important subject for a writer of the Erciyes journal who emphasized that if the number of nation or race increased, this was because eugenic situation of the Turkish population in the nation was specified by the government and thus the Kayseri House conducted duties for increasing the number of birthrate, decreasing the possibility of infant mortality rate and for raising consciousness of woman about maternity and motherhood.²¹

²⁰ Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü. (1949). *Genel Nüfus Sayımı-21 October 1945-Kayseri Province*. Vol. 37, Issue: 286, Ankara, p. 23.

²¹ Etem Seçkin. “Nüfus Sayımı Dolayısıyla”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 34-5, November-December 1945, pp. 19-20.

The label of Kayseri as the core center of trade and state industrial investment was intensified in the 1930s with the influence of statist economic policies and the Kayseri local society welcomed new bureaucratic bourgeoisie consisting of civil servants and occupational groups of such modern spaces and buildings as the Railroad Station²², Sümerbank, Airplane Factory or the People's House of Kayseri. In the Sümerbank factory campus, particularly, the workers and civil servants stayed in the lodging houses of the factory and took part in the cultural activities. It was aimed that modernized ways of life and attitudes and the new Turkish culture of the nation would be taught and indoctrinated to the workers and civil servants so that they could contribute to the statist policies and measures of the ruling party for the economic development of the homeland. It was somehow isolated the workers and civil servants from the Kayseri province. However, by introducing the modernized ways of life and practices of nationalized culture in the Kayseri province, the high officials of the Sümerbank became the new members of the local society. As for low-income workers, they were excluded from being part of the local society.

For an Anatolian province in which geographically agricultural production and rural ways of life were highly visible, the enormous number of peasantry and peasant population was also not counted as the local people of Kayseri. The peasantry was depicted solely as the source of the beautiful sides of the villages and Turkish countryside in the Kayseri province and indeed, the Kemalist urban elites and the republican government could make interaction with either headmen or the landholders of the villages to know something about the Turkish peasantry. On the other hand, the indifference to or absence of the peasant population was maintained until when the state in the 1940s decided to initiate the village institutes movement throughout all the Anatolian villages in the country so that the message of civilization and education of the people could reach to the peasants, villagers (Stirling, 1965). In the actual story, the Pazarören village institute experience in Kayseri demonstrate that students faced

²² In the decision of Internal Affairs dated in 1931, it was allowed that alcoholic drinks were able to be sold in the bar of the railroad station of Kayseri. Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Prime Ministry State Archives. Office of Republican Archives. Catalogue of the Regulations of the Committee of Ministers (Bakanlar Kurulu Kararnameleri). *BCA BKK* 30.18.1.2.17.7.19.

with social and economic troubles during their education; some had to work in the Sumerbank to send money to their family in the villages; most of them suffered from hunger especially during the war's harsh conditions; and when they became village teachers in their villages after graduated from the institute, they were even given limited school supplies and financial resources to construct the village schools and transform the villages.²³ As Mahmut Makal pointed out in his autobiographical book named *A Village in Anatolia/Bizim Köy*, the village institute experience was not that effective and modifying.

3.2. The Role of the Republican People's Party Members and the People's House Actors in Kayseri

The RPP's influence and control in the Kayseri province fundamentally in 1930s and flexibly in the 1940s was obvious in terms of its individual profiles²⁴ of party membership and local party administrative committee bodies and even for the House membership. The local power bloc in the party administrative structures, composed of the professions, merchants, landowners or 'farmers', displayed the existence and majority of the prominent local families and their family members (father, son, uncle; or sister, wife, daughter). Lamprou (2009: 71) mentions that "while the majority of the

²³ For a broader information about the memoirs of village teachers or students of the period in the Pazarören Village Institute, see Ali Salman. (2013). *İçinde Yaşayanların Anlatımıyla Pazarörenli Yıllar*. Kayseri: Geçit Yayınları. There is a lack of memoirs of the female students or woman village teachers in the book, too.

²⁴ Some of the examples were: The Feyzioğlu Family-Sait Azmi (the party deputy, chairman of Social Assistance Branch in the House) and his son Necmettin Feyzioğlu (mayor); the Özsan Family-Naci Özsan (the House chairman, lawyer, party member), his brother, Osman Özsan (local party secretary) and Mahmurhan Özsan, sister in law of Naci Özsan and wife of Osman Özsan (member of the party administrative committee and the chairman of Social Assistance Branch of the House); and the Molu family-Emin Molu (mayor). And some of the influential party members were: Hayrullah Ürkün (the party deputy, mayor and the House chairman), Tacettin Tacettinoğlu (mayor and the House chairman) and Nazmi Toker (governor and mayor). Necmettin Çalışkan. (1995). *Kuruluşundan Günümüze Kayseri Belediyesi*. Kayseri: Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları; Mustafa Şanal. (2007). *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*. Kayseri: Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları. On the other hand, opposing persons of the local notables, as seen in the case of Rıfat Çalika detailed in the chapter 5 of this thesis, lost the party deputyship and even other official positions in the Kayseri province.

Party members in the province of Kayseri were farmers, the top echelons of the Party structure in the town were in the hands of local financial and political elites, mainly merchants, entrepreneurs and a few professionals usually members of local elite families”. Doğan (2007: 126) points out on the other side that the local power groups and individuals or local interest groups within the party organization gave more importance on the administration of the municipality. This was because it was a space of power struggle in which the local authority on the public could strengthen the political and economic consolidation of power. The continuous change of governors and mayors in the Kayseri city illustrated the flexible authority and control of the party center upon the provincial party members. For example, the influential local notables of the ruling party could negotiate with the party deputies of Kayseri to convince the center about who they are willing to see in official positions or who they were unwilling to see. Though the local dominant notables seemed to compromise with the center, communicate with the high authorities, the General Secretariat, and contribute to its plans and purposes in the periphery and not even oppose strongly to the interventions of it in the local politics and in administration of state institutions. Also, in the party membership, the presence of woman was dependent upon the semi-accomodation and appropriation of the party’s ideal representations relating to the woman’s political participation in the country (Güneş Ayata, 2010: 129; 182-6).

As a particular cultural-ideological space of the province, the Kayseri House tended to reflect the collective consciousness of the party members. The connection between the local party bodies and the House gave shape to the memberships and involvement in its activities. The party members appearantly became members of the House and actively participated in the meetings²⁵ and cultural activities of the House. The meetings were held mostly in the city club of the province and in these meetings, the members of the party administrative committee, the House chairman, the chairmen of the House branches and also the party inspectors made speeches and comments on the sacred importance of the People’s Houses as the gathering houses of the Turkish

²⁵ “Halkevi’nin Aile Toplantısı/Halkevi Toplantısı”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 25 January 1937; 25 March 1940; 1 May 1941; 14 May 1942. Hayri Özdemir. “Halkevi Toplantısı”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 17, 1941, pp. 517-8.

people who possessed national senses of enlightenment and progress and decided to work hard for attracting the attention of local people to the House and its useful activities. The House was an instrumental tool for writing articles in the Erciyes journal²⁶, using the printing house owned by a party member for publishing official language based books (*Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası and Sümer Matbaası*)²⁷ or making tea parties, balls (feasts, concerts, official celebration dances)²⁸, saz/folk music²⁹ nights or weddings and engagement ceremonies³⁰. In the first times of the House experience, the weddings and engagement ceremonies were not considered unnecessary expense of the House activities. However, in the interwar period and during the second world war, increasing spendings of the state on officially compulsory works, state imposed measures on the people's personal needed spendings (taxes, high prices, black market) and thus the harsh conditions of the poor and the peasants forced the state officials in Kayseri and the House actors to speak out the weddings wastes in order to suggest local families to save money and to stop going into debt.³¹ As an example, a Turkist commander titled teacher who were teaching military in the Kayseri high school wrote poem about wedding wastes potraying didactical aspect of the official language and even for the wastes, he put blame on

²⁶ A limited number of writers was dominant in the journal and the readers were criticizing the editorship about that case. See chapter 4.

²⁷ Önder, A. R. (1972). *Kayseri Basın Tarihi (1910-1960)*. Ankara: Kayseri İşçi Kredi Bankası Kültür Yayınları. Besides, the high officials of the House promised the folk poets to publish their poems in a book. However, there were not such kinds of books found among the House publications; the poems were just published selectively in some articles of the Erciyes Journal written by its regular authors. See chapter 5 in this thesis.

²⁸ Ball for children organized by the Social Assistance Branch. Anonymous. (1934). *Kayseri Halkevi Armağanı (Issue: 3)*. Kayseri: Kayseri Yeni Matbaa; "Yılbaşı Balo", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 2 January 1936; "Halkevi'nin Çayı", *Kayseri*, 27 January 1941; "Temsil Kolu Bir Çay Ziyafeti Verdi", *Kayseri*, 12 July 1945.

²⁹ Nedime Ergül. "Sazlı Sözlü Bir Gece Yaşadık", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 65-6, June-July 1948, p. 32; "Saz Gecesi Çok Neşeli Geçti", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 15 November 1948; Nedime Ergül. "Kulaklarımızın Bayramı, Ruhumuzun Ziyafeti Var", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 71, December 1948, p. 22; "Halkevi Saz Gecesi", *Kayseri*, 31 January 1949.

³⁰ "Halkevi'nde Nişan Töreni", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 12 October 1936.

³¹ "Düğün İsrafatı Önleniyor", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 9 March 1944.

woman who was described loving to make unnecessary expenses.³² As a matter of fact, the House members continued to make their weddings and engagement ceremonies in the House halls. In the 1944-45 working report of the House, 5 members were benefited from the halls and even the jazz band of the House was there.³³

Another complaint about wastes claimed to be made by the provincial party organs in Kayseri was on the tea parties or feasts. A report was prepared by the party inspector Hilmi Çoruh about the spendings and financial budget of the Kayseri province and the provincial party organization and he criticized the unnecessary spendings on feasts in this inspecting report. The event of feast he criticized was held in the airplane factory and continued in the House hall. In the event, the deputies of Kayseri, governor, mayor and the party members gathered together to celebrate the arrivals of the deputies with a feast. Then, the deputies were brought to the House to entertain them and inform them about what the members did in the House.³⁴ The report was replied by the local party chairman and for him, the complaint on the wasting the party's money to make feast for them was not a serious problem or a wrongdoing. Since the main reason was to be in touch with the people and to listen their requests, the unexpected spendings (waste) of the local party administration for the party deputies were tolerable and to express gratitude to them.³⁵

The Kayseri House was also the gathering place for the local and non-local teachers and appointed civil servants who were the targeted masses of the party center for ensuring the national education of the local people to be civilized Turkish citizens in the periphery and the enlightenment of them to be easily adopted to the state initiated reforms and modernizing attempts in the everyday life and the public spheres. They

³² Hulusi Satoğlu. "Düğün İsrafatı", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 57-8, October-November 1947, p. 16.

³³ Erciyes. "Kayseri Halkevinin Bir Yıllık Çalışması", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 26-7, March-April 1945, p. 32.

³⁴ "Valimizin Mebuslarımızın Şerefine Verdikleri Ziyafet ve Halkevinde Tetkikler", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 11 September 1939.

³⁵ The reply of the local party chairman to the criticisms in the report of the party inspector Hilmi Çoruh. *BCA CHP* 490.1/1578.426.1.

were all together in the House to play their roles as the carriers and followers of the Kemalist cultural policies and the Turkish revolutionary ideals in the province. While local schoolteachers (e.g. Kemalettin Karamete, Kazım Özdoğan, Kazım Yedekçiöğlü³⁶) focused on the combination of the Anatolian culture and in particular Kayseri's cultural history with modernized but mostly civilized ways of life and believed in the national pedagogy of Kemalism in the periphery, non-local teachers (e.g. Cevdet Kudret, Nazlı Gaspıralı³⁷) and civil servants (e.g. Fahri Bilge, Murat İğneci, Hüsni İrkılata, Sahir Üzel³⁸) were more inclined to implement the imagination of a modern Turkish citizen by saving them from chains of backwardness, bigotry (superstitious beliefs) or from uncivilized bad conditions and were depicted as idealist instructors of the people who would carry on the task of enlightening the local people and delivering the messages of the state to them. Furthermore, the House members, whether they are local or non-local, expressed their interests and positions in the House space and even in front of the local society via their texts which echoed the experiences of the House membership and the House activities. Each member/actor employed the House space either for preserving their role of mediators of the state in local politics (i.e. strengthening the place they had in the local society) or for appearing like enlighteners of the regime who would save the province from chain of backwardness and ugliness. Some texts written by the local members were composed of efforts to show the supposed success of the House and beauties of the province, but some written

³⁶ For information about Karamete and Yedekçiöğlü, see chapter 5. As for Kazım Özdoğan, he was an orator teacher teaching Turkish. He was attending to the village visits and prepared the drafts of surveys on the visits. He wrote articles in the Erciyes journal dealing with the national history of Kayseri, the Hittite past of the province-he was titled as *Etiler Mektebi Başöğretmeni*-and gave speeches and lectures in the House. He became as well the chairman of the Museum and Exhibitions Branch of the House.

³⁷ For detailed information about Kudret, see chapter 5. Nazlı Gaspıralı, wife of Haydar Gaspıralı who was appointed to work in Kayseri and member of the Peasantism Branch, was 'president' of the Language, History and Literature Branch and teaching Turkish in the high school. She was elected as the one of the members of the municipal assembly and even conducted the duty of presidency in the Yardımsever Cemiyeti in Kayseri (Lamprou, 2009: 114-5).

³⁸ Fahri Bilge was the director of Ziraat Bank in Kayseri. He became member of the Peasantism Branch and examined and collected the Kayseri folk poems. Hüsni İrkılata, the provincial director of culture and chairman of Language, History and Literature Branch in the Kayseri House, was criticized by the House member, Karamete due to his bad reputation in the province. Sahir Üzel undertook the chairmanship of the Library and Publications Branch while he took part in the village visits. He had many writings in Erciyes and in the official local newspaper.

by the non-local members displayed local uncivilized conditions of the people and efforts to fix them (Lamprou, 2009: 136).

The selection of the House chairmen was too associated with a subtle rivalry between the state officials and civil servants and urban local intellectuals and elites. From the beginning, the Kayseri House presidency was primarily based upon local man monopoly and executed by a party member elected by the local party administrative committee. There were some exceptions (Ömer Sıtkı Erdi, Reşat Oğuz) including the principals of the Kayseri high school. These exceptions seem to be not acceptable for the powerful local notables elected as the members of the party committee in the province. The instance of such mistrust (Ömer Sıtkı Erdi case) to the non-locals will be discussed in the context of relations between the party center and the local members. So, the House membership or presidency together with the party membership was for reechoing ‘the Kemalist middle class principles’ and cultural elements of the republican ideals in the periphery. Yet this reproduction somehow created tensions and struggles among local power forces and caused to the rise of interest conflict between the prominent local notables and non-local state employees.

3.3. Sociopolitical Relationship between the Centre and Locality over the Kayseri House Experience

The republican government and the party center cherished the aim of making the local society adapted to the new national myths or the republican modernist principles. This aim seemed to create a top-down mechanism. However, at the provincial level, there emerged a fragile hegemony of the state on the local party organizations and a kind of vague relationship between the center and the local party agencies (Metinsoy, 2010b). The provincial People’s Houses as the providers of the state-society relations in the periphery were not enough to strictly enforce the cultural reforms and the regulations or rules of the party center about the functioning of the Houses. The vague relationship between the center and the locality sometimes caused the problem of communication in terms of monitoring the provincial Houses and the local authorities. In the case of

the Kayseri House activity, representatives of the party center and the party inspectors examined the works done and tried to figure out the reasons behind the wrongdoings and malpractices of the local party administration and the House through a monitoring mechanism.

The village visits of the House members and its leading figure, governor and president of provincial party organ, Adli Bayman were published in the brochures and publications of the House and these journeys were described the most successful activities of the House experience in the Kayseri province in the mid-1930s. The visit surveys were required to be in accordance with the House bylaws and the principles, instructions of a village trip survey regulated and carried out by the party center officials or the Kemalist intellectuals of the center. When the governor sent a letter to the General Secretariat of the ruling party along with brochures to show the national duty they did for implementing ‘essential’ purpose of merging the people with the state, he was not replied. The reply was sent to the House chairman, Naci Özsan by Nafi Atuf Kansu, who was working in the position of monitoring the House activities in the party secretariat. Kansu mentioned that their enthusiasms and endeavors were recognizable but the brochures did not fulfill the center’s demands and qualifications about how a village survey ought to be. This was a sample of objection of the center to the Kayseri House activities. According to the statements of the governor, the event had a bad impact on the House members and caused disappointment among them.³⁹ As a matter of fact, in a report of party inspector, H. Çoruh, the outcome of his attitudes was obvious. The party inspector criticized the provincial party committee about improperly using the money of the party for paying compensation to Adli Bayman for his service. And the reply of Kayseri party organization was that as he was dismissed (*el çektirmek*) from his office, he was paid so little money that he could not manage to take his children with him. They heard that he applied the prime ministry to help him for money. So, they decided to give money to him in order not to be suffering from poverty because he well served their party organization. If this waste,

³⁹ For a detailed information, see chapter 5.

unnecessary spending was regarded as corruption or accounting irregularity, they were ready to pay back the money to the party center.⁴⁰

In the case of a House chairman who was also dismissed from his office and resigned from the position of principal of the high school of Kayseri, the problem was primarily stemmed from irregularity in accounting book of the provincial party organ. Ömer Sıtkı Erdi was former representative of the Theatre Branch of the House and elected as the chairman of the House. After his election, he was praised for conducting actively his duty, accelerating the process of decision-making in the meetings of the House and giving more attention to the activities of the House branches.⁴¹ Hence, the General Secretariat implied that he succeeded to activate the House and its branches because it had been in the position of disorder and slowdown for so long. It was even highlighted that it was good to learn the ‘accounting’ works being seriously conducted.⁴² On the other hand, on the basis of the problem of the House’s new building, he began to face with some criticisms of the influential members of the provincial party organ not directly but via their writings in the local newspaper:

(...) The activities of the House today do not satisfy us. We want to explain it with consolation that the new House gives our dreams and hereby we expect dear House chairman Ömer Sıtkı Erdi from whom we listen many good speeches on every occasion that he should keep his promises. It is our right and duty to demand *successful* works from the House chairman that will satisfy us.⁴³

⁴⁰ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/1578.426.1.

⁴¹ “Faaliyetli Halkevi Reisimiz”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 13 February 1941.

⁴² “Halkevimizin Çalışmaları Parti Genel Sekreterliğince Taktir Edildi”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 6 March 1941.

⁴³ “Yeni Binamız Vesilesi ile Halkevi’nden İstekler”. *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 2 March 1942. “Halkevi çalışmaları bugün bizi tatmin edecek durumda değildir. Bunu biz, yeni binamızın hayallerimize verdiği teselli ile açıklamak isteriz ve bu vesile ile de her fırsatta birçok güzel nutuklarını dinlediğimiz muhterem Halkevi Başkanı Ömer Sıtkı Erdi’den parlak vaatlerini yerine getirmesini bekleriz. Halkevi Reisi’nden bizi tatmin edecek başarılı çalışmalar istemek hakkımız ve vazifemiz olmuştur”.

As a matter of fact, success of the Houses and their activities was concerned importantly by the local party officials. Activity reports needed to be sent regularly to the party Headquarter in order to be able to be monitored and controlled. Also, the party inspectors who were appointed by the state oversaw the local authorities and wrote reports about the efforts, activities, wrongdoings or issues associated with the local societies. The successfulness of the House was seen as a state of pride and somehow a reward. Sometimes there was a fear, anxiety or opposition to be labeled as non-hardworking House. Therefore, this top-down but joint control mechanism provided an effective initiative in local politics for the party to achieve public acceptance to the cultural reforms, its principles and its party programs (Uyar, 1999).

In the end, Erdi was dismissed from the position of chairmanship and asked to leave the city. Actually, the case was related to the irregularity found in the accounting book of the provincial party organization concerning the money sent for the new building construction. The party inspector, Agah Sırrı Levend wrote in his report that most of the money sent by the center to the local party organ for opening the new building was used by the former House chairman without putting the money in the bank and some parts of amount of spending was typed in the accounting book but other parts were not seen in the book; that is, Erdi ‘embezzled’ money for his own purposes.⁴⁴ Levend also mentioned that the new House building process was ultimately ended and he attended to the opening ceremony of it.

While A. S. Levend was in the Kayseri province and visiting the House, he came together with the elected committees of the House branches. He suggested them to give particular importance to the House membership and contended that the committees should come together continuously to raise the feelings of cooperation and trust among the representatives and members of each branches.⁴⁵ Besides, in another report, he mentioned the lack of interest of civil servants in the House and its activities:

⁴⁴ The inspection report of Agah Sırrı Levend dated 12.12.1942. *BCA CHP* 490.1/1578.426.1.

⁴⁵ “Parti Müfettişimiz Halkevliyle Bir Konuşma Yaptı”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 23 November 1942.

The civil servants, especially the Directors of State Offices, are not interested at all in the activities of the Halkevi. With the exception of the Director of Medical Services (in his capacity as chairman of the Social Assistance Section of the Halkevi) and of the Director of Education (in his capacity as the chairman of the Sports Section), the indifference of all the other directors is overtly striking. I have been able to see some of them coming to the lectures I personally gave only out of kindness and to the family meetings once in a while. [It] is impossible for them to work voluntarily (Quoted in Lamprou, 2009: 77).⁴⁶

The uncertain situation of the new House building⁴⁷ seems to be an important issue keeping the provincial party organization in touch with the center and the party inspectors highlighted the crucial necessity of it so that the House could pursue its obligations and conduct its activities seriously and without any obstacles or failures. The new House construction was represented in the official correspondences as the guarantee of the successes of the Kayseri House to maintain the myths of national revolution and progress. It was claimed that the failure in some works of the committees of the branches was because the House had not enough halls to make useful and didactic programs for the Kayserili audiences and even not enough mechanical equipments, musical instruments or any culturally modern products necessary for attracting the attention of the students, youth, women; that is, the people to the House activities. It was said that the House did not make any further movement to develop itself and its branches.⁴⁸ It was pointed out that through the new House building, the House members would regain energy and enthusiasm they had not cared for years in order to work a lot for the national ideals of the Republic. Therefore, the

⁴⁶ The English version belongs to Lamprou. The report of Agah Sırrı Levend dated 16.07.1942. *BCA CHP* 490.1/671.259.1.

⁴⁷ The House was at first set up in the building of former Turkish Hearths of Kayseri.

⁴⁸ The party inspector, Behçet Kemal Çağlar criticized that the House had an important value for the province but there were problems of managing the House and its social activities either. The Kayseri House was a crucial opportunity to eliminate a label that was attached to the Kayseri people as 'considering their own interests' and to call them as the followers or lovers of the Kemalist revolution. "Halkevi Toplantısı", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 25 March 1937.

new House problem needed to be dealt with and solved by the center.⁴⁹ Up until 1942, the absence of a new House building causing to failures and the state of passivity was articulated in the official discourse. However, after the House building was opened, the halls, its equipments and its existence were even not regarded convenient and effective. The new ‘shrine of culture’ imagined for unity of language, history and the people did not take the attention of women to take role in the House stage⁵⁰, of the youth to save them from the influences of communism⁵¹, degeneration or bad habits or to participate in the House sport activities and meetings⁵², and even of the local people to come to watch movies in the House cinema hall (free-paid tickets). Besides, most of the House halls were occupied by the provincial party organ and remained empty meaning not used for any revolutionary purposes. In the case of cinema hall, for instance, it was mentioned that because the House had not a film projector, the hall was not used and needed to be rented for promoting earnings for conducting both the local party and the House. The indifference of the center to the absence of the film projector and the flexible and vague objection of it to renting the hall demonstrate that the problem remained unsolved until the House closed.⁵³

Another issue was related to the functioning of the House library. It was complained that the library was either opened or closed according to attempts, demands and actions of the House officials. It was even complained that the House library was used for meetings and weddings, the librarian was incompetent and the books were not registered properly or regularly. The House library was depicted as a room not used for the purpose of reading.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/670.254.1.

⁵⁰ Nedime Ergül. “Halkevi Temsilleri” in *Erciyes*. Vol. 7, Issue: 72, January 1949, pp. 22-3.

⁵¹ The pure Anatolian children could not let the penetration of such dangerous thoughts into the country. They signified the holiness of national values and thus had the spirit of nationalism. Kazım Özyedekçi. “Yüksek Tahsilli Hemşehrilerimle Konuşma” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 61-2, February-March 1948, pp. 25-6.

⁵² “Halkevi’nde Gençlik Spor Toplantıları”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 7 December 1948.

⁵³ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/1218.46.2.

⁵⁴ For a detailed information about library case, see chapter 5.

In addition, in the small towns of the Kayseri province, the problems were more unreached. There were so many correspondences about the party organizations, the People's Houses in some towns of Kayseri (Develi, Ürgüp, İncesu, Pınarbaşı) and the People's Rooms in the rural areas of the towns which reflected the absence, incapability of them and their activities and also the center's disinterestedness in the situations happened in those towns.⁵⁵

In this regard, as Metinsoy (2010b) points out for all the People's Houses, the Kayseri House did not show an actively operative and progressive image in the periphery. The problems on equipments, substructures, building, financial spendings and roles and functionings of branches and their socio-cultural activities were highly emphasized and expressed in the official texts and correspondences.

3.4. The Areas of Cultural Activities: Branches of the Kayseri House

Like the other branches were, the nine branches of the Kayseri House were represented operating well due to their intellectual, educated and enlightened members and actors. The educated local notables took part in the chairmanships and memberships of the branches and specific members were elected as the chairmen of the House branches. As mentioned above, the committees of the branches did not show so much effort or activeness on conducting the activities. The party inspectors sometimes complained and criticized that the committees did not put enough energy to attract the people to the House and its activities. The local newspaper 'called' the people to become members of the branches in accordance with their occupations, professions and specialities. It was expected an influx of the people to the House branches.⁵⁶ Indeed, in the Kudret's novel, the branches were described as empty shapes/forms only used for coming and meeting together, writing lots of reports (the Kayseri House as factory

⁵⁵ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/957.707.1.

⁵⁶ Önder Duman. (2003). Kayseri'nin Sosyo-Kültürel Yaşamında Halkevi'nin Yeri (1932-1950). *IV. Kayseri ve Yöresi Tarih Sempozyumu Bildirileri*. Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Kayseri ve Yöresi Tarih Araştırmaları Merkezi Yayını, p. 179.

of reports) and information letters of activities performed and making trips to the countryside for discovering the unspoiled.⁵⁷ S. Üzel, the member of the House, also mentioned the situation of the House turning into a shape/form:

(...) Why did the Kayseri House make no progress and what was the reason for it? What was the reason in that only a few of citizens registered in the nine books of the nine branches carried on the duties and activities and kept the House alive formally; and the others began to show disinterest in the House? (...) This disinterest put the House in a form which was lifeless and incapable and turned it into just a big label.⁵⁸

There are many formally same and official rhetoric centered sources showing how the House branches worked hard to accomplish the national mission of reaching to the people. On the other hand, for critically analysis of the Kayseri House branches, it is worthy to mention the social and cultural activities performed and organized in the branches which were presented as the normative works of the House. The questions needed to be asked are based upon how the nine so-called active branches of the House were brought to the lives of the Kayseri people, how they changed or were (not) able to change their everyday practices and most importantly, to whom did they manage to reach.

The (annual and monthly) activity reports⁵⁹ of the House branches were required to be prepared for informing the party center on what they did in the branches over the period

⁵⁷ Cevdet Kudret (2006). *Havada Bulut Yok*. İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, pp. 138-9.

⁵⁸ Sahir Üzel. "Yeniden Hayat Bulan Ocak" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 12, 1939, p. 341. "(...) Kayseri Halkevinin yerinde sayısı ne içindi ve buna sebep ne idi? Evet buna ne sebep ne idi ki, dokuz kolun dokuz defterinde sayılı binlerce vatandaştan son zamanlarda ancak birkaç kişi faal bir vaziyette kalarak Halkevini şeklen ayakta tutabilmiş, diğerleri Halkevi ile alakasızlık göstermeye başlamışlardı? (...) İşte bu alakasızlık Halkevini ruhsuz, cevhersiz bir şekle sokmuş ve onu kocaman bir etiket haline getirmişti".

⁵⁹ Anonymous. (1933). *Kayseri Halkevi Armağanı*. Kayseri: Yeni Matbaa. Anonymous. (1934). *Kayseri Halkevi Armağanı (Issue: 3)*. Kayseri: Kayseri Yeni Matbaa. Fahri Tümer. "Kayseri Halkevi: Geçen Yıllarda Nasıl Çalıştı, Neler Yaptı", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 6-7-8, 1938, pp. 166-68. Erciyes. "Kayseri Halkevinin Bir Yıllık Çalışması", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 26-7, March-April 1945, p. 31-2. Muhtar Erdemer. "Halkevi Haberleri", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 14-5, March 1940, p. 462. Anonymous. "Halkevimizin Açılmasının 11. Yıldönümü Münasebetile Halkevi Reisi Bay Nazmi Akyurt'un Nutku", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 20, March 1943, pp. 610-14. Fahri Tümer. "Halkevimiz Çalışmaları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 36-7, January-February 1946, pp. 40-2. Tacettin Tacettinoğlu. "Halkevimizin

of one year or in a month. In these reports, the arranged and compatible activities of nine branches were depicted, represented and narrated. The House was pretending to manage the rules of the House Bylaws relating to the branches. However, reporting and recording the activities were somehow seen obligations of the House project and there were statements in some reports expressing the necessary works are continued in the branch as required⁶⁰; that is, without having any information about what they did, how many people attended to the activity, or what was this year given important to by the members and actors in the branch.

In the context of detailed formative activities of the branches, it is understood that there was not so much difference between the Kayseri House and other established Houses. However, because the desires, interests and aspirations of the local members and actors in the House branches shaped the activities and events they prepared and organized and concerning the social aspects of the Kayseri province, in each branch, various local programs and works were carried out. This meant the combination of local forces with modernizing and civilizing principles. For instance, the local accents, history and local folk literatures were rediscovered by the members of the Language, History and Literature branch in order to manage to make communication with and to attract the attention of the supposed people. In the village trips, they were used for speaking in the language of peasants to make the party's ideological purposes and policies be learned and internalized. In this sense, the Peasantist branch of the House was represented as the most active branch of the House. As a matter of fact, among the House publications, the brochures⁶¹ of village trips are more in number than other

Yıllık Çalışması”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 50, March 1947, pp. 24-5. Erciyes. “Resim Çalışmaları”, “Müzik Çalışmaları”, “Dersane ve Kurs Kolu Çalışmaları”, “Sosyal Yardım Kolu Çalışmaları”, “Kitapsaray Kolu Çalışmaları”, Dil Edebiyat Kolu Çalışmaları”, Temsil Kolu Çalışmaları”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 72, January 1949. Erciyes. “Evimizin Bir Yıllık Çalışması”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 73, February 1949, pp. 24-5.

⁶⁰ “Evimizin Bir Aylık Çalışma Raporu”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 25, February 1945. “*Ar Kolunun müzik dersleri her akşam devam etmektedir*”. “Kayseri Halkevi 1948-1949 Yılları Çalışma Blaçosu”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 82-3, November-December 1949. “*Spor Şubesi: Bu şubemiz Beden Terbiyesi bölge başkanlığı ile daima işbirliği halindedir. Tertiplenen spor müsabakalarında uhdesine düşen vazifeleri yapmıştır*”.

⁶¹ The villages visited were as follows: “Tavlusun (Seri 1)”, “Germir (Seri 2)”, “Mimarsinan (Seri 3)”, “Argıncık Köyü (Seri 4)”, “Talas (Seri 5)”.

sources relating to the conferences, speeches or activity reports. In the brochures, it is understood that civil servants, schoolteachers and local official chairmen of the House and provincial party organ and their members paid special attention to the ideal of working for strengthening the mutual relationship and respect between the city dwellers and the villagers and felt responsible for preparing a set of guidelines about how to know and describe the village in terms of geographical, historical, social, cultural, folkloric, economic, hygienic and mostly educational conditions and fields (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999; Lamprou, 2009: 255-7).⁶² As an instance of this binding duty, an activity report⁶³ written by the chairman of the peasantism branch of the Kayseri House was sent to the party center in order to show that the House's activities on the cause of village development were conducted 'scientifically', making the village "counted, registered and studied, medically treated and politically instructed". This indicates that the activities are "canonical, that is they bare close similarity and in one sense follow the norms set by canonical texts on villagist activities; at least in theory, when reported to the source of that canon, the ruling Party" (Lamprou, 2009: 260).

⁶² Tümer, F. "Kayseri Halkevi: Geçen Yıllarda Nasıl Çalıştı, Neler Yaptı", p. 218-9; "*Gidilen her köyün kültürel, sosyal, ekonomik tarihi durumlarile folklorü üzerinde incelemeler yapılmakta*". Tümer, F. "Halkevimiz Çalışmaları", p. 42. "*Köylümüzün kültürel, sıhhi, sosyal durumlarının yükselmesine köylü ile şehirli arasında karşılıklı sevgi, saygı ve tesanüdün kuvvetlenmesine çalışmaktadır*".

⁶³ The content of an activity report of the Kayseri House Peasantism Branch is presented as follows:

- 1) The Village excursions program continues with the participation of women. We are working towards the strengthening of feelings of mutual affection and cooperation between men and women villagers and city men and women.
- 2) A doctor and a health care worker take part in the excursions examining the ill villagers. Medicine is distributed free of charge by charitable associations.
- 3) Research on the cultural, social, and financial situation as well as on the history and hygiene of every village is carried out and an attempt is made to publish a brochure on every village visited.
- 4) During the excursions orators from the Section deliver speeches on various issues with a simple and comprehensive to the villager language. (Revolution, Independence, infectious diseases, village cooperatives, improvement of products and animals).
- 5) Our villagers are invited during the holidays and fests to the House. Wrestling competitions are set up between villager wrestlers.
- 6) Our section is trying to establish People's Courses (Halk dershaneleri) by coming into contact with the village teachers (they are considered natural members of the section). Our Section also assists the villagers who visit the Halkevi in their paperwork with state offices.
- 7) During the village excursions members from the theatre section stage plays inoculating the revolution and independence. The Halkevi band is also taking part playing national songs creating in this way a beautiful and amusing day. (as quoted in Lamprou, 2009: 259-260).

In the Fine Arts branch, the local folk singers took part in the House stage and saz bands were constituted but also jazz bands or western music instruments were used to entertain the local society of the House, even though the instruments (such as piano) were sometimes not available in the House stocks.⁶⁴ In Theatre branch, the nationalistic-didactic plays were staged for the taste of republican audiences in the periphery⁶⁵ but in the case of the Kayseri province, the absence of woman in the House stage and woman's indifference to the House theatrical events were considerably implied by the members of the theatre branch committee. Moreover, climbings (mountaineering) of the privileged members of the House to the Erciyes mountain and hikings of the Sport branch committee actors became the actions of sightseeing the romantic landscapes and experiencing exalted hard nature of the mountain by using the modern mountaineering equipments. As for Social Assistance branch of the Kayseri House, the sanitarian and hygienic purposes were prioritized and because the Kayseri province was regarded as not enough clean, the policies were produced and decisions were taken by the members of the branch and even by the House administrative committee in order to deal with the health of the ordinary poor people. Distributing soaps and keeping Turkish baths open for entering free were some of the noticeable decisions.⁶⁶ In the novel of Kudret, the Social Assistance branch is an empty entity because there is not enough money to help the poor. On the other hand, when the harsh war conditions affect the life of the poor, the House forms a committee to make list of the poor and give them ration papers (*karne*) so that they are able to benefit from the helps of the House.

⁶⁴ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/967.742.1.

⁶⁵ "The House performed the play *The Tragedy of the Trenches*, which dealt with the heroism of the Turkish soldiers during the war of independence. The play was written by one of the committee members and was performed only after being approved by the party's central apparatus in Ankara" (Ari, 2004: 50).

⁶⁶ "Sosyal Yardım Kolu Faaliyetlerini Arttırdı", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 6 March 1944. Şanal, *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*, p. 182.

3.5. Concluding Remarks

Majority of the Kayseri population was composed of Muslims in a numerical evaluation; however, the demographical analysis of the population shows differences and changes from period to period in terms of existence of non-Muslims regarding ethnic and religious minorities. In this sense, first of all, it may be said that the conception of the Kayseri province as “conservative” city seems to be based on the changing number of Muslim and non-Muslim population. Secondly, since the beginning of the republican state and single party regime, the industrialization process of the city and industrial development policies and projects in Kayseri provided many spaces for those who were called themselves as the Kemalist, nationalist, conservative and Islamist in order to express their views on politics, culture or economy. Hence, the mid-1940s were times when these voices increased due to multi-party system and gave impetus to the spread of the conservative nationalism in Kayseri. In fact, the Democrat Party got a huge support from the local elites and notables of the city who had previously been the members of the RPP (Cengiz, 2013).

In the Kayseri House, the local society participating in the activities and taking part in the committees was composed of the provincial party members, the powerful local notables, civil servants, teachers, farmers or the educated people of the state and the party in the periphery. The influence of the local elites is highly observed because the rivalry and interest conflict between the locals and non-local actors of the House are intense especially in terms of administrating and controlling the House experience in the Kayseri province (together with controlling other party and state provincial agencies). Complex power dynamics of the locality shaped the decision making processes and works done in accordance with the center’s regulations and policies. The flexible and vague interventions and authority of the party center resulted in dismissal of the state employees due to their alleged unnecessary and undesired attitudes and actions, and had impact on the absence of civil servants in the House. Elections of the House chairman became associated with the power struggles of different interest groups and individuals. The problems on construction of new House building and functioning of the House activities gave rise to the confessions about the

House taking an empty shape. The indifference of members in the House branch committees affected the activities required to be performed by those branches. The activity records and registration books of the branches were depicted as the successes of the House in the official Kemalist discourse, nevertheless, the actual performances for reaching the real people were the opposite. The Kayseri House activity was not deemed failure but something superficial.

CHAPTER 4

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ERCIYES JOURNAL OF THE KAYSERI HOUSE

This chapter mainly deals with the influence of the Erciyes Journal of the Kayseri House on the cultural and national development of the provinces and villages (rural areas) through the acts of spreading the revolutionist principles of Kemalism and by facilitating the nationalization process of the local society together with the local traditional items. As stressed before, the national-modern institutions such as Smerbank were founded for both the rapid industrialization of the country and the city and contemporization of the local society. Together with Smerbank, the Kayseri House was also the most popular cultural space to strengthen the national ties of the society, while they were taking part in free times and making some national and modern works or activities. The formal sketch of Turkish citizen exhibited in the nine activities of the House and every member had impact to shape the nationalization process and modernization project of the House under the influence of the Kayseri party organ. Therefore, the authors or writers in People's Houses journals as the members and actors of the Houses have necessary public duties to "merge the local with the national" (Edensor, 2002: 19).

With a comprehensive analysis, the chapter aims to explain firstly what are the general claims of the People's Houses journals and then the driving factors and activities of Erciyes by referring to its writings and their authors. Since the Houses attempted to publish journals so that the ideal Turkish citizen, culture and identity could become real undeniably and unanimously, as the local cultural publication of the new Turkish regime, the Erciyes journal introduced and contributed to many studies in a great scope of themes and subjects largely including folklore studies for the ideal of Turkishness. In this sense, in contrast to the general discussion of the first section of this chapter,

the other sections mostly focus on the tasks and articles of Erciyes which indicate national education of the people from woman to peasant for ideal Turkish citizens; the Kemalist conceptualization of art, culture and folklore; or the acts of replacing the religious, Ottoman and uncivilized signs placed in history, language and in village life with new meanings of the republican ideals.

4.1. A General Overview of the People's House Journals and Erciyes

To issue or publish a periodical/journal in the Houses was the duty of the Language, History and Literature Branch. This branch, the most indispensable part of the People's House institutional structure for developing the social and cultural reforms of the regime, and for making the core principles of the Republican People's Party widespread and acceptable throughout the country, carried out some works which were mainly dealt with creating a unified nation speaking Turkish by collecting sources that were in line with both Turkish History Thesis and Sun-Language Theory. For instance, in the Turkish nationalist discourse, the folklore and folk culture needed to be well-reviewed, evaluated in the direction of Kemalist populist-nationalist pedagogical factors and so, collected and published firstly on behalf of the House and lastly for the desires of the early republican regime/party (Erdoğan, 2015).

In this respect, the basic argument of the branch for the People's House institution demonstrates that according to the views of the Kemalist cadres, the reforms and ideological acts to nationalize culture, history, music, theatre, sport, health or that is to say, the everyday life in collaboration with attempts to constitute a national identity would be absorbed by "the people". Therefore, this branch and the journals published by it are the important sources of the Kemalist cadres so as to figure out the background of the official discourse echoed by the new regime.

Since ensuring internalization of the Kemalist ideology and giving impetus to the construction of national culture and identity were the core instruments of the branch, every People's House needed to publish a journal. Every journal would be concerned with informing the people about the subjects that lean on modernized style of life along

with "national(ist) sentiments" of the country, collecting local and folk culture oriented sources compatible with the principles of the republic and the party and drawing the picture of an ideal citizen of the republic in which a modern (so-called Westernized) and nationalist person is presented. They also contributed to the studies on villages owing to the village monographs in a peasantist discourse. These monographs had to be written in line with the regulated fundamental guidelines and procedures of the ruling party. Thus, each House journal became an exhibition ground for these works through which "two-headed mission of People's Houses shows itself in the shape of both westernization and exploring the local" (Öztürkmen, 1998: 98). This mission is somewhat concerned with the existence of the House journals.

Besides that, a chief journal for the official formation of Kemalism and as the mirror of nationalist ideals, *Ülkü* had instructing and directing impact on the other journals (Güz, 1995). The editors and writers of *Ülkü* who were the official party authorities sometimes offered suggestions or gave advices/instructions to the Houses and their journals and sometimes criticized or demanded to change their policies of publication in order not to contain any theme, content or discourse which could contradict with the policies, rules or orders of the centre/party (Karpat, 2009: 336).

There were many texts and literary works published in journals which tend to define how a civilized Turkish citizen behave in her/his everyday life and the ways of living in a modernized lifestyle. The local cultural forms of a city or province could take part in the House journals and be only legitimized, if they complied with the national standards of the House mentality. This means that the local elite based part of that province together with the "other local and non-local professionals" of it who must be educated and deeply loyal to regime's reforms and Kemalist ideology (Öztürkmen, 1998: 99) were writing, illustrating and defining the local situation through referring to nation-state paradigm of the People's House question. "It is also instructed the House leaders to urge the local youth to write stories and essays by taking their inspiration from local events, from village and town life and to describe the natural beauties of their lands" (Karpat, 1974: 72).

With regard to *Erciyes Journal of the Kayseri House (1938-1950)*, like the other House journals, Erciyes was one that drew its strength from its House and members and notably local Turkish youth. Fictionalized as a *bölük*⁶⁷ center in the headquarters of "a young and enormous military that takes the offensive toward a dense darkness of idea with the shining and illuminated Culture torch of Atatürk" (Kayseri Halkevi, 1938: 3), the Kayseri House was in charge to submit the journal so as to show and manifest their ideological engagement in the House and to share their idealist commitment for enlightening the local society and population. These motives could be realized through a determined collective identity. From first to last, in accordance with the national culture and identity formation of the new regime, issues and volumes of Erciyes published many works and articles in which modernization project, adoption of Kemalist nationalist-secular ideology and ideal objective to unite state and society were the basic characteristics of the language their writers used. For reaching to the aim of diffusing the nationalist cultural identity, one of the chief figure of the Erciyes journal, Reşat Oğuz described whom was welcomed as the readers of the journal by saying that:

Just as a young student who is in a reliable and exciting school life together with a peasant and worker who lie in the wooden bedstead of Village room at the hours of the resting time of daily village works are able to see subjects in the columns which concern them, every intellectual who has a wish to take benefit from the history, characteristic, flow of life and archaic lambent wit of Kayseri also finds here what they are looking for.

Erciyes is the journal of the entire Kayseri inhabitants and Kayseri.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ The direct relationship between the military forces and nation is the most dominant element of the Turkish nationalism. The military features such as discipline, duty, obedience or defence are incorporated into the citizenship, identities and everyday lives of the people, women, men and the new (young) generations. The "myth of military-nation" emphasizes that:

"military service is not the extension of defence, military or in a general sense political organization, but of culture (...) The military, beginning from the National Struggle, has primarily taken role in the transfer of the Turkish nationalism from enlightened class, written culture to the people and in the popular reproduction of it" (Altınay and Bora, 2008: 143, 146).

⁶⁸ Reşat Oğuz. "Üçüncü Cilde Başlarken", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 25, February 1945, p. 1. "Okul sıralarının şuurulu ve heyecanlı hayatı içinde bulunan genç talebe, bunun yanında günlük köy çalışmalarının dinlenme isteyen saatlerinde Köy odasının peykesine yaslanan köylü ve işçi, sütunlarda

In this regard, it is understandable that the core attempt to "bridge the gap between the intelligentsia and people" of the new regime seems to be kept in mind by the Kayseri House members and thus authors of the journal. They seemed to spend so much time to educate the ambiguous "everyone" through the journal for the state of being "proper and good Turkish citizens", in Füsün Üstel's (2004; 2008) analysis, whose private and social life would be regulated according to the cultural policies and reforms. In particular, education of Turkish child/youth should not be underestimated. The texts and articles referring to the (national) education of the people and youth will be discussed in more detailed ways in the second section of this chapter; nevertheless, as a matter of fact, it is worthy of attention that especially in the late 1940s, Kemalist cadres of the Kayseri House and its journal Erciyes became very anxious about the future and preservation of the country and the Turkish nation.

The intentions of conserving the future of the country contained the case of creating a Turkish child⁶⁹ full of national ideals. Thus, the officials of Erciyes made recommendations, suggestions or warnings and criticisms to the youth which are all based on the morality standards of the republican period and on the disciplinary dimensions of modern nation-state and society. For example, some of "The Answers of Erciyes to Its Readers" titled letter-answering texts demonstrate that young people and students need to be disciplined for ensuring order and progress together. These texts informed about what they should do or not do and also controlled the realm of youth so as to prevent any shift from national culture or cultural construction of the republican regime to external influences. While the House editors emphasizes the

kendini alaka ile saracak konularla karşılaştığı kadar, Kayseri'nin tarihinden, özelliğinden, hayal akışından maziye ait nükte ve zeka parıltısından faydalanmak arzusunu taşıyan her aydın da aradığını burada bulabilecektir. Erciyes bütün Kayserilerin ve kayserinin dergisidir".

⁶⁹ In an article of Erciyes titled "Türk Milliyetçiliği", the writer calls out to the "high school" students. The writer talks about the high quality of Turkishness and mentions that every Turk who believes in the supremacy of the national soul and honour and in "very glorious" Turkish history taking its immortality from heroic senses is "undoubtedly" nationalist. In the end, national character of the youth is drawn: "Do not beat the air and even not worry. In the conscience of Turkish youth, there is no place for others but the ideology of Turkish nationalism as being the most divine ideal". Servet Dindoruk. "Türk Milliyetçiliği", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 50, March 1947, p. 2. "Boşuna uğraşılmasın ve hatta endişe de edilmesin. Türk gençliğinin vicdanında, en kutsal mefkure olan Türk milliyetçiliğinden başka bir ideolojiye yer yoktur".

importance of the journal for the youth to express and introduce themselves, they sometimes answer to the letters in pejorative ways and their statements lead to the thought that they do not desire to see an undisciplined stance and manner and even unorganized style of writing by the youth:

We received your poems that are written about death. It is supposed that you are a little pessimistic because of your engagement with such subjects in this age. Try to see and show the beauty of nature rather such subjects in younger years (Answer to the letter of Pazarören Village Institute Student).⁷⁰

Since Bobstil surpasses the poetry, typically a kind of enthusiasm by the young people to write in that way has increased. You do not elude yourself somehow, too (...) We request from you to send more serious impressions and not to kill your time with this sort of writings (Answer to the letter of a Young Person from Devrek).⁷¹

(...) we read your poem carefully. You have also (complaint) in your young age. Probably querulousness is the sharpest quality of newly grown-up youth (...) We would like to see writings which are typed in the style of folk poems (Answer to the letter of a Young Person from Kaman).⁷²

In these three answers, it can be inferred that because the realm of youth is considered very changeable and open to be influenced (especially culturally) and to disorder (the state of mess), there should be determined measures and regulations to save the youth and thus the country. For the sake of nation, in a nonignorable way, youth has to be monitored in schools, coffeehouses, cinema, streets and of course in family life (Levend, 1936: 716). Cantek mentions similar criticisms of the republican cadres on

⁷⁰ Erciyes. "Erciyesin Okuyucularına Cevapları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 46-7, November-December 1946, p. 47. "Üçüde ölüm üzerine yazılmış olan şiirlerinizi aldık. Bu yaşta böyle konularla uğraşmanız biraz karamsar olduğumuzu zannettiriyor. Gençlikte böyle şeylerden ziyade tabiat güzelliğini görmeye ve göstermeye çalışın".

⁷¹ Erciyes. "Erciyesin Okuyucularına Cevapları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 53, June 1947, p. 33. "Bobsitil tarzı, şiiri de geçtikten bu tarafa, umumiyetle gençlerede bu çeşit yazma hevesi aldı yürüdü. Siz de her nasılsa bundan yakanızı kurtaramamışınız (...) Bize daha ciddi duyuşlar yollamanızı, vaktinizi bu türlü yazılarla öldürmemenizi rica edeceğiz".

⁷² Erciyes. "Erciyesin Okuyucularına Cevapları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 67, August 1948, p. 33. "(...) şiirinizi de dikkatle okuduk. Sizde de genç yaşta bir (şikayet) var. Galiba şikayetçilik yeni yetişen gençlerin en bariz vasfı (...) Yeni, halk şiirleri tarzında yazılmış yazılarınızı bekleriz".

the youth's behaviors, tendencies and cultural preferences especially in 1940s and defines the period he studied as 'puberty (*buluğ çağı*) of the Republic'. This phrase "is compatible with period-specific old-new debates, criticisms of the controlling generation for the young people, their approaches to art and culture and their preferences of fashion." (Cantek, 2013: 11).

Another side of the criticism of the youth is closely related with the symbolizing aspect of the Houses and their journals about "folk" and "folk culture". When examined, three answers seem to project the image of the journal editors who are insisting mostly on the local folkloric culture and its materials in order to make a contribution to the building of nationalisation and the new local history in the periphery. If the youth desires to write a poem or story, they are obliged to do this according to reformulated standards of the folk culture. In fact, the Kemalist cadres and intellectuals were very concerned about the folkways of the "ordinary" people, primarily of peasants and saw them as the sources for the invention of Turkish national culture and identity. However, because the people or peasants and local folkloric materials of them were not in accordance with the new regime's ideological paradigms and revolutionary principles, they had to be reformed and even modernized (Erdoğan, 2015). In this sense, the journals that are charged with the construction of national culture and identity would be supplier and catalyzer in the provinces for making the Kemalist discourse perceivable in the eyes and minds of the Turkish young people.

On the other hand, as the period when these answer texts were written, the political atmosphere of the 1940s might be remembered once again. In particular, the ambiguity that bears on the forms of blending "republican conservatism" (İrem, 2006) with the Kemalist modernism (linked to official nationalism) (İrem, 1997; 2002) and "conservative populism" (Bora and Erdoğan, 2006) with the Kemalist populism (linked to conservative nationalism) in the mid-1940s became somewhat possible in cultural politics and even popularized in the People's Houses and their journals as ideological instruments.

In this context, it might be claimed that the officials and writers of the Kayseri House and its journal Erciyes had to face with this ambiguity and paradox (specifically in

terms of their discourses). It means that as well as they would protect and maintain the Turkish revolutionary principles, they also had to control the mind of the people and youth for preserving the continuity of local nationalization process of culture and identity without making no concessions of locality and local heritage and tradition and to prevent the degeneration of the moral criteria against the West impact.

In the late 1940s, the Kayseri province witnessed the growth of the conservative attitudes and preferences of its local people (mostly the opposing local notables, landowners and provincial small (Muslim) bourgeoisie) which were held back on the behalf of the Turkish nation. Both republican and conservative values began to be effective on their daily life. The political debates on modernity/modernization and civilization were developed in more nationalist-conservative discourses and caused to the constitution of new meanings about the social, cultural and even family lives of the local people. Therefore, if the Erciyes journal's articles of the late 1940s are carefully glanced through, they could be perceived to be in the mainstream of moral themes and arguments on value judgment.

As an example of these articles in the Erciyes journal, H. O. Bekata's⁷³ writing on the loss of the standards of value is worthy of note. He asserts that when the war gave rise

⁷³ H. O. Bekata is an important figure of the ruling party and the periods of the 1930s and 1940s. He is the publisher of the nationalist journal, *Çığır* (1933-1948) and its texts and articles are mostly related to the ideal of youth, nationalism and mostly the Anatolianism. Besides, the advertising of *Çığır* which labels as "journal of national culture" appears in the last pages of Erciyes's volumes of 46-47 and 48-49. Specifically, on the cause of youth, Bekata's thoughts show the moral standards of him, as his article in Erciyes presents to us. In 1942, he explains these thoughts in *Çığır* like that: "the youth is aimless in a suffering thirst. Turkish child is still stray. Personality used for the expression of all grand traits such as morality, *seciye* and *cibilliyet* is individually scarce; it is seen in the nationally rare people". See Bekata, H. O. (1942). *Çığır Dergisi*. Issue 110.

In an article Erciyes named "Atatürk ve Gençlik", Bekata also expresses his worries about the national education of the youth and tells the story about his dialogue with Atatürk in the First Language Congress on this issue while he was at the phase of publishing *Çığır* journal. He asks Atatürk to give an answer to his question about the youth and Atatürk gives the letter about the issue to the deputy of national education, Reşit Galip. However, the issue and his questions become unsolved and unanswered. Then, he says: "Because of that, in the country, a Turkish youth who is proud of past and believes in the future of nation and is trained with the systematic bases of national education and morality suitable to this grand nation is a major ideal". Hıfzı Oğuz Bekata. "Atatürk ve Gençlik", in *Erciyes*. Vol. 4, Issue: 46-7, November-December 1946, p. 6. "*Onun için memlekette, milletin geçmişiyle öğünen, geleceğine inanan ve bu büyük millete yakışan bir milli terbiye ve milli ahlakın sistemli esaslarıyla yetişen bir Türk Gençliği ve onun kafasını sarsan ruhunu tutuşturan müşferek büyük ideal*".

to enrichment and illegal profiteering, there emerged a group of people who waste their life for entertaining, gambling and for their own sake and value judgments rather than for the common interests, rules and values of *cemiyet* (the community or the Turkish nation). Finally, he adds that the country must be protected from the "moral black-marketeers" who disrespect to the common value standards. From this view, it is understood that the moral values of the people but in particular the Turkish child are directly under the guard of the new regime and the party officials or political elites. It is a national(ist) matter.⁷⁴ For the another author, R. Bener as a *tabiye* teacher, specifically "immorality" of the citizens shows a considerable increase and everyone he knows complains about the pessimistic picture of the moral criteria of the country and says that they cannot see the existence of a proper *cemiyet*. Bener offers some suggestions for the situation: If there is no low morality based on being addicted or weak-minded and if every person gets rid of their mistakes and their lack of virtue, immorality will not happen in the *cemiyet* (society).⁷⁵

The reasons behind the recommendations and criticisms of the answers and all articles written on morality display that the acts of the House and its journal, *Erciyes* aim at preserving the label of Turkishness, giving the people confidence and rising collective consciousness in a straightforward way. Actually, tendency on self-confidence is very widespread among the other journals of the People's Houses. That is to say, the Houses and their journals had a heavy responsibility to ensure the instillation of confidence in order for narrowing the gap between the state and society and not for confronting with any opposition.

Although there are many disciplinary answers to readers of the Kemalist cadres in the journal, there is an example which displays a reaction of a young person to the answer of his letter. This thesis, in a sense, will attempt to explain the reactions and voices of the people to the cultural policies and activities of the Kayseri House in chapter 5. However, the answers of the editor to the opposing letter of a high school student

⁷⁴ Hıfzı Oğuz Bekata. "Kıymet Ölçülerimiz Soysuzlaşıyor", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 54, July 1947, p. 1.

⁷⁵ Raşit Bener. "Hayretten Kendimi Alamıyorum", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 80, 1949, p. 5.

including reactions to recommendations and criticism of the editorship are noteworthy to be mentioned. After the editors firstly emphasize their unwillingness to the training of youth in such behaviours as the student displays, they try to clarify what they mean. Some important answers actually uncover the reaction of the student and indicate a sort of authoritarian and normative conceptions of the House members in the eyes of the student:

(...) To advise someone on something that one does not know is not to be self-conceit.

(...) You asked 'are you moralist or poet'. We do not remember attempting to bite off more than we can chew (...)

You disliked poems in the Erciyes journal's issue on Atatürk for being made-to-order; you commanded that 'a poem like Atatürk accords with Atatürk' (...) Every Turk has said something about their *Ata* to the extent that they are able to say...It is what we can do and have. Why we want the training of you, my dear! (Answer to the letter of a High School Student).⁷⁶

In this answer, the last statements are the most arguable to be mentioned for understanding the usage of voice, when the leader of the Turkish Republic become a matter of fact. Because Atatürk and the abstract conceptions of "nation" or "the people" are the most important elements of the Kemalist discourse, the so-called opponent sides of the society even used them for their defences and criticisms. In a tactical way as seen in De Certeau's (1984) works and terms, the student applied to the same official populist rhetoric so as to create awareness to his letter and mainly to the interests of the people who are considered as the source of the unity and social solidarity. Also, the matter of "made to order" is something similar to E. D. Başbuğ's discussions about plays (texts) and performances in theatre in early republican period. Başbuğ mentions

⁷⁶ Erciyes. "Erciyesin Okuyucularına Cevapları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 48-9, January-February 1947 p. 50. "(...) *Bilmediği şey hakkında birisine öğüt vermek kendini büyük görmek değildir.*

(...) *Siz ahlakçı mısınız, şair misiniz? diye sormuşunuz. Böyle başımızdan büyük bir iddiaya kalkıştığımızı hatırlamıyoruz.*

Atatürk sayısındaki şiirleri ismarlama diye beğenmemiş, Atatürk'e, Atatürk gibi şiir yaraşır buyurmuşsunuz. (...) Her Türk Ata'sı için dilinin döndüğü kadar bir şeyler söylemiştir. ... elimizden bu kadar geliyor. Sizlerin yetişmesini niçin istiyoruz kuzum!"

that while they had efforts to awake the national sentiments and to facilitate the reception of symbols and rhetoric deriving from the Kemalist narrative of leader-nation-state, the literary quality of them is bound to the level of "inadequacy", "lifelessness", "the characterless" or "the lack of literary style"; that is to say, because they were written according to the programs and bylaws of the party, they gave the impression of the fact that there is a single narrator and the texts are in same ways and styles written by the author of the other similar text(s) (Başbuğ, 2013: 160-1). So, the voice of the student speaking of "the made to order" indicates that he seems to complain about and even get angry at the repetition of Atatürk imagery⁷⁷ literarily in the same (unity-based) ways and even angry at the act of instructing, controlling and disciplining role of the House journal editors and probably his teachers as the mediators between state and students in terms of strengthening the republican values in the province.

As it is seen, all the answers and the articles of Erciyes consist of the official, nationalist, politico-pedagogical and ultimately moralistic discourses of the House members and thus the Kemalist cadres of the new regime. The official discourse in the People's Houses and their journals in order for self-confidence in the Turkish nation,

⁷⁷ Esra Özyürek (2004) details more intensively her analyses on the increasing commercialization and privatization projects about the imagery of Atatürk in late 1980s and 1990s when popularity stemmed from the state-led modernity of 1930s. The instilment of state symbolism and statist discourse to the citizens as Turkish consumers or "voluntary supporters" facilitates the spread of the core principles and founding reforms of the Turkish state in the context of market based mechanisms. The monumental symbol of the country, Atatürk has become a matter of discussion since his death until today. Especially due to the fact that the question of youth or child is a national duty for the existence of Turkish nation-state and identity, the rise of both sympathy to American cultural products and opposition to them has made the discussion over the youth linked to the political symbol of Atatürk more intensified.

In an article of Erciyes journal, the editor writes that without the national soul or ties to national traditions, a nation cannot reach to contemporary civilization and in this sense, the youth disordered mentally could not increase the value of nation. In an incident he faced and feels sorry about the Turkish youth, the editor mentions a high educated Kayserili young person. This young says him that in their school, there is an Anatolian friend of him who love Atatürk very much and attached the poster of Atatürk going up to Kocatepe to his locker. This friend of him later meet with a graduated young who says him that "I feel pity for you. Even as there is a photo of pretty legged movie star (I do not recall her name), I feel pity for you because you place the photo of Atatürk!". Erciyes. "Marifet Kavluğu Zihniyetli Gençlik Değil", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 71, December 1948, p. 1. "Yahu dedi sana acıyorum. Güzel bacaklı sinema yıldızının (ismi belleğimde kalmadı) resmi varken, Atatürk'ün resmini koyduğun için sana acıyorum". So, the influence of Kemalism, the official ideology of the state in republican period, invents the Kemalist citizens, youth and women and in return, they defend, consume, reproduce and privatize the leader and the national soul for the republic's sake.

sustainability of the Turkish language, and for healthy and moral Turkish citizens is the result of the cultural policies and practices of the state or the party center. Therefore, as the supporters of the reforms and practices of the new regime, the Houses in the periphery would not be incompatible with the discourses. Put it another way, "we have seen how Halkevi members and executive heavily employed a discourse of morality and justified their practice of excluding and 'othering' the local non-elite population 'in order to avoid ugly events' (çirkin hadiseler)" (Lamprou, 2009: 288).

Consequently, it can be noted that the journal provides a broad source for understanding the Kayseri House in terms of its institutional structure, activities of its branches or publishing of cultural policies and nationalist reforms of the state in the journal. Therefore, the conception and more importantly construction of national identity, senses and intentions or of "an ideal (Turkish) citizen" metaphor of the Kemalist cadres and actors are the main notions of the journal and its texts.

The realization of popular/public education (national pedagogy), cultural and social transformation of the people especially in the local context or provinces and national means to mobilize the people ideologically would be possible through the House and so the Erciyes Journal. In this manner, combining the core issues about nation, patriotism, uniformity, populism, civilization, sovereignty or modernity (modernization) with the local qualities of the city/province (Kayseri) in the way of folklore (art and culture or literature), history (and language), sport or economy, Erciyes and its writers tried and tended to work "in practice" for ensuring the unification of the state and society. Like other journals, it was charged with typifying the Kemalist rhetoric and project on guiding and training the society as well as the peasants to be nationalist, secular, moral and literate (Turkish) persons. On the other side, it may not be underestimated whether the journal accomplished this duty and reached to all people of the periphery/province or not.

4.2. Ideal Citizen: Education of the People in the Periphery

The significance of the House journals on the making of "nation or the national" denotes that every Turkish person would be subject to the revolutionary effects and practices of the state and the party. The whole (entire) people as the conception of the Kemalist discourse needed to be dependent on the constructed principles, ideals or the national images of the Turkish society. The necessities of the reforms and penetration of them into the everyday life of the citizens who are seemed to be Turkish were proceeded with the courses, books, speeches, conferences or mostly nationalist symbolic activities of the Houses and lastly the articles, writings or the texts of the House journals. Therefore, the introduction of the cultural policies and the official ideology of the new regime to the society in general and the locals in particular became possible through the Houses journals. In this context, this section aims to relate the articles or texts of Erciyes journal with the formulated policy of national or popular education (*halk terbiyesi*)⁷⁸ and to examine them according to the Kemalist discourse.

For the national, secular and modern state and society, in the first moment, culture and education were supposed to be reformed and transformed. Order, integrity, nationality or solidarity which are based on contemporization and modernization project of the republic would be realized with a national education and pedagogy. The new regime

⁷⁸ Popular education is the core item and aim of the People's Houses as it is explained in the second chapter of this thesis. The presence of nationstate is tied to "the making the people work together as an unit". Thus, by reforming the people through civilization, modernization and nationalization operations, popular education is seen as a phrase in which training for a good, proper, moral or enlightened Turkish person is a compulsory pedagogical matter. Those who are "dandy" (*ziippe*), weakling, have an egoistic pleasure and put the morality and gentility of Turks in danger may threaten the national education (Erciyes, 1948b: 1). Therefore, in a manner of speaking, because the mind of the ruling elite and the intellectuals is wrapped up with the "sense of belatedness", (ideal) citizen education become the indispensable part of the republican morality program to be modern Turkish nation (Lamprou, 2009: 27, 31).

A certain number of articles were written about pedagogy, citizenship and how to be nationally behaved subjects in Kayseri House journal, Erciyes. Here are some examples: Erdoğan, H. (June 1938). "Çocuk ve Terbiye", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 4, pp. 111-112; Gaspralı, N. H. (March 1940). "Seciye", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 14-15, pp. 420-23; Bener, R. (March-April 1946). "Karakter Sağlamlığı", in *Erciyes* Vol. 4, Issue: 38-9, p. 6; Sarı, S. (March-April 1949). "Vatandaşlığı Nasıl Anlıyom", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 74-75, p. 9; Bener, O. (1949) "Öğütler", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 74-75;78-79;80-81 (involving some issues related to the pedagogical discourses such as cleaning, lying, gossiping or begging).

came into action for the education of the people through campaigns, public appearances of Atatürk and the activities and texts of the intelligentsia and Kemalist cadres. In particular, for the survival (*beka*) of nation-state, Atatürk says in a speech that "the education by new Turkish Republic to the new generation is national education" and mentions that the new generation would be loyal to the Turkish nation and state (Kaplan, 2005: 139-40). "One of the first aim of the reforms has been to destroy the rooted and degenerated old mentality; to create a new generation; a youth that falls in love with knowledge, is conscious, strong-willed and dauntless".⁷⁹

From this view, it can be also inferred that the emphasis on the "new generation" implies to both young and old population or male and female.⁸⁰ A mass education may be illustrated in that line: On the one side, due to their primary envisaged roles as the Kemalist intellectuals, the state elites or professionals would be in charge of projecting the modern, civilizing faces of the regime and its Kemalist revolutionary polices in the cities, towns or countryside (villages). In the framework of creating a common national identity and culture for a mass society, they were supposed to be promoters of the transmission of the principles to the people whether they are in urban or rural areas. On the other side, the people who are old, young and not official would be subjects to be enlightened and to the act of awakening their national souls. For instance, in the Erciyes journal, a writing about the question of child which includes the author's story he experienced when he went to a town as a doctor of struggle with malaria shows that the adult people were able to be enlightened and aware of the national issues concerning to the young population of the country. In that story, a native named Güzel Ağa of a *cenup* town said the author that "previously in our villages any child had not found. Nowadays they are filled with children. *Allah* does not give any harm to state and nation" and assumed "every child are soldiers to the state". These words remind the author about the fact that the matter of child is also linked to "the matter of village,

⁷⁹ Hilmi Güçlü. "Çocuk Bayramının Büyük Anlamı", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 51, April 1947, p. 2. "Devrimlerin ilk amaçlarından biri, kökleşen, soysuzlaşan eski zihniyeti yıkmak; yeni bir nesil; gerçek bilgiye aşık, şuurlu, iradeli ve yılmaz bir gençlik yaratmak olmuştur".

⁸⁰ Naci Cıngılı. "Ulusal Bayramımız ve Kutsal Günümüz", in *Erciyes*. Vol. 1, Issue: 6-7-8, 1938, p. 216.

health or defence". The pedagogy and education of a child should not be underestimated. "Today's child is tomorrow's adult. (...) Child is the cause of survival of our state".⁸¹

Moreover, importance of the national education ideology which is depended on the act of training people in the senses of freedom of "idea, knowledge and conscience" and of raising citizens suitable for the new regime (Köker, 2007: 209) points to either the positivist, moral and secular contexts or Turkish language and history oriented assumptions. In particular, the conceptions of civilization, modernization and Westernization in a national/popular education together with social, cultural and even physical factors are embodied in the faith of scientific thought and knowledge. In context of the positivist tendencies, the education ideology is based on this fact: "the work of education is a work which does not bear fruit easily and requires to make effort with a high patience and knowledge on soul"⁸²

Knowledge: a key unlocking doors that are not opened, a strength overcoming all obstacles (...) Life is short and the world of knowledge is larger than expected. In this respect, we have to work, read in all our life experience (...) Science starts with the desire of learning (...) The only medium that brings happiness to individuals and nations is science.⁸³

Accordingly, the process of mobilization for the national education gave impetus to the formation of official ideology in many educational mediums like schools, institutes or universities. To increase the rate of literacy was based on a compulsory education system through which the intelligentsia, teachers, local notables or those having the

⁸¹ Hakkı Aladağ. "Çocuk Meselesi ve Biz", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 51, 1947, p. 3.

⁸² Cemil Sena Ongun. "Öğretim ve Eğitim Hakkında", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 26-7, 1945, p. 4. "Bu iş, ürününü kolay kolay ve birdenbire vermiyen ve ruh üzerinde büyük bir savor ve bilgi ile uğraşmayı gerektiren bir iştir".

⁸³ Fikret Kavafoğlu. "Hayat ve Bilgi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 84-85, 1950, p. 11. "Bilgi: Açılmayan kapıları açan anahtar, bütün güçlükleri yenebilecek bir kuvvettir. (...) Hayat kısa ve bilgi alemi ise tahmin edilmeyecek kadar geniştir. Bu itibarla ömrümüz müddetince çalışmamız, okumamız gerekir. (...) İlim, öğrenmek arzusuyla başlar. (...) Fertleri de milletleri de saadete ulaştıracak biricik vasıta ilimdir".

bureaucratic-elitist culture were training and teaching all citizens to live in a modern nation and to be the part of the civilized world (Ahmad, 1993: 81). An article in the Erciyes Journal makes explanations about the education matter by noting that: "In the strength of a nation's position in the world of humanity and civilization or in independence and integrity of the homeland, the preliminary condition is certainly education and training".⁸⁴ In a local level, the myth of popular education is thus needed to be evaluated in line with the fact which signifies the regime's pedagogical or collective consciousness based efforts to ensure togetherness in a unit (national unity and homogeneity).

Also, the education of the young people, on behalf of the future, was very open to manipulation and control for the political system of the republican era to impose national sentiments, official culture and cultural policies. In the Kayseri House journal, since the young generation is considered the carrier of culture torch of Atatürk, they are the main target to be educated and trained. The pedagogical effect of the journal Erciyes seems more likely to be realized by such attempts as "mobilizing, calling out, recalling, invoking, advising, requesting, warning or urging". The language used by the authors differs according to their interpretations on the national ideals, though creating a morally well-educated youth is generally linked with the Turkishness of the nation. The temperature sometimes rises, intensifies but sometimes becomes moderate in terms of didactic-pedagogical manners and discourses:

The young and hearty generation of tomorrow! (...) You catch up the bright and bountiful era of the Republic!⁸⁵

Atatürk demanded from the youth that they should behave sensitively on the duty of [the Republic] (...) But from which youth? From youth that

⁸⁴ K.Ö. "Kayserinin Bugünkü Öğretim Durumu", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 34-35, 1945, p. 25. "Bir milletin insanlık ve medeniyet alemindeki yerinin sağlamlığında, vatan bütünlüğü ile bağımsızlığında ilk şart, muhakkak ki öğretim ve eğitimidir".

⁸⁵ Hasan Erdoğan. "Çocuk ve Terbiye", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 4, 1938, p. 112. "Ey yarının genç ve dinç nesli! (...) Cumhuriyetin nurlu ve feyizli çağına yetiştin!".

degenerates mentally, conforms to every regime, act without thinking? Of course, not.⁸⁶

(...) they do not forget that this youth swears not to stray away from Atatürk's path, to be worth of him on the holy way, Turkishness (...) hereby, we shout out that Atatürk, who becomes flag in the untouchable, unassailable and unable to reach climax of mountains, flows as a blood in the vessels of the youth, is divinized in our hearts, and overflows our minds by being determination, lives in the youth that runs with the torch of six arrows.⁸⁷

The third of these quotations reflects a considerable approach to the issue based on the youth's responsibility as Turkish young citizens. A Turkish teacher, the Kayseri House chairman between 1947 and 1948 and editor and writer in Erciyes journal while performing some works on folklore of Kayseri, Özyedekçi (later Yedekçiöğlü), expressed his anger against a text published in an Istanbul periodical in the gathering of the people in the Republic Square of Kayseri. The people are likely young (high school) ones as seen in his article dealing with a calling for "Atatürk youth". By this way, he claimed "youth shows their love and belief to Atatürk". The commitment to national sentiments such as republican tradition, party's six arrows as the core reforms and to the cult of Atatürk demonstrates an effort to make the youth and their mentality covered with the Kemalist ideology and reveals the influence of the ideology on civic and public duties of the youth in order to be a strong, patriotic, good or even virtuous Turk. With the desire to construct Kemalist citizens, the political symbols and political-moral standards of the state were brought to the private sphere and personal

⁸⁶ Raşit Bener. "Gençlik ve İhtiyarlık", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 25, 1945, p. 17. "Atatürk, Cumhuriyeti gençliğe emanet ederek bu emanatin üzerinde hassas davranmalarını onlardan istedi. (...) Fakat hangi gençlik? Fikren dejenere, önüne gelen rejime uyan, aklına geleni işleyen gençlikten mi? Şüphesiz hayır".

⁸⁷ Kazım Özyedekçi. "Atatürk'e Dil Uzatılmaz", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 53, 1947, p. 2. "(...) unutmasınlar ki bu gençlik Atası'nın yürüdüğü yoldan ayrılmamaya, ona layık olmaya, mukaddesatları Türklük üzerine and içmişler ve bunu bütün dünyaya ilan etmişlerdir. (...) Bu vesile ile haykırıyoruz ki: Atatürk, bu milletin el uzanmaz, dil uzatılmaz, güç yetmez dağlarının doruklarında bayraklaşan, gençliğin damarında kan olarak dolaşan, gölümüzde ilahlaşan, azim olup dimağlarımızdan taşan, atıye elinde altı okun meş'alesi ile koşan gençlikte yaşamaktadır".

attitudes of the people and the young because moral degeneration, sick old mentality or bad, harmful, unhealthy habits or behaviors are not acceptable and tolerable.

The worry of unhealthiness and backwardness for an ideal Turkish nation led the state and its Kemalist cadres to pay attention on the people's habits and behaviours in their daily lives. The etiquette⁸⁸ rules including the information about health/hygiene, habiting and disciplining in the entertainment, social, cultural or family life, marriage, childcare or male, female or maternal issues would be keys to equate the society with civilization, westernization and even secularization (Atabay, 2009). In an article written about a caricature, because of the lack of order/good manners/etiquette and the deficiency of discipline/education, the author implies that "our" people tend to use the wall as a handkerchief for blowing their nose: "What a shameful thing!", he said.⁸⁹ In another article, it is stated that the people who are "ignorant, stupid, knowledgeable, lazy, dirty, escape from sciences, do not give importance to sayings of doctors or just rely on afterlife for happiness"⁹⁰ ought to be awakened. Therefore, in civilized and modern/contemporary ways, "clean and tidy" spaces and proper attitudes and

⁸⁸ As a reflection of the established and conventional forms of behaviours and morals, etiquette or *adab-ı muaşeret* was articulated in many books, novels in early republican era. In the People's House example, the control of the everyday practices of the local notables and actors according to the rules was assumed through the conferences, activities, books and articles. The modern-Western, civilized but also national social order and the survival of the revolutionary reforms were dependent on these rules and standards. In a brochure published after a conference of the Kayseri House, being a civilized and proper person both for woman and man is borne upon the obligatory rules about saluting, talking, sitting and standing, drinking, dining or dancing in houses, about streets, halls, balls, cinema or meetings on official or non-official issues such as tea or family. In the national matter of fact, the honor shown to the holy flag of the Turkish people and to the anthem of independence are the most important duties. Consequently, "adab-ı muaşeret is so to speak a sort of science... Everyone who says "I am a good human" ought to know it (...) After our great revolution saved woman from cage, veil (*peçe*) and threw bigotry (*taassup*) away, it has made the civilizational principles of the West our national slogans and symbols". It is also clearly discovered in the brochure that the etiquette rules specifically concerning to "woman" such as saluting woman or woman's salutation and to "young girl" (family girl) are drawn the ideological formations of the ideal family model and the Republican modern and secular women and girls. Savaşçın, H. (1938). *Kayseri Halkevinin Konferans Neşriyatı: Adab-ı Muaşeret Seri-1*. Kayseri: Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası, p. 2.

For an extensive analysis of the etiquette rules in terms of the early Republican conception see Mahir's article: Mahir, E. (2005). Etiquette Rules in the Early Republican Period. *Journal of Historical Studies* 3, pp. 15-32.

⁸⁹ Ferdi Fahir. "Bir Karikatürün Hatırlattıkları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 42-3, 1946, p. 41.

⁹⁰ Raşit Bener. "Tahtakuruları ile Neler Konuştum", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 29-30, 1945, p. 6-8.

behaviours which are purified against the wastes/leftovers of the society could contribute to the national building process and the healthy progress of the population.

Also, the younger generations were supposed to be open to the threat of losing their consciousness or the strength of their body as Turks. Primarily, the socialization and leisure time of the young persons as the future guardians of the new Turkish world was under the control of public obligations and moral duties and in the case of the regime's plans for not being rejected, they had to be prevented from uncivilized and unhealthy activities and practices. As the author in Erciyes calls out:

THE YOUNG: First of all, in order to be successful, it is needed to be physically and mentally strong, character-wise. For this reason, you shall move away from drinks that poison your blood, friends who destroy your morality, coffeehouse life and *fena* habits; run to the People's Houses which would give health, knowledge and good habitudes to you.⁹¹

Causing to the formation of greedy people and encouraging the young to the bad, sickly harmful situations, playing cards or gambling and drinking coffee or alcohol were seen the disasters for a nation-state.⁹² Therefore, the local actors of the Kayseri House, bearing in mind that the local society and the Kayseri inhabitants were mostly Muslim and conservative, were in alert not to be out of control and order. Since the executive power of the center hardly dealt with all issues relating to the Houses, the Kayseri House would be obliged to perform consistently and seriously the party bylaws and moralistic official discourses of the state and the Kemalist intellectuals so as to facilitate the spread of modern and more pedagogical habits to the lives and free-times/leisure times of the youth, women, children and even villagers: "In the People's Houses, hygienic knowledge of our people is increasing by the means of seeing the

⁹¹ Hamdi Üçok. "Eşref Zaman ve Eşref Mekan", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 52, 1947, p. 2. "*GENÇLER: Her şeyden önce hayatta muvaffak olmak için bedence ve ruhça kuvetli, sağlam karakterli olmak lazımdır. Bunu için senin kanını zehirleyen içkilerden, ahlakını bozan arkadaşlardan, kahve hayatından ve fena alışkanlıklardan uzaklaşacak sana sağlık, bilgi ve iyi itiyatlar verecek olan, halkevlerine koşacaksın*".

⁹² Baydar. "İnsanlığın ve Milli Benliğimizin Düşmanı: Kumar", in *Erciyes*, vol.7, Issue: 74-75, 1949, p. 21.

movies showing hygiene, the commercials of *terbiye* [education/training] and advices in many posters".⁹³ They had to be both mentally and physically healthy so that the process of national identity and modernity project in the 1930s for (Western) civilized, hygienic and eugenic improvement of the population could be continued in rational ways.

In this regard, a healthy body and a hygienic way of life as the essential social dynamics of a populace are notably depended on the issues of citizenship and civilization. For example, malaria is not just a disease, but a threat for "populace, prosperity, race and for nation-state". Also, in his article of the Erciyes Journal, Doctor Kamil Özkarakaya relates "parasite" (*bit*) matter to "braveness" and the national sentiments and mentions how the superstitious thoughts may lead to a destruction of nation and nationhood:

(...) these absentminded [*gafiller*] do not desire to be saved from their fixed ideas by accepting the statement "Parasite is found in the brave" as the expression of reality (...) [Nevertheless], the real braveness is to escape from parasite... Is there anyone who is braver than a citizen who eliminates the possibility of dragging a nation into disaster by escaping from parasite.⁹⁴

In a scientific and rational level, the strong body of a disciplined person, specifically a male one would be firstly genetically qualified member of the nation, secondly defender of the republican principles regulated together with sports like gymnastics but also the athletics-based forms of the traditional/ancestral Turkish sports like hunting, mountain climbing, skiing (in the example of Kayseri, Erciyes), wrestling or javelin throwing and lastly supporter of the newly emerged regime's body politics and policies. Even the body and private lives of the female people, in terms of the national

⁹³ Etem Seçkin. "Analık", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 31-32, 1945, p. 6. "*Halkevlerimizde sağlığı gösteren sinemalar terbiye reklamları ve afişlerle dolu öğütleri görmekte halkımızın sağlık bilgileri artıyor*".

⁹⁴ Rüştü Özkaralaya. "Bit Yiğitte Bulunmaz", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 26-27, 1945, p. 23. "(...) *bu gafiller "Bit yiğitte bulunur!," sözünü bir hakikatın ifadesi olarak kabulle sabit fikirlerinden kurtulmak istemezler (...) O halde yiğitlik bittten kaçmaktadır... milletin, bir felakete sürüklenme ihtimallini bittten kaçmak suretile ortadan kaldıran vatandaştan daha yiğit kimse olur mu?*".

duty, are the subjects of the regime's discourses and practices in People's Houses. The young male or female people had not to be degenerated and the adults or old ones had to be surveilled (Alemdaroğlu, 2005: 65-6; Alemdaroğlu, 2006: 133-35). They were seen as the symbols of building aesthetically strong and mentally self-confident Turkish people and mainly seen as potential Kemalist civilian soldiers.

Physical education as a national duty was completely associated with the people's health, but broadly with the control of body as a machinery of discipline and an area of disciplinary power. It was also influential to determine the bio-political circumstances of the population and strengthen the moral national civilized capabilities of citizens' bodies (Akin, 2004). "Making strong-willed, not weak, beautiful people, securing the physical health of the youths and meeting the sporting needs of those who are not member of a sport club or not a pupil in any school"⁹⁵ were all objectives of the people's houses as the prominent places of physical, moral, pedagogical training in order to spread the ideal Kemalist aesthetic ideology, to create the disciplined body images and thus to achieve the goal of a modern Western Turkish nation. Sports and every sporting physical and mental activities and exercises should not be about enthusiasm, flighty (*havai*) curiosity or for fun, but must be seen as "national service" (*vatan borcu*). "The future of Turkey is in need of strong, fit and brave shoulders".⁹⁶

In a nation-state, physical education is based mostly on the youth and children so that their existence leads to the continuation of the dominant nationalist ideology. Therefore, the Kemalist regime's sport-oriented actions and claims indicate that every child has a potential to be athletic because of the Turkish racial origins and every young person is obliged to be sturdy, wise, morally well-behaved, beautiful or agile as long as Turkish nation needs them. For the reasons to disseminate sense of self-confidence, to create "beautiful bodies", to make the nation adopted to moral capacity of the reformist principles but mainly to abstain from the risks that could endanger the

⁹⁵ Muvaffak Uyanık. "Sporun Modern Manası ve Halkevleri Spor Şubelerinin Vazifesi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 19, 1943, p. 6-7.

⁹⁶ İ. Aytürk. "Spor ve Spor Kulüplerinin Önemi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 2, 1938, p. 64.

national security, "the level of national fitness and strength became a matter of pride or shame" (Alemdaroğlu, 2005: 65). Training of the youth is a good condition both to maintain the moralizing process and to activate the sublime quality of the Turkish national identity. In *Erciyes Journal*, N. Yücel explains the relations between the youth, sport and Turkishness in gendered and culturally coded male characteristic ways. So-called "shy little boy of the past" is compared with "lively boy of today". If every Turk is born a soldier, as the popular myth of Turkish national culture, "Turk is born in arena, dies in it; Turk is born on the top of horse and dies on it; Turk does not die in bed, it is disgrace".⁹⁷ Militaristic, masculine, heroic-patriotic (warrior-oriented) and nationalist metaphors accelerate the effect of ideological motivation and indoctrination for the future of the Turkish people who are subject to the establishment of the Republican society.

In a sense, nationalist ideology invented for the new generation is arisen from the old generation or the very old-ancient Turkish history and traditions. Since the Ottoman tradition was abandoned and there was a necessity of motive to replace it with a motivating, mobilizing and integrative one (together with conformity, solidarity and unity), the ancient Turkish cultural symbols and signs were frequently and directly used in the Kemalist cultural policies and items. That is also connected with aspiration of the regime's party to place the significance of national security, defence in the minds of the people and to make ancient Turkish tradition equal with the new regime's constructed ideals and cultural expectations. For example, the ancestral-traditional physical activities in the writings of *Erciyes Journal*'s authors were mostly composed of hunting and skiing. In these writings, hunting is signified as "a main and valuable category of national sport which is suitable with the characteristics of the Turkish nation and as a custom embedded in "our ancestors".⁹⁸ As for skiing, it has a "great importance for the Republican government due to its influence on national defence of the homeland"⁹⁹, but it is mostly claimed in writings that skiing together with mountain

⁹⁷ Nevzat Yücel. "Spor ve Gençlik", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 10, 1939, p. 299.

⁹⁸ Nihat Yahyabeyoğlu. "Avcılık ve Avcılar", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 22, 1944, p. 672.

⁹⁹ Mehmet Ötügen. "Kayak Sporunu ve Dağ", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 17, 1941, p. 515.

climbing is historically originated from ancient Turkish tribes especially settled in Central Asia region and that many writers on history of skiing verify the historical presence of skiing in everyday life of the ancient Turkish people.¹⁰⁰

Besides, the availability of skiing and mountain climbing in Kayseri and Erciyes demonstrates that the city and mountain enable a beneficial ground for the Kemalist populist discourses on the newly formed romanticized Anatolia. Erciyes mountain, a medium for cultural formation of the local history and for re-created and re-defined image of the (Turkish) people with civilized characters opens a widened gate to the nationalization and modernization processes. To illustrate, the articles including the Erciyes trips or journeys¹⁰¹ echoes the exact Kemalist discourses, narratives, practices and meanings. Writings on mountaineering and the Erciyes mountain focused on building mountaineering/hiking/skiing institutions and places, transforming the unclimbed mountain into a sport center, diminishing the difficulties of travelling which are all based upon efforts to mass tourism and also preserving the nature to make research on it for scientific purposes (like village excursions). The House members and the journal writers undertook to invite the people -especially the wise and educated ones- to take responsibility for reconstructing the mountain and its landscape according to nationalist sentiment and the assertions of national culture and identity. Muvaffak Uyanık, director of *Maarif* in Kayseri, puts it simply in the journal: "We believe mountaineering institutions will give the youth high personality and training of patriotism".¹⁰² All the ice-mountain climbing equipment are ready to describe new meaning of Erciyes as the space of sporting practices for modernization process: "spike mountain shoes" (crampons), "spike ice climbing sticks" (ice axes), or "climbing

¹⁰⁰ Zeki Velidi Togan. "Eski Türklerde Kayakçılık", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 82-83, 1949, p. 21-25.

¹⁰¹ Erciyes trips or journeys (similar to the Village Excursions), moreover, will be considerably discussed and more interpretively evaluated in chapter 5 by reason of the fact that these trips are crucial to indicate the various and different voices and everyday practices of the House members, local actors, women, villagers, "the others" etc.

¹⁰² Muvaffak Uyanık. "Bir Dağcılık ve Kış Sporları Bölgesi olarak Erciyes", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 22, 1944, p. 665.

ropes"¹⁰³. Because performing mountaineering and using its equipment required professional skills, they had to be taught and thus mountaineering or skiing were seen as the necessary sport activities of the House for body health and physical education. To educate and to regenerate the population on the ways of national superiority and modern society as the unchanged motives of Kemalist intelligentsia, the House members who were mostly urban settlers coming from different cities of Turkey saw the Erciyes mountain a sublime figure that could provide an additional movement to make the nation (for an ideal model) more strong-willed, powerful and beautiful, decisive, highly motivated and controlled or clearly speaking, physically and mentally healthy.

Largely depending upon the transformed and imagined space of Anatolia as a new expression of national culture and identity, the texts of the journal related to mountainous sports in Erciyes refer to the masculine representation of the spaces of health, sport or more specifically "body" through the discourses mainly regarding gender and landscape (Holt, 2008; Morin et al., 2001; Hoven and Horschelmann 2005). T. Bora explains and resorts to the question of "gendering geography" in the example of İsmail Habib Sevük's journey notes by stating that in accordance with nationalist or official discourse of the Republic, national geography brings about depictions of homeland (*vatan, memleket*), landscape, nature or environment which formulate spaces of romanticism and picturesque and also of gendered aestheticization (Bora, 2007: 30). Geographical construction of gender and masculine practices, in the case of the Erciyes mountain, points to both romantic narratives and body-disciplinary policies. The ideal bodies of mountaineers or climbers are subject to the fate of country; in a sense, this seems to make them prepared against hardening of the body and mind in everyday life:

Erciyes is a poet which is written in the middle of homeland's map (...) Human being learns there to struggle with forces of nature; learns firmness, self-sacrifice, the love of homeland and nature, friendship, faithfulness. (...)

¹⁰³ Galip Güneri. "Erciyes'e Cumudiyeden Çıkış", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 19, 1942, p. 576. Sahir Üzel. "Erciyes'in Tepesinde Gördüklerim 2", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 5, July 1938, p. 150.

[Mountain] strengthens as its firmness as the will of human being in one's struggle with nature. ¹⁰⁴

The aspiration of a "disciplined, strong and beautiful" nation as the dominant form of masculine cultural ideology in 1930s and early 1940s was carried out with population control techniques, the regulations on sexuality, gender roles and the social, everyday practices of gendered individuals in society. Therefore, spaces of the masculine shaped spaces of the feminine/womanly, for both the Turkish modernity project and nation-state formation was bearing on the masculine body politics, codes and categorizations. People's Houses of the regime party as the cultural institutions were suitable apparatuses for the image of woman that would be publicly social actor and lead to produce and reproduce the gender roles and codes. In this context, the articles in the Kayseri House's journal have different subjects relating to woman and female body such as rules and principles of being mother, wife, daughter or "how to be a Turkish woman" according to morality-control system and such regulatory discourses on family¹⁰⁵ life, childcare, motherhood; abortion or birth control as biological-scientific

¹⁰⁴ Ötüken. "Kayak Sporü ve Dağ", p. 515. "Erciyes, daima karlı ve mavi gökle birleşen tepelerile vatan haritası ortasına yazılan bir şiiirdir. (...) İnsan orada tabiat kuvvetleriyle mücadele etmesini, metanetini, ferağatini, memleket ve tabiat sevgisini, arkadaşlığı, vefakarlığı öğrenir. (...) [Dağ] İnsan iradesini de tabiat mücadelesinde kendi metaneti kadar kavileştirir".

An instance of his journey notes that is parallel with the Erciyes mountain's imagery on the gendered motives: "(...) However, Çoruh is not that, has no time; (...) flows agilely just as it has always an urgent work. (...) this [cupreous] manly color is so fitting to that athlete river." (Bora, 2007: 30).

Another notable instance in a text of Erciyes journal:

(...) When I take a look at that craggy sharp-pointedness, a shiver runs down my spine because of nature's greatness [azamet] and power [kudret]. (...) Erciyes, conceited about its terrifying grandeur [haşmet], (...) has what a wonderful stand. Erciyes's looking on smaller mountains surrounding it resembles to a sultan's looking down on those who surround him. What an honor?.

Anonymous. "Erciyes'e Çıkarken", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 4, 1938, p. 120. "(...) Başımı kaldırıp bu yalçın sivriliğe baktığım zaman tabiatın azamet ve kudreti ile içim ürperiyor. (...) İnsane dehşet veren haşmetile (...) Erciyesin ne müthiş bir duruşu var?. Etrafını saran kendinden küçük dağlara bakışı, tahtında oturan bir tacidarın etrafındakilere olan hor bakışına benzer. Ne onur bu?."

¹⁰⁵ Ideal model of family is associated with the idealized (civilized) notion of womanhood, motherhood, wife, fatherhood, husband and thus "a good, moral or proper" citizen of the Turkish nation in the early

explanations, that is eugenic policies (the population question). The control of the female body is tied to both moral and biological training of womanhood:

When woman knows and believes she is very important creature for country, far from depending upon this kind of murder [abortion], probably she takes it as her significant duty to make our children improved and enlightened by spreading our roots over every which way and to work for increasing population of country.¹⁰⁶

(...) If we remember that these valuable organs create the armies, all of us have to care about the health of that group [women].¹⁰⁷

"Sturdy" (healthy good) bodies narrated in Kemalist texts of the period were articulated not only for men or male social actors and their bodies, but also for women

Republican period. The moral criteria of being family, wife-husband relations, differences in sex and gender in terms of formation of family are all dependent on invention of the nationalized character of society. In the example of the Kayseri House, Ö. S. Erdi makes a speech on psychology of family concerning mostly with the question of how family life and relations shall be and shall not be. Speaking of that "the family is nucleus of nation" because "deformation of a nation originates firstly from family", the author gives advices to and urges the next generation on such issues as early marriage, behaviors of man and woman and the gaps/differences of age, wealth, religion, blood, nationhood, opinion or education between spouses (wife and husband). Ömer Sıtkı Erdi. (1939). *Aile Psikolojisi*. Kayseri: Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası, p. 1.

As Kandiyoti notes, all these "regulative discourses" are based upon newly created morality understanding. "Like all regulatory discourses, the ideal of modern bourgeois domesticity needed its civilizational "others" and the normalization of certain forms of sexuality and gender was predicated upon critique and stigmatization of others" (Kandiyoti, 2014: 119). In this sense, re-definition of woman's identities, masculinities or family relations in the Kemalist populist discourse was initiated through nation-building perspective of the ruling cadres of the republic.

¹⁰⁶ Etem Seçkin. "Çocuk Düşürmek", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 29-30, 1945, p. 2. "*Kadın kendisini yurt için ne kadar önemli bir varlık olduğunu bilse ve inansa bu şekil cinayetlere bağlanmaka şöyle dursun, belki kökümüzün her tarafa dal budak salıp evlatlarımızın gelişip, aydınlanmasını ve yurdun nüfus yönünden artmasına çalıřmayı mühim bir ödev bilir*".

¹⁰⁷ The statement may be understood clearly through its original version: "(...) *Bu kıymetli organların ordular vücuda getirdiğini hatırlarsak el birliđi ile bu zümrenin sağlıklarıyla hepimiz ilgilenmeliyiz*". The organs mentioned here are not parts of body of a living creature; but mothers (or women). The author of the article titled "Analık [Motherhood]" in *Erciyes* uses the noun, "organ" to refer to motherhood/mother (maternity). Woman, womanhood, state of birth, giving birth and child-rearing are all included in and blended with a sacred word, motherhood. In fact, the sexuality or sexual relations and reproductive functions of woman as fundamental agent of domesticity, fertility, motherhood of a nation are developed in accordance with the hygiene policies, eugenic measures and biological control and protection of population. A mother's womb is surrounded by the discourse of healthy future generations. Etem Seçkin. "Analık", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 31-32, 1945, p. 5-6.

whose images and mostly "bodies" were attached to a disciplinary and controlling mechanism of the regime's policies on physical health and even morality. "Mothers who have strong bodies, sturdy arms and legs" or ideal Turkish women who are highly enlightened and morally educated were supposed to serve as good citizens for reproduction of healthy children and to undertake responsibilities in sphere of family so that the imagination of modern-national Turkish family would be internalized by the whole society so as to prevent any danger or risk concerning to hygienic situation and social existence of nation. "A sturdy mother means a sturdy fetus, child".¹⁰⁸

In case human infants are not born alive or healthy, a national cause breaks out.¹⁰⁹ Particularly, the case of abortion is a matter of life and death. In Erciyes journal, E. Seçkin, a gynecologist in Memleket Hospital of Kayseri, dwells on this issue, abortion by giving warnings, advices to woman or criticizing them severely and 'mercilessly'. Seçkin's expressions may be more meaningful to figure out "having no mercy to abortion":

(...) Is it possible not to be surprised at and hate those who kill our alive pretty children deliberately? Killers of human infants are subject to today's law and religion and they are also criminal among humankind. We know that a part of crimes in step of misdemeanor is forgiven and other part is punished. Alternatively, in time they may be covered up. However, criminal offence of killing is not forgiven. After years, they are punished by falling into hands of public authorities. (...) [Killers] are remembered by uttering curses. (...) [I]f having mercy to this kind of murderers who drink the blood of human infants and consume the existence of country does not mean taking part in murders, then what is it?¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ M. Edip Tarım. "Sağlık Bilgisi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 25, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹ M. Edip Tarım. "Kısırlık Hakkında Bir Kaç Söz", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 24, 1945, p. 13.

¹¹⁰ Etem Seçkin. "Çocuk Düşürmek", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 29-30, 1945, p. 3-4. "(...) *bu canlı sevimli evlatlarımızı kasden öldürenlere hayret ve nefret etmemek mümkün müdür? İnsan yavrularını öldürenler bugünkü yasa ve din bakımından sorumlu olup bunu yapanlarda beşeriyet arasında suçludur. Biliyoruz ki kabahat basamağındaki suçların bir bölümü bağışlanır, bir bölümü de cezalandırılır. Yahut zamanla ört bas olabilir. Lakin katilik bağışlanmaz. Yıllardan sonra yetkili kurumların eline düşerek cezalarını görürler. [Katiller] lanetle anılırlar. (...) Halbuki basit ve alçakcasına irtikap edilen bir kazanç ile insan yavrularının kanını içen memleketin varlığını kemiren bu kabil canilere acımak cinayetlere iştirak etmek değil de nedir?*"

The state's expectations on giving birth, raising child and forming a strong family enabled the Kemalist discourse to be more antagonistic about women who terminated her pregnancy due to some reasons¹¹¹. In fact, the image of real Turkish woman brings up constructed distinctions between urban and peasant/rural/Anatolian woman and well-informed and uninformed woman. In the case of abortion, as an example, apart from a "group" of women, many of them have a little information about health; particularly by reason of "knowing nothing", the spread of "murder" to peasant women is possible and apparent.¹¹² The enlightenment of people is needed. On the other hand, the ugly truth about abortion is not in villages, but in cities. As G. G. Öztan emphasizes, the sense of motherhood does not contain freedom, leisureliness or laziness of urban space and thus rural women as models of traditional gendered roles are much more preferred than urban women (Öztan, 2006: 275-6). Therefore, it may be comprehended that for a good and moral population, based on the idea of self-sacrificing citizenship and de-feminized form of womanhood, women's bodies were established with the approach of "new" and "real Turkish" woman who would be well-informed and enlightened, but also suited for being mothers and wives of the manifested nation.

In a sense, gender roles shaped with meanings and body of a woman were tied to male oriented discourses within a patriarchal society. The republican desires to see de-feminized female bodies, woman's visibility in education, schools, professional jobs (but in controlled ways) and women in housework as wives or mothers demonstrated the significance of national Turkish woman picture for the Kemalist male elites. The physical appearance was related with beauty, purity or transformation which are included and fused with the nationalist drive to rebuild traditional gender codes according to modern, secular and national woman categories and boundaries. In Erciyes journal, Ömer Sıtkı Erdi writes about a questionnaire concerning "why does

¹¹¹ The "criminal" (*cinai*) reasons are listed as follows: "multi-child family, poverty, desire to live an easy life, demand to supply animal desire as one wishes, strange (*eksantrik*) women's fear of deformation of their bodies and their hesitation from childcare which they assume as distress" Özkarakaya. "Çocuk Düşürme ve Zararları", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 24, 1945, p. 9. "Bunların bir çok sebepleri vardır ki başlıcaları şunlardır: çok çocukluluk; fakirlik; rahat bir hayat geçirme arzusu; hayvani arzuyu istediği gibi temin edebilmek isteği; eksantrik kadınların vücutlarının bozulacağı korkusu ve sıkıntı addettikleri çocuk bakımından çekinmeleridir".

¹¹² Seçkin, "Çocuk Düşürmek", p. 4.

woman beautify herself?" and notes some of answers to that question: one says that woman is beautiful but because of responsibilities given by community and family on the shoulder of woman, beauty is lost. Thus, "that fragile person" needs to put on make-up and to dress. Another one who is a professor of natural science says "timidly" that human female was created "very ugly and very short-coming" so were whole female creatures on earth. A beautiful human is healthy and thus has symmetric body lines. In this regard, woman beautify herself for man and to fulfill that shortage by "applying artificial measures". There is a physiological superiority of males in the natural world.¹¹³ What is clearly inferred from those answers is that beauty is something to complete inadequate parts belonging to the picture of woman and her body. This means beauty, beautifulness are associated with morality (behaviors and manners), agility, health or mostly production of national identity and not with entertainment, fashion or earthly pleasure.¹¹⁴

A woman's position and her body were hereby rendered rationalized, secularized, modernized but remaining connected to the nationalist traditional female signs, moral and shared values or domestic responsibilities of women and maintain the controlling, disciplining and transforming ideals of the male body or male bureaucratic structure, the Kemalist's reformist ideals to reorganize, reshape, reconstruct the public and private lives/spheres (Durakbaşa, 1998; Göle, 2010; Arat, 2014). Woman was considered as "symbolic pawn"¹¹⁵, "symbol which represents the boundaries of cultural differences" (Sancar, 2014: 112). The parallel between representations of

¹¹³ Ömer Sıtkı Erdi. "Kadın Niçin Süslenir", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 19, 1942, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ U. B. Bayraktar (2013) explains the situation by citing S.S. Tarcan's approach as follows: "Selim Sırrı (Tarcan), who wrote extensively on sports, related beauty to biological factors. He described the principles underlying beauty thus:

While the species of the nations comprised of the people who know to take care of themselves evolve day by day, it is certain that the nations that remain without care experience degeneration and also that their species become interrupted. [...] It should be well known that the most beautiful people grow in the nations that are most in compliance with the rules of general health.

¹¹⁵ For more detailed information, see Kandiyoti, D. (1989). Women and the Turkish State: Political Actors or Symbolic Pawns. In Nira Yuval Davis and Floya Anthias (Eds.), *Woman-Nation-State* (pp. 126-149). London: Macmillan.

modern (secular) woman and traditional woman and between the myths of modern family and traditionally moral family symbolizing the imagined nationhood of the Kemalist cadres appeared with morality, "order, rationality and discipline" on the behalf of modernization and civilization processes (Arat, 1998: 102). In the example of Kayseri, for educating (young) women to be capable of technical knowledge about "housekeeping, laundry, embroidery and sewing, hat making, fashion, language, cooking, painting" because "the Kayseri people want to learn, know everything; is it not the point of every success?"¹¹⁶ and to be proper housewives, mothers, daughters, the Girls' Institute was there.

Also, while the domestic family roles and positions were learned and taken, just as Kandiyoti (2014: 120-121) mentions that "new modes of dress and consumption became complex signifiers of class, gender, place of origin", Kayseri women, who were visible mostly in the lives of local notables, local elite families of the 1940s when attempts to migrate from rural to urban areas and efforts to adapt to lives, styles or everyday practices of urban elites began to rise, were influenced by changes and transformations in private spheres. Nonetheless, many provincial (Anatolian) women of early Republican period continued to stay in domestic sphere due to the traditional habits and distance of the Kemalist cultural reforms and were neither working in professionally high jobs nor benefiting from high standard education (going to schools). For instance, as the author of the journal explains, Kayseri local dialect of man is different from woman's local dialect. Local woman's dialectic styles and practices such as congratulating for new baby¹¹⁷, going to hamam (Turkish bath)¹¹⁸, shopping in bazaar¹¹⁹, joining society¹²⁰, singing lullaby¹²¹ or walking around¹²²

¹¹⁶ Kemal Dağlıoğlu. "Kız Enstitüsünde", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 14-5, 1940, p. 436-7.

¹¹⁷ HALA. (1947). Kayseri Kadınlarının Gözaydın Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 5(59-60), pp. 17-18.

¹¹⁸ HALA. (1948). Kadınlarının Hamama Gitme Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 6(61-62), pp. 11-13.

¹¹⁹ HALA. (1948). Kadınlarının Alış-Veriş Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 6(63-64), pp. 17-19.

¹²⁰ HALA. (1948). Kadınlarının Derneğe Gitme Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 6(69), pp. 18-20.

¹²¹ HALA. (1949). Kadınlarının Ninni Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 7(72), pp. 29-30.

¹²² HALA. (1949). Kadınlarının Gezmeye Gitme Üslubu. *Erciyes*, 7(73), p. 11.

demonstrate explicitly that "the single field of province which is offered to woman is still house" (Çur, 2013: 124).¹²³ They also demonstrate that the primary duty of woman in province was to become mother as sacred entity in a national Turkish family.

As well as that woman and her body as to reconstruct and reproduce the defined hierarchical codes, categories or norms were identified under the dominant (existing) patriarchal structure of the Kemalist nationalist tradition, the nationalist discourse of this ideology drew the distinction between old and new (Turkish) woman in order to prevent any opponent/"reactionary" movements against the determined imagery of woman in that constructed nation and to make the people (woman or man) from rural to urban grasp the necessity and even obligation of the cultural, political or economic reforms of the regime. Education of woman, in this respect, was to save them from ignorance, backwardness and uncivilized, old-fashioned or unscientific traditions, conditions, habits or manners. The "emancipation of Turkish woman" was the only factor for preserving and maintaining the newly emerged republican values or reconstructed and reshaped gender roles and positions. To enable the issue of emancipation to be perceived and internalized, the author of Erciyes Journal tends to make it sense by distinguishing the old from new:

If we associate new Turkish woman with a picture, the frame of this picture is the old Turkish woman. (...) The old Turkish woman first of all depended upon spirituality. She did not possess the new time conceptions like homeland and nation and knew only two realms including faith and swearing. The old Turkish woman lived in very narrow and closed frame in cases of spirit and *içtima* [assembly], via the *çarşaf* [full-body cloak] shouldering during childhood she dressed so to speak an isolated modesty, via the *peçe* [face veil] covering her face she made her life miserable. With the exception of her close relatives it was not permitted to contact with none of man. (...) Likewise, whole existence of old Turkish woman was left to the responsibility of men. (...) Before revolution Turkish woman was not free. She was living in a

¹²³ For more information about situation and presence of woman in province and the Kayseri House, see Chapter 5.

slavery life. (...) She kept herself alive by being slave of kitchen and baby crib.¹²⁴

New model of womanhood based upon this comparison was formulated in a secular/secularized ground and policy. It was apt to disapprove woman's clothing, veiling in order to highlight the "neuter identity" (Kandiyoti, 2014: 131) so that woman would obtain freedom by getting rid of slavery and would get disconnected from law, moral and training system of that time before Turkish revolution.¹²⁵ That is to say, it mirrored a new Turkish woman in modern daily styles but without any sign of femininity and without any danger of immorality. She would possess the Western knowledge in order to be able to undertake her duties as the national modern woman of her country and to be well-educated and well-enlightened for the criteria of good citizenship. Most of all, in the family (domestic) routines as mothers, wives or daughters, the Turkish women would act rationally and orderly for the ideal transformation of household life according to modern civilized manifestations.

In this point, the secularization of the issues including education, language, politics, citizenship, idea of Turkishness and Turkish nationalism, health, sport, youth, woman, gender roles, household or motherhood and secularizing the public, political, cultural, religiously identified spaces for the people who were supposed to be modern and national and even to get sense of belonging to the new Turkish Republican regime all suggest such arguable questions as how in a province assumed "conservative", the process of secularism as a state and party policy be reflected by the authors of the

¹²⁴ Rıza Sembol. "Yetişen Türk Kadını", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 24, 1945, p. 7-8. "Bu günkü yeni türk kadını bir tabloya benzetirsek; bu tablonun çerçevesi de eski türk kadınıdır. (...) Eski türk kadını herşeyden ziyade maneviyata bağlı idi. En büyük gaye bu inançlarını muhafaza etmek ve hayata ona göre düzen vermek olduğundan maddi bütün endişeler ikinci planda kalırdı. Vatan ve millet gibi yeni zaman meşhurlarına da sahip olmayıp yalnız iman ve küfürdiyarı olmak üzere iki diyar tanırdı. Eski türk kadını, ruhi ve içtimai münasebetlerde çok dar ve kapalı bir çerçeve içinde yaşardı, daha çocukken yüklendiği çarşafı adeta tecrit edilmiş bir haya girer, yüzüne çektiği peçe ile dünyayı kendine zindan ederdi. En yakın akrabalarından başka hiçbir erkekle temasa gelmesine müsaade edilmezdi. (...) Keza eski türk kadınının bütün varlığı erkeklerinin mes'uliyetine terkedilmiştir. (...) İnkılaptan evvel türk kadını hür değildi. Kulluk hayatı içerisinde yaşıyordu. (...) kendisini mutfak ve beşik mahkumu olarak yaşattıyordu".

¹²⁵ Rıza Sembol. "Yetişen Türk Kadını", p. 8.

Erciyes Journal and how adaptable the authors are to explain the process and its effects on religion, culture and identity, more particularly in case of Kayseri.

4.3. The Argument of Secularism in the "Conservative" Kayseri

In Erciyes Journal of the Kayseri House, the articles solely relating to religion were written in the 1940s except the article series about *medrese* (madrassa) memories of a journal author in 1930s. With a consolidating political atmosphere of the 1930s and centralization of authority through single party system, the cultural changes and transformations were realized under the state control (and indeed by administrative organs of the ruling party). In this regard, the article series about medrese memories demonstrate that the narratives of reformist and regulatory policies and mostly the official discourse which bears on categories of the old versus new, the modern versus the backward, civilized versus traditional or the revolutionary versus reactionary were fairly employed as the indicators of the nationalist project of the regime so as to reorganize the public sphere by means of breaking ties with the past and to recast religion and Islam by placing Turkishness, collective Turkish national identity and science and progress by the way of secularism policy. For the author, writing these memories is "not attacking to medrese recklessly but revealing the truth".¹²⁶

Medrese, in G. Makdisi (1981: 27) words, "is the Muslim institution of learning per excellence" or may be clearly defined as the traditional institution of Islamic education. In the secularization project, medrese system is also deemed as the part of religious education system and was ended with the establishment of nationalist educational reforms in the early Republican period. According to Zürcher (2000: 271-272), it means "attacking to ulema, the traditional castles of institutionalized Islam"; however, the Kemalist official discourse emphasizes the opposite, "not attacking" as explained above in the article. This means that the article about medrese memory of the author

¹²⁶ Hüsnü Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları ve Karakuvvet", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 2, 1938, p. 37.

points to the dual character of nationalist narration: the first is distance-discrimination from the past and the second is relationship-unity of Turkish-Muslim society.

Those who make medrese guilty out of its original holy situation were ignorant, very ignorant [*eçhel*] Sultans of time, careless lazy government of that time. They are matters [*heyüla*] that pretend to be ulema of that time. However, the generation who reached to era of medrese and are still alive are not sinful a little bit in this case.¹²⁷

Also, it is worthy to mention the author's response to Medicine History Institute directorship's worry on a devastated medrese picture used in his second article of memory series so as to comprehend the national-secular ideals for distancing the republican tradition and history from the Ottoman past especially in terms of the caliphate-sultanate authority in the Ottoman period:

What I want to say is that it is not unfairness if we extend the high sensibility of their excellencies to any historical medrese which the sultanate, *softalık* laid in ruins.¹²⁸

The author continues to tell "tragic and comic" scenes of medrese system and of his experiences by underlining the criteria of backwardness in this system and the list is the following:

1-One who receives training of philosophy in medrese becomes atheistic [*zındık*].

2-One who engages in the Turkish literature becomes *nauzübillah* [we seek refuge in Allah] heretic [*kafir*].

¹²⁷ Hüsnü Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları ve Karakuvvet", p. 38. "Medreseleri aslındaki kutsal durumdan suçlu hale koyan zamanın cahil eçhel Padişahları o zamanın gafil uyuşuk hükümetidi. O zamanın ulema geçinen heyülalarıdır. Yoksa Medrese devrine yetişen ve halen sağ olan neslin bu işte zerre kadar günahı yoktur".

Heyula means in English "matter". See E. J. W. Gibb. (1900). *A History of Ottoman Poetry: Volume 1*. London: Luzac & Co, p. 45.

¹²⁸ Hüsnü Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları: Nasara Yensuru", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 4, 1938, p. 100. "Demek istiyorum ki zatı alilerinin yüksek hassasiyetini, saltanatın, softalığın harabeye çevirdiği her hangi tarihsel medreseye teşmil etsek insafsızlık olmaz".

3-Engaging in natural sciences in medrese is not *şeran* [according to the Sharia law] lawful [*caiz*].

4-Reciving training of history, geography *bidatı seyyiedir*.

5-Painting/Drawing in medrese means *eliyazubillah* [Allah forbid] idolatry [putperestlik].

6-Writing so much in medrese is already the sign of swearing.

7- Because there is no language of grave and heaven, writing text in Turkish is unpleasant.¹²⁹

This statements display the broad influence of the Turkish language in secularist callings for the Kemalists to remind the Turkish youth the past's unscientific, anti-progressive, irrational, pro-sharia, reactionary or superstitious expressions through the negative ways vis-a-vis national, civilized, secular characteristics of Turkishness. It is manifested here that the official discourse presents a "backwardness" which is not of pre-Islamic Turkish (ancient Anatolian) history but belongs to the history of Ottoman Empire. From the point of the author, the list numbered above reflects the considerations seen as against the Sharia law. In this regard, as Ahmad (1993: 80) states, the iconic Sharia law had to be come to an end and for spreading the Turkish language to all the populace, alphabet (the Latin instead of the Arabic) had to be simplified. In the example of medrese system, the author gives information about a traditional symbolic fifteen years training process called '*nasara yensuru*' for learning Arabic grammar when according to the author, the medrese pupils who know reading the Quran a little bit from its cover and enters into the process at ages between 12 and

¹²⁹ Hüsnü Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları ve Karakuvvet", p. 37-8.

"1-Medresede felsefe okuyan zındık olur.

2-Medresede Türkçe edebiyatla iştiğal eden nauzübillah kafir olur.

3-Medresede Tabii ilimlerle meşgul olmak şeran caiz değildir.

4-Medresede Tarih, coğrafya okumak bidatı seyyiedir.

5-Medresede resim yapmak eliyazubillah put perestlik demektir.

6-Medresede çok yazı yazmak zaten alamehi küfürdür.

7-Medresede kabir ve cennet lisanı olmadığı için Türkçe eser yazmak mekruhtur".

15 became gradually dunderhead by memorizing the Arabic grammar night and day but not understanding anything.¹³⁰

There were medrese pupils who wanted to escape from sleeping continuously by tea and coffee just as there were pupils who applied vinegar to their face, eyes in order for not sleeping at night.¹³¹

Lastly, the author's memories concerning to the concepts of mosque and *namaz* (ritual prayer) puts official discourse of the secularism project in a more debatable ground for the purposes of encouraging religious reform among the republicans and legitimizing the act of refashioning the Islamic worship practices to give a national look or appearance. In his article named '*Fodla ve Tas Muharebeleri*', the author narrates his memory by telling the story about how the medrese pupils behaved to worship and perform the *namaz* in mosque, when *fodla*¹³² was the reality:

[In the case of the number of *fodla*] our Suleymaniye district was so crafty: It was limited only for those who stopped by *imaret* [alms house], following *sabah namazı* [a morning prayer] in Suleymaniye mosque. (...) However, not everyone could go to mosque by waking up for *sabah namazı* and the pupils who lived their lives as being lazy could not wake up early. *Mektepli* pupils like us ran to the door of mosque as if they performed the *namaz* and came back to medrese with double *fodla* in their hands. It was a must to wear *sarik* [Islamic hat] while going to emaret. For this reason, sometimes one *sarik* was in a half an hour interchanged through three or four heads.¹³³

¹³⁰ Hüsni Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları: Nasara Yensuru", p. 97-9.

¹³¹ Hüsni Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları: Nasara Yensuru", p. 99. "*Gece uyumamak için yüzüne, gözüne sirke süren olduğu gibi mütamadiyen çay kahve ile uykuyu kaçırmak isteyen meraklı mollalarda bulunurdu*".

¹³² The author describes *fodla* as a kind of pide (round and flat bread) distributed by medrese schools in Istanbul to those who stays and resides there before the time when the author wrote these memories Hüsni Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları: Fodla ve Tas Muharebeleri", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 3, 1938, p. 65.

¹³³ Hüsni Savaşçın. "Medrese Hatıraları: Fodla ve Tas Muharebeleri", p. 65. "*Bu hususta bizim Sülemaniye semti fazla kurnazdı: Sabah namazını Süleymaniye camiide kılarak imarete uğrayanlara inhisar etmişti. (...) Halbuki sabah namazı uyanıp camiye gitmek herkesin harcı olmadığı gibi hayatı ataletle geçen mollalarerken uyanamazlardı. Bizim gibi bi namaz mektepli mollalar süratle cami kapusunda koşarnamaz kılmış gibi oradan imarete giden ve elinde çifte fodla ile medreseye dönerdi.*

Worshipping or performing *namaz* (ritual prayer) in mosques as an important part of the Islamic tradition was deemed crucial for the secularization process and thus for Turkish nationalist ideology so as to be reformed and changed but not completely abolished because the *namaz* had been embedded in the daily rituals of the Turkish society since the Ottoman period. For the Turkification of Islam or nationalization of Islam, the Arabic and Persian influences in worship and thus in daily ritual prayers and the Quran were initially needed to be removed and the language of Islam had to be translated into a purified Turkish; that is, it was able to be read, listened and recited in Turkish. The leading attempt to nationalize the Islamic language and way of life was to reform *ezan* (the call for prayer) so that state's control on religion continued to be publicly accepted. Considering the nationalist and secularist policies of the ruling party, the recitation of *ezan* in Turkish was seemed to be fundamental to "the promotion of a vernacular Islam" (Azak, 2010: 60). However, the controlling and regulative atmosphere of 1930s for the Kemalists transformed with the step to multi-party system and then intensity of controversies, critiques and oppositions to the Turkish *ezan* question increased in a greater extent. According to Azak (2010: 61-84), the opposition or conservative reaction was directed to the secular (Westernized and modernized) character of the policy of Turkish *ezan* but not on the Kemalist nationalization process, since the conservative nationalist discourse introduced a national identity preserving the originality of Islam and glorifying the Ottoman past.

On the contrary, the Kemalist discourse associated these oppositions with anti-secularist reactionary movements and regarded them strictly against the Kemalist Revolution and the republican legacy. In the Erciyes journal, an invented poem named "Türkçe Ezan İstemiyene/To Those Who Do Not Want Turkish Ezan" illustrates how the secularist language of the ruling party was internalized and employed by the authors, writers of journals and periodicals; by the members, actors of the party and the people's houses and supporters of the Kemalist cultural and political reforms:

Emarete giderken başında sarık olmak şarttı. Onun için bazan bir sarık, yarım saat içinde üç, dörtkafayı değiştirdi".

Oh! Ignorant who does not know what religion is (...) Oh! Religionist oh! The masked color of Muslim (...) Had this nation called for years Allah as “Ekber” [God is great], The same virtue now calls as “Ulu Tanrı” [God is great] (...) Oh! You! The dark force, shall not rise from the grave, Even if reciting ezan like that [with the old version] a thousand times, shall you not be spoiled (...) I am Turk, “my ezan” will be recited in Turkish, the wishes of a couple of bigots will not be fulfilled (Aydüz, 1949: 31).¹³⁴

This sort of a Kemalist interpretation demonstrates that the oppositions and debates on Turkish ezan and secularization projects and policies to reduce the influence of Islam in public practices were seen as the anti-secularist movements which involved in Azak’s words (2010: 76), “the betrayal of the Kemalist reforms (*Kemalist inkılaplara ihanet*), a step backward (*geriye bir adım*) or the sign of reactionaries rising from the grave (*hortlayan irtica*)”.

On the other side, actually, the Erciyes journal’s articles about religion published in the late 1940s echoed clearly the increasing debates on secularism and religion and also echoed the writers’ efforts and enthusiasms to enlighten local society about what is religion in terms of secularism and about the “true” meaning of secularism. When it came to religion and Islam, the writers engaged in the rising impact of conservative nationalist discourse in the mid-1940s (Bora, 2003: 125). This means that specifically in the case of the Kayseri province, the articles displayed not only the demand of reconciling religion with secularism which would not challenge the religious practices, symbols and values of “the people” but also the ideal populist endeavor to maintain the Kemalist republican ideology of reinterpreting and reforming religion and Islam on behalf of civilization and modernization in the process of construction of Turkish national identity (Mert, 2006; Bora and Canefe, 2008). That is why a positivist

¹³⁴ Şevket Aydüz. “Türkçe Ezan İstemiyene”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 78-79, 1949, p. 31. “Ey! din ne demek olduğunu bilmeyen eçhel (...) Ey! ham sofı, ey! müslümanın maskeli rengi (...) Allahına “Ekber” dedi yıllarca bu millet, Şimdi “Uludur Tanrı” diyor aynı fazilet (...) Sen ey! kara kuvvet, yeniden hortlayamazsın Bin böyle ezan okusan yüz bulamazsın (...) Türküm “ezanım” türkçe okunmuş olacaktır, Bir kaç yobazın isteği yer bulamayacaktır”.

perspective of Kemalism to religion, Islam and secularism penetrates into the mind of the local members or actors of the People's Houses and the ruling party.

The association of secularism with “anti-religion” (or atheism) and being “against Islam” by the opponents was one of the subjects of the writers. One strives to shed light on the issue by expressing that secularism depends upon firstly the freedom of conscience through which each individual faces Allah directly and secondly the refusal of superstitions that give damage to spirituality and morality.¹³⁵ The other one gives explanation for the issue by criticizing the work of N. Ş. Kösemihaloğlu titled “Allah Nedir?/What is Allah?” and claims that a collective unity of society is not the source of religion and Allah has got the quality of being divine but societies has not due to their lack of creativity and that collectivity cannot be related to Allah and relating with it means not knowing Allah.¹³⁶ Also, from the view of Z. Yörük (2008: 315-316), the nationalization of religion and Islam led by the state in accordance with the secularism policy had to be approved through the embodiment of the sacred Other, Atatürk who is symbolized as Turk “becoming god” by means of his copied photography.¹³⁷

As for the religious ceremonies, bairams/feasts and celebrations regarding the Muslim population of the country and the Kayseri in particular, they are also interpreted in the Erciyes journal in terms of nationalizing Islam and reforming and regulating religion under the control mechanism of the ruling party and guidance of the state. Namely, as the writer of the journal states, the Sacrifice (*Kurban*) Feast, an important issue that needs to be considered in the context of national economy should be reorganized by conforming to the secular identity of the new regime as regards to the national purposes and benefits. It is undeniable subject because “benefits of the national and religious holidays living in minds and consciences are higher on account of the national unity and solidarity”.¹³⁸ In addition, A. R. Önder writes on the fasting and bairam period and

¹³⁵ Rahmi Taşçıoğlu. “Din ve Cemiyet”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 81, 1949, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Recep Tekmen. “Allah Nedir?”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 82-3, 1949, p. 17-18.

¹³⁷ N. T. Ulutuğ. “Tanrılaşan Türk”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 82-83, 1949, p. 3-6.

¹³⁸ A. Hilmi Kalaç. “Kurban Bayramı”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 57-58, 1947, p. 17.

ceremonies of the Alevi and notes that they do not fast in Ramadan and not worship in the namaz but they have their own fasting days and bairams.¹³⁹ In this manner, it may be manifested that the author's attention to the religious life of the Alevi associates with the arguments of I. H. Baltacıođlu who sees the Alevism as a belief "fusing Islam with Turkish culture and civilization" (Azak, 2010: 83) in accordance with the secularization process.

Besides, it is worthy of notice in the journal that because of the criticism to secularism as anti-religion and the ongoing atmosphere of the rising oppositions to secularism and even to the People's Houses, Önder seems to consider it necessary to draw a parallel between the people's houses and mosque so that these two "holy places" might be perceived not to be separate from each other, as both have the qualities of training and educating and specifically the existence of the people's houses might be continued without any intervention. As a matter of fact, the experience of People's Houses was mostly challenged by the conservative nationalists (like criticisms of Adnan Menderes) who were saying that the "place of culture" turned into westernized, modernized and elitist institution of the republican party and could not carry the responsibility to be supporter of "true" Turkish Anatolian local culture and identity. Hence, while some considerations of them signified that the religion needed to be reformed and cleaned up from its superstitious elements, the others reflected the religion as the indispensable feature of the Turkish national identity. Thus, to form relationship between the houses and mosques as the religious (traditional) places is not a hostile or conflictual attitude for the author. The belief of the author concentrates on either effort to nationalize religion and Islam or act to replace the religious/sacred or the Islamic with the secular (profane). Instead of mosques, the people's house could be recognized as meeting, socializing and training place. It encompasses science, fine art, philosophy, religion and nationhood all together. It is a liberty center, not a bigotry or fanaticism organization and it would not be "a new temple which destroys the mosques".¹⁴⁰ Consequently, in the Kemalist discourse, the traditional religious

¹³⁹ A. Rıza Önder. "Pilvenkilerde Oruç ve Bayram", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 74-75, 1949, p. 7-8.

¹⁴⁰ A. Rıza Önder. "Halkevi-Cami", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 38-39, 1946, p. 4-5.

symbols, popular icons and places or areas of “holiness” were attached to the process of secularization and nationalization.

4.4. State of Art, Culture and Folklore: Modernized or Nationalized?

The articulation of “a cultural revolution not seen in any part of world”¹⁴¹ and “seeing Turks as superior nation”¹⁴² shaped the nationalist considerations of the Republican and urban elites that emphasized a synthesis of both modern secular aesthetic characteristics and pre-Islamic Turkic cultural qualities or the local Anatolian elements. The argument on culture and civilization was expressed through the historical roots of Turkishness, meaning that true Turkish culture not only stemmed from the villages, peasants of the Anatolian peninsula but also originated from the cultural identity of the Central Asian Turkish societies. In this regard, art, culture and folklore are intersected so long as the nationalization process is linked to “appropriate and proper” reinterpretation and modernist representation of artistic and local cultural forms which are transformed into more pedagogical contexts and conformed to the revolutionary spirit of the new nation-state formation. Further, the taste of the people and audience appreciation were taken into consideration profoundly for the populist endeavor to transmit the reconstructed and standardized (authorized) discourse of the Turkish national culture essentially called as culture of the “Turkish folk” to the receivers, people invented homogenously in the narration construction process of the official ideology (Erdoğan, 2015; Öztürkmen, 1998; Kaptan, 2006).

To find the real national culture and identity among the peasants living in towns and villages and providing the folkloric supplies in their folk lives by performing unspoiled folkloric acts, the People’s Houses along with their publications and journals were engaged with collecting the folkloric, traditional art forms and materials from the different regions of the country and had duty of assisting the Kemalist cadres or the

¹⁴¹ Naci Cingilli. “Ulusal Bayramımız ve Kutsal Günümüz”, p. 216.

¹⁴² Naci Cingilli. “Talas Kamunu: Folklor Kaynağı I”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 3, 1938, p. 88.

republican elites of the center to decide whether the folk element is tolerable or should be revived and reprocessed for changing and eliminating any harmful or inconvenient parts of it on behalf of pure, authentic, genuine Turkish values and national culture of Turks. In this respect, as İ. Başgöz points out;

(...) each folklore genre had a special value for the nation: proverbs reflected the high morals and philosophy of the Turkish ancestors, epics exemplified Turkish heroism, riddles demonstrated the cleverness and finesse of the Turkish mind, folk poetry revealed the natural sentiments of the people; in sum, folklore as a whole expressed the national spirit which had been undermined for centuries (Başgöz, 1972: 171).

In a similar vein, Öztürkmen mentions that concern of the People's Houses journals on folklore reflected "a new regional consciousness" which was based largely upon the nationalized character of culture and affected the Turkish national culture through which frame of "a new local history" could be drawn (Öztürkmen, 1998: 119). Moreover, the aim of folkloric inquires and studies were almost identical: "to implement the principle of towards the people; that is, to destroy the gap between the people and the elite class".¹⁴³

Erciyes journal has a great number of articles focusing on folklore and involving studies and works about it or folk culture and literature ranging from folk (popular) tales¹⁴⁴, plays¹⁴⁵, poems-songs (*deyiş*, *koşma*, *semai*, *divan*, *destan*, *türkü*)¹⁴⁶, epics-

¹⁴³ Kazım Özyedekçi. "Kayseri Ağzı Kelimeler Üzerinde Araştırmalar I", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 23, 1944, p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ See, Önder, A. R. (1948). Padişahın Rüyası. *Erciyes*. 6(65-66): 29-31; Önder, A. R. (1948). Kureyşi ve Bamasur. *Erciyes*. 6(67): 23.

¹⁴⁵ See, Özyedekçi, K. (1946). Kayseri Çocuklarının Mahalli Oyunları I. *Erciyes*. 4(44-45); Özyedekçi, K. (1947). Kayseri Çocuklarının Mahalli Oyunları II-III-IV. *Erciyes*. 5(48-49; 52; 55-56).

¹⁴⁶ See, Kalkanoğlu, M. (1948). Anadolu Köylerinden Ağıtlar ve Deyişler. *Erciyes*. 6(65-66): 17; Dizdaroğlu, H. (1948). Aşık Ömer'in Yeni Şiirleri. *Erciyes*. 6(71): 20-21; Canbulat, C. (1949). Karacaoğlandan Yeni Deyişler. *Erciyes*. 7(81): 8.

legends¹⁴⁷, proverbs-idioms¹⁴⁸, riddles¹⁴⁹, *manis*¹⁵⁰ and local accents or pronunciation of words and regional dialects¹⁵¹ to folk artists, poets, minstrels (*aşık, ozan*)¹⁵², that is, those leading figures who lives or lived in the region and formed and performed a folkloric work in the villages or towns of the Kayseri province. Collectors of all these folk cultural forms and figures were composed of educated but “amateur” local researcher-writers generally including teachers (i.e. Kazım Özyedekçi, a regular author on folklore studies) or civil servants (i.e. A. R. Önder, a lawyer, another leading author of the journal on history of Kayseri press and folk culture). They were born or resided in Kayseri and inclined to the Kemalist discourse of creating a Turkish cultural heritage by making researches and studies for the national image of pure Anatolia and serving for constructing a “standardized and homogenized language” (Kaptan, 2006: 38) and unified folk culture. As Öztürkmen (1998: 99) states, in terms of studies on local cultural forms, the authors of the People’s Houses favored the cultural reforms and committed to the new regime and Erdoğan (2015) argues that even though the folk (popular) cultural forms were written as they were, social engineering project of the republic was dominant in the writings and they were selected and reprocessed according to official ideological principles, aims and concerns.

¹⁴⁷ See, Önder, A. R. (1945). Munzur Efsanesi. *Erciyes*. 3(31-32): 19-20; Önder, A. R. (1948). Çoban Baba Efsanesi. *Erciyes*. 6(61-62): 7; Özyedekçi, K. (1947). Çerkez Mahmud’un Destanı. *Erciyes*. 5(51): 29-30; Aladağ, İ. H. (1947). Yemen Destanı. *Erciyes*. 5(54): 15-16.

¹⁴⁸ See, Ayrıl, S. (1943). Kayseride Söylenen Atasözleri. *Erciyes*. 2(21): 639; Özyedekçi, K. (1946). Kayseri Ağzı Deyimler. *Erciyes*. 4(44-45): 8; Önder, A. R. (1949). Pertekten Derlenmiş Kelimeler, Deyimler, Atasözleri. *Erciyes*. 7(82-83): 19-20.

¹⁴⁹ See, Özyedekçi, K. (1946). Kayseri’de Söylenen Bilmeli Matallar I. *Erciyes*. 4(44-45): 22-25; Özyedekçi, K. (1947). Kayseri’de Söylenen Bilmeli Matallar II. *Erciyes*. 5(48-49): 35-37.

¹⁵⁰ See, Önder, A. R. (1947). Maniler. *Erciyes*. 5(52): 29-32.

¹⁵¹ See, Özyedekçi, K. (1944-1949). Kayseri Ağzı Kelimeler Üzerine Araştırmalar I-XXVIII. *Erciyes*. In these serials, the author tries to discover distinctiveness and variety in the local dialects of Kayseri.

¹⁵² See, Kum, N. (1938). Aşık Cafer Tan. *Erciyes*. 1(3): 92-93; Okay, H. N. (1940). Seyrani. *Erciyes*. 2(14-15): 424-431; Okay, H. N. and Soysal N. (1939). Erkiletli Aşık Hasan. *Erciyes*. 1(10): 284; Bayraktar, Ş. (1940). Karaca Oğlan. *Erciyes*. 1(16): 484-486; Önder, A. R. (1945). Kadın Halk Şairi Şerife Soykan. *Erciyes*. 3(26-27): 15-18.

In the Erciyes journal, first of all, it is obvious that while collecting the folkloric materials and selecting them for commenting about their regional or local importance and values, the authors in some cases, obtained information not directly from those who were creators of folkloric supplies; that is, they either collected the data by means of written sources about them (namely *cönks*) or were helped by someone who “knows” anything about the creators and their works without regarding any scientific and methodological dimension in the process of researching. For example, H. N. Okay wrote several articles about a folk poet in Kayseri (*Seyrani*) that were mostly composed of same information taken from a single book written for the poet and interestingly, it was then confessed that the sameness and recollection process caused to some mistakes and problems in the collection act. In this sense, it is obvious that such situation may lead to question consistency and sufficiency of the facts in the supposed folk culture, as long as the official discourse of the republican regime is to reinvent the history of the Anatolian Turks and the Anatolian folklore.¹⁵³ In addition to that example, a kind of epic lament (*ağıt*) sung by a villager woman was published in the journal and according to the article, this song and the information of why she sang this lament were collected from a driver (*arabacı*).¹⁵⁴ This kind of folk song in a lamenting style is unique in the case of Kayseri because as Özyedekçi, who even collected another lament from a student of him¹⁵⁵, complained and felt sorry, pains or incidents of the people in daily life could not be interested and appraised in the folklore studies in Kayseri.¹⁵⁶ Besides, the folk culture is referred to the oral or verbal traditions and thus the authentic quality is covered with the everydayness of a folkloric piece. However, the tendency to form a pure and true folk culture somehow means neglecting everyday life interpretations of people and is chained to both nationalist and populist

¹⁵³ Haşim Nezihi Okay. “Seyrani”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 14-15, 1940, p. 431.

¹⁵⁴ K.Ö. “Boz Ahmet’in Osman’ın Destanı”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 42-43, 1946, p. 34.

¹⁵⁵ Kazım Özyedekçi. “Çerkez Mahmud’un Destanı”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 51, 1947, p. 29.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

interpretations of the authors of the Houses while collecting, selecting, reviewing and publishing the folkloric pieces (Erdoğan, 2015).

Secondly, the articles specifically about the folk poems and artists were written to publicize them but by giving opinions, criticisms in terms of their language and style and by evaluating and presenting the collected works as the works of “the day” which makes them harmonized and modified with the cultural policies and ideological statements of the Kemalist revolution. The high moral values and morality of the people (folk) were sometimes highlighted; or the reactionary, superstitious and religious dimensions of the folk culture were specified for making it free and cleaned up from those ideas and for entirely eliminating them¹⁵⁷. N. Kum defined a folk poet as “a well-behaved, good mannered, quiet and inoffensive farmer”.¹⁵⁸ N. Okay claimed that a poet he wrote about “seems to be a religionist man”, since he was “unfortunately (...) influenced by the classical Ottoman poetry” (*Divan literature*) because of his medrese education background.¹⁵⁹ N. Okay and N. Soysal similarly mentioned that the poet they talked about could “not save himself from the perspective of religion and bigotry”, “not be independent and not tend to criticize “the records of religion” and even “not able to become secularized in any one of his poems”.¹⁶⁰

It is further unfolded in the Erciyes journal that while reviewing, reprocessing and collecting the folk pieces, the writers and editors worked on to decide whether it was

¹⁵⁷ S. Öztürk’s (2010: 10) assessments on the chapbooks of the early republican period may be taken into account to figure out the criticism act on the religious signs by the Kemalist discourse:

Spirituality in chapbooks is perceived as a tangential attribute and few chapbooks address religion. Aside from a few accounts where heroism is embellished with religious motifs, the links between superstition and its underlying religious tenets are weak. Spies relates that very few spiritual components can be found in these books and that the Islamic religion, as a religious adjective, is encountered as a ‘detail’. The saz (a musical instrument) was played, alcohol was drunk and wedding ceremonies were held in Turkish chapbooks, but the presence of faith is rarely displayed in descriptions of such festivals.

¹⁵⁸ Naci Kum. “Aşık Cafer Tan”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 3, 1938, p. 92.

¹⁵⁹ H. N. Okay. “Everekli Ali Celalettin Efendi”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 5, 1938, p. 131.

¹⁶⁰ H. N. Okay and N Soysal. “Erkiletli Aşık Hasan”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 10, 1939, p. 284.

necessary to make changes or restoration and correction for compatibility with and appropriateness to the regime's modernist and nationalist and even moralistic discourse. After explaining the great importance of the land law of the period for peasants, a text of Erciyes on a collection of a folk poem notes that even if there was a word which was no longer used in the new language and inconvenient to the regime's invented vocabulary, it was "necessary and valuable" not to violate the authentic characteristics and the literal original parts of the poem.¹⁶¹ Özyedekçi also claimed that because of its state of "rowdyism (*kabadayılık*)", the Kayseri dialect seemed to be bizarre and disturbing to anyone who was not familiar with it. However, "in such dialect which is more wrong and rude than the Istanbul accent, there is nothing that gives the impression of banality and disgustingness". For him, the local dialect or pronunciation style of Kayseri was much more resembling an elderly who addresses the listeners in such a language that is laughing and gives lessons, warnings and advices.¹⁶² In a similar way, Önder commented about the local dialects of Erkilet, a village of Kayseri and mentioned that the people of the village were sober-minded just like Nasreddin Hoca. It was believed there was a special language of this village. Nonetheless, "it is not in the level of mother tongue and not a truly language. It is not slang (rowdy) [*külhanbeyi*] language as well. It is more likely humor and slogan language". He finally informed the reader about his collection of words and in this collection, he excluded (eliminated) some of the words that seemed nasty or obscene to him.¹⁶³ As a result, it may be necessary to contend that in the views of the writers, the local dialects and accents were to be considered as the pure and genuine parts of the constructed nation and its identity; therefore, their rowdiness, nastiness or obscenity would be discarded (which means censoring the grotesque imagery of the folk culture) and their appropriate sides of tolerable humor or didactical warning and

¹⁶¹ Erciyes. "Öşür ve Hezir", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 31-32, 1945, p. 18.

¹⁶² Kazım Özyedekçi. "Kayseri Ağzı Kelimeler Üzerinde Araştırmalar III", in *Erciyes*. Vol. 3, Issue: 25, 1945, p. 16.

¹⁶³ A. R. Önder. "Erkilet Dili", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 59-60, 1947, p. 7.

noble, high souled and morally standardized characteristics should be exalted (Erdoğan, 2013: 23; Erdoğan, 2015).

In another example, an author wrote about a folk poet and his poems by expressing basically that both in the aşık and folk literature, the folk material could not be fully complete and accurate due to their basis on oral tradition. He argued that not every poem of him was valuable in the same manner and that actually, it might be said for any folk artist: “The poems are beautiful, fascinating like creatures in nature; are ugly, unpleasant”. Since they were orally transmitted and could lose their original primary elements in this process, wastes, lacks, incorrectness or deformation of meaning and expression would be found. On the other hand, no matter how valuable or inadequate were they, the most important thing in a scientific and literal study was the record or document.¹⁶⁴ In this sense, it may be asserted that the endeavor to collect and select is ultimately associated with the invention of “folklorized, formalized, transposed and re-accentuated” (Turkish) folk culture (Erdoğan, 2015: 2).

During the nationalization process, purification movement of the Turkish language meant to search for the ideal of pure Turkish words. Therefore, the Kemalist cadres promoted and supported the People’s Houses to make collection acts and publications on local folk traditions particularly for redefinition of Anatolian language or for glorification of the local language and to manifest the major dimension of Turkish language and culture as the main source and soul of those who feel themselves belonging to the Turkish nation whichever different regions of the country they come from. For instance, the Language and Literature Branch of the Houses carried out the task of collection and research on local dialects and was the main supplier of the oral cultural traditions to create a modern literature of pure Turkish language. In the Kayseri House and the journal *Erciyes*, all of the collected and published folk materials were to contribute to the development of the supposed national folklore by introducing their Turkified patterns and descriptions. In this regard, having taken considerable inspirations from the ideology of Turkism developed by the views of Gökâlp and from

¹⁶⁴ Hikmet Dizdaroğlu. “Aşık Ömer’in Yeni Şiirleri”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 71, 1948, p. 20.

the ideal of Turkishness as the core source of national unity and populist repetition of the imagined nation in collective memories of the people, some of the journal writers embraced undoubtedly the official line of the purified and proper Turkish language of folk culture which signified new locality designations and meant that the new regime's reforms would be reached to the ordinary people of the provincial cities and towns and if possible of villages. One of the writers, Önder¹⁶⁵ examined the dialects of Pertek placed in the province of Tunceli and asserted that by going from west to east in Anatolia it was found in the styles of dialect more connection with the Azeri Turkish pronunciations and accents. He said that while writing on his collection, he did not mention (neglect) local dialects of the villagers who spoke Kurdish and only documented the different pronunciation patterns of the town dwellers and the villagers who spoke Turkish. Another writer speaking of Fuzuli¹⁶⁶ emphasized the importance of the poet as being a Turk. He was called as Kurdish by some "malicious" persons, but he did not have any Kurdish poem and there were many literal records accepting his mother tongue as Turkish. Besides, the writer said that it was "disrespectfulness" to deem a poet who wrote poems in Turkish language as belonging to any other nation except the Turkish nation.¹⁶⁷

In the nationalistic discourse of the Kemalist intelligentsia, the authentic profile of the Anatolian Turks was so glorified and idealized romantically that any folkloric supply considered important in search of the folk could awake the national sentiments and touch the high emotions of the Turkish nation. Therefore, an illustration which expresses how a folk instrument (*bağlama/saz*) was represented as the indispensable embodiment of royal soul of Turks by conforming with untouched and undiscovered "real" soul of the Anatolian folk life and landscape may be useful for understanding

¹⁶⁵ A. Rıza Önder. "Pertek Ağzının Özellikleri", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 81, 1949, p. 16.

¹⁶⁶ The controversy on what is the place of birth and mainly the origin of *Fuzuli* seems to cause many different assumptions to be created. Some of them are as follows: He is assumed "from Baghdad; Kirkuk; Hille, Babylon; or Iraqi Arab". His roots are cited as "Turkmen; Turk from Oğuz tribe; or Kurd". For the assertion of Fuzuli in Kurd roots, see Ali Suad (1996). *Seyahatlerim*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları; T. Bois, V. Minorsky and D. N. Mac Kenzie (2004). *Kürtler ve Kürdistan*. 2nd edition, İstanbul: Doz Yayınları, p. 174-5.

¹⁶⁷ Ekrem Erkmen. "Büyük Türk Şairi Füzuli", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 16, 1940, p. 470.

the insistence on Anatolian and mostly Turkish village life.¹⁶⁸ This understanding is actually complied with the peasantist ideology existing in the minds and views of the members of the People's Houses. In this sense, A. Karaömerlioğlu (2006: 69) explains how rise and diffusion of the peasantist outlook of the 1930s and 1940s gained impetus through the glorification of the peasants and villages which is one of the primary element of the peasantism/peasantry. He also argues that the creation of "a utopian and unrealistic village life" was accompanied with "finding the 'true' Turkish culture and race in villages" (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999: 76). This means that folk materials of the nation had to be uncovered for the sake of exalted Turkish folk culture: "Folk literature which could not be valued because of being the words of peasant" is the most outstanding part and cultural heritage of the national literature; while being opposite to the palace (Ottoman Empire) and its poets, the folk poet, "village or Anatolian child", depicts the unspoiled, original, genuine beauties of the Anatolian life.¹⁶⁹ The heroization of the Turkish peasant and thus Turkish nation, in a sense, dealt with the superiority of village and countryside over city and its life because "that pure child of homeland" was out of city and far from the image of "high class poets". Here again, the writer of the journal, as a secondary school chairman in Develi, criticized seemingly the Ottoman classical poetry. He accused the palace poetry of disregarding, looking down on the homeland people (the Anatolian folk) and even the "us" behaving in the same way as the urban public ignored and neglected them and their languages. For him, the urban poets were popular and read among the urban public in the halls of cities; however, the folk poets were listened only in village coffeehouses¹⁷⁰ or village rooms and the poems continued to exist and disseminate in such places. Thus, he concluded that it was necessary to uncover the unknown and hidden folk poems.¹⁷¹ As

¹⁶⁸ K. Dağlıoğlu. "Hayri Karamete", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 18, 1941, p. 543.

¹⁶⁹ H. N. Okay. "Halk Edebiyatı", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 10, 1939, p. 302.

The folklore on village would be formed in the exalted genuine language of villagers. Thus, villagers would have the ability to read the revised folk supplies 'deservedly'. Naci Cingilli. Talas Kamunu: Folklor Kaynağı VI. *Erciyes*. Vol. 1, Issue: 11, 1939, p. 322.

¹⁷⁰ For a detailed study see Serdar Öztürk. (2008). The Struggle over Turkish Village Coffeehouses (1923-45). *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 3, pp. 435-454.

¹⁷¹ H. N. Okay. "Halk Edebiyatı Üzerinde Bir Kaç Söz", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 18, 1941, p. 531-533.

a matter of fact, although the village or rural education project of the regime appears as the main concern of the writer in order for opening the village life to the urban people so that the gap between the rural and urban would be prevented, as Karaömerlioğlu emphasizes, this leads to an uncertainty which “stems from the mentality of for the people, despite the people” (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999: 83-4).

It may be also noteworthy to put forward assertions on the situation of audience or spectator of the national cultural forms. The reception of the republican regime’s cultural policies and nationalist-modernist representations in the invented national folk culture was taken into consideration seriously by the party representatives in the local and thus by the local members of the People’s Houses. In terms of the ideal of receptive readers who would welcome the Kemalist populist discourse with excitement or intensive national sentiments, the Houses realized and organized artistic cultural activities to make the reforms accessible primarily to the illiterate rural populace of the homeland. In this regard, the Kemalist revolutionary enthusiasm for ensuring a national culture was extended by the formation of art branches in the People’s Houses. In these branches, art exhibitions were organized for a cultural heritage which was full of national and heroic patterns. The aim of the republican cadres was to create the anticipated aesthetic taste of audiences who were to be illuminated in accordance with the art of the day. Artistic forms would be produced in a revolutionary spirit and narration to make the public feel integrated to the new imagined Turkish nation. The real Turkish art was linked to the day that presented a modern nationhood along with the local elements and traditions. It could be read or adopted, only if it portrayed the moral, national values of the day and if did not have any ‘American’¹⁷² tones and images¹⁷³. In addition to that, dance or dancing was viewed not complying to the body of the Turkish nation, if there was no a national dance. It looked like “a readymade

¹⁷² For understanding criticisms and arguments developed by the 1940s intelligentsia on Americanization see Cantek, L. (2013). *Cumhuriyetin Büluğ Çağı: Gündelik Yaşama Dair Tartışmalar (1945-1950)*. İstanbul: İletişim.

¹⁷³ Jale Baysal. “Günün San’atı” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 72, January 1949, pp. 39-40, 46-8.

cloth bought from Europe”¹⁷⁴. From this two debates, it is concluded prominently that the conservative interpretation of culture in the late 1940s was maintained by the educated local actors of the Kayseri House, even though it meant to be backward.

Furthermore, in the halls of the People’s Houses, the idea of film screening especially for the educational dissemination and activating the national emotions was taken seriously into account. With a cinema projector, “the taste of the people” would be corresponded to the taste of the dominant and official, as be realized through other cultural mass communication instruments of the dissemination for the implementation of national identity and culture. While looking the screen nationalist-populist, the supposed audience could appreciate the uniformed ideals of the new regime. The attendance of the audience in the House cinema shows was actually restricted only to the civil servants, teachers, students or the members of the Houses; thus, socialization, entertainment and conformity were connectedly provided (Çeliktemel-Thomen, 2015: 49-75). In the Kayseri House, a film produced by a non-staged theatre play was screened and the author of the Erciyes journal who watched it claimed that the film seemed not raising national excitement, pride and did not have any heroic stance. He stated that “in artworks adapted for the film screen, always together with the national and humanistic feelings, moral thoughts shall be pursued, the artwork shall be always in a didactic character”.¹⁷⁵

To reach to the true pure Turkish culture and people, theatre and theatre stage were also considered available more than cinema or radio¹⁷⁶ as important message

¹⁷⁴ Mustafa Tütüncü. “Dans Bir İhtiyaç Mı?” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 78-9, July-August 1949, p. 19. “(...) bu günkü anladığımız mânada bir milli dansa sahip olmadığımız gibi cemiyetimiz de böyle bir ihtiyacı hissetmiş değildir. Bunun için Avrupa’dan aldığımız bu hazır elbise vücudumuza uygun gelmedi.”

On the other hand, according to A. Öztürkmen (2002: 131-135), the People’s Houses became places for the national development of folk dance and local folk dance groups. Especially performing dance in Ankara for national festivals was a prestigious cause.

¹⁷⁵ Kemal Ülkücü. “Canavar Filmi”, in *Erciyes*. Vol. 6, Issue: 65-66, 1948, p. 28.

¹⁷⁶ The usage of radio was necessary for making the people receive the constructed discourse of the Kemalist revolution which meant the pure Turkish folk music would be heard, but the Western music would be broadcasted as well. The People’s Houses could broadcast radio programmes that were formed by the selected and appropriate Turkish folk songs harmonized with the technical or instrumental

transmission tools, that is, the most indoctrinating-manipulative means to disseminate the supposed ideology (Ari, 2004; Başbuğ, 2013; Lamprou, 2014).¹⁷⁷ As mentioned before, in the Theatre (Drama) Branch of the People's Houses, many party center-approved amateur theatrical plays especially the very Turkish nationalism-oriented ones were performed and staged. The theatrical groups were formed in every theatre branches under the supervision and surveillance of the local urban elite members of each Houses and traveled principally in "national" days to the villages so that the party's secular and modern ideals could be revised continuously in the common memory of the supposed homeland people.¹⁷⁸ Those plays visually narrated in romantic, patriotic, heroic and didactic elements could invite the audience to the celebration of the Kemalist cultural reforms and of the newly created history of the Turkish nation, people, peasant and even Turkishness as the dominant ideology:

(...) We begin with the Turkish national anthem. Four acts of play flow together with national, patriotic poems; country and homeland folk songs sung with *saz* (...) Particularly, in the last act, the way in which the Byzantine's haughty king, Romen Diyojen [Romanos Diogenes] is brought before the great Alpaslan increases the national sentiment, pride. We are listening: from right to the left "Oh poor king! like you, many haughty *başbuğ* [a kind of commander used in Turkish narration], many arrogant emperors came to heel before that throne, begged forgiveness and were beheaded!" such voices are rising.¹⁷⁹

elements of the Western music. The nationalized music could have place in the local Houses apparently in order to educate the invented people and unite them in a homogenous entity, raise the influence of the Turkishness imagery and finally acquire (urban) readers who would accept the dominant ideology (Ahıska, 2005: 101-153). For the Kayseri House example of a radio programme, see Halkevi. (1943). Kayseri San't ve Folklor Saati. *Erciyes*. 2(20): 594-7.

¹⁷⁷ Erciyes. "Sahne ve Halk", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 18, 1941, p. 527-8.

¹⁷⁸ Nedime Ergül. "Evimiz Temsil Kolunun Bünyan Gezisi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 65-6, 1948, p. 14-5. N. Ergül. "Halkevi Temsil Kolunun Pazarören Köy Gezisi", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 68, 1948, p. 23-4.

¹⁷⁹ N. Ergül. "Evimiz Temsil Kolunun Bünyan Gezisi", p. 15. "(...) *İstiklal marşı ile gösteriye başlıyoruz. Dört perdelik piyes milli, vatani şiirlerle; saz çalınarak söylenen yurt ve memleket havalarile süslensrek akıp gidiyor. (...) Hele sonuncu perdede bizansın marur kralı (Romen Diyojenin) esir edilerek büyük Alpaslanın huzuruna getirilişi milli duruşu milli onuru kamçılıyor. Dinliyoruz: sağdan soldan "Ey zavallı kral, senin gibi marur başbuğ, kaç kendini beğenmiş hükümdar bu that önünde baş eğmiş, af dilemiş ve boyun vermiştir!" sesleri yükseliyor*".

Audiences of the theatrical plays staged in the Houses or villages were mostly composed of the local members of the Houses and their families and urban public of a provincial town. In the villages, the nationalist plays could be watched by the teachers, students or those who were in relation in any case with the party or the House of a province they settled. The question of whether villagers to watch the plays came to the places where they were performed was uncertain because the places were sometimes the people's rooms, village institutes¹⁸⁰ or sometimes cloth manufacturing factories in villages¹⁸¹. From this perspective, it is evident as Ari (2004: 45-6) states that "the inaccessibility of theatre to villagers" was the fundamental point of the problem which gave rise to the contradiction and inconsistency in the policy of delivering the national emotions to the illiterate rural population.

The presence or absence of woman both as an audience and a player in theatre stage made the Kemalist cultural reforms and modernity project even more debatable, since as one of the aims of the new regime, promoting woman's participation in spaces not based on domesticity was not apparent in practice (Lamprou, 2009: 217-246). As has been discussed above, due to the fact that woman or gender issues inside the People's Houses and in the articles of the House journals were presented according to nationalist-modernist visions of the new regime, their presence but mainly public appearance produced so many responses and comments essentially relating woman to such official discourses and discursive categories as morality, immorality, civilization, backwardness or generally 'being a new Turkish woman'. For A. Lamprou, the presence of woman in the public sphere concerned not only the modernist circles but also the conservative structures and signifiers of the local societies in the provincial towns (Lamprou, 2014: 19-23). This means that the connection between the modernist and conservative discourses became visible when the case was the position of woman. On the other hand, an article of a female schoolteacher who concentrated highly on the presence of woman in theatre stages brings the argument into a different glance. The author, Nedime Ergül complained about the absence of woman both in the People's

¹⁸⁰ N. Ergül. "Halkevi Temsil Kolunun Pazarören Köy Gezisi".

¹⁸¹ N. Ergül. "Evimiz Temsil Kolunun Bünyan Gezisi".

Houses and theatrical plays and expressed the following ideas by looking the situation through her own eyes as a female member in the Kayseri House:

(...) Kayseri is a big town of the Central Anatolia with a population of sixty thousand. In this great human crowd, are not there any our girls and women who will work actively by coming to the House? Will we search for the non-woman plays that we will put on our stage? Is this work for us, that is for the Kayseri people who embrace the civilization of thousands of years not be backwardness? (...) That sadness is not only peculiar to our homeland [Kayseri]. In all Central Anatolian People's Houses, the situations are resembling each other. It is impossible that there is an obscene [*açık*] scene in the plays staged in our Houses. Those [plays] are things giving lively and useful examples from national, patriotic every family for happiness to become established. It is not containing scenes which are unpleasant and deemed shameless [*ayıp*] by country, but it is much apparent that we make changes on a word for minutes. Hence, there is no any reason for feeling shy, staying away, trying desires, inclinations to suppress within ourselves.¹⁸²

This is somehow interlinked with the words of Lamprou who implies that in local Houses, women, mostly female schoolteachers were under pressure to take role in activities of the Houses and to participate in the theatre plays to solve the deficiency problem (Lamprou, 2014: 12-3). Besides, immoral, inappropriate and harmful tones were to be assessed “seriously” by the party center representatives and in general sense, the question of obscene language in the folk supplies and in theatre stage was firmly criticized and refused. It was commented that obscenity could endanger formation of the pedagogical authority in the invented, modernized, moralized, refined and lastly nationalist folk culture. Therefore, it is evident that the author felt

¹⁸² Nedime Ergül. “Halkevi Temsilleri”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 72, 1949, p. 22-3. “(...) Kayseri, Ortaanadolu'nun 60 bin nüfuslu büyük bir şehridir. Bu büyük insan kalabalığı içerisinde halkevine gelerek bilfiil çalışacak kızımız ve kadınıımız mı yok? Biz hep böyle sahnemize koyacağımız piyeslerde bayansız olanları mı arıyacağız. Bu iş bizim için, yani bin yılların medeniyetini bağrına gömen Kayseri halkı için bir gerilik olmaz mı? (...) Şu üzüntü yalnız bizim memleketimize has değil. Bütün Ortaanadoludaki Halkevlerinde durum bir birinin benzeridir. Evlerimizde temsil ettiğimiz piyeslerde açık bir sahne bulunmasına imkan yoktur. Bunlar milli, vatani her aileden saadetin kökleşmesi için canlı ve faydalı örnekler veren şeylerdir. Hoşa gitmeyen ve memleketçe ayıp sayılan sahneler bulundurmamak değil, kelime üzerinde dakikalarca oynadığımız çok vakidir. Binaenaleyh çekinecek uzaktan duracak istekleri temayülleri içimizde zorla boğmağa yeltenecek hiç bir sebep yoktur”.

uncomfortable about the presence of woman to be considered along with such negative connotations by those audiences who were parts of both the republican and nationalist conservative groups of the Kayseri province and especially of the city's urban population.

While involving another article in the Erciyes journal concerning the Turkish traditional shadow theatre which possessed obscene language and characteristic, the audience issue may be grasped more obviously. The author of it reviewed R. Oğuz's published book which examined *Karagöz*¹⁸³ with some of its staged modern plays (scenarios) and included their comparison with (old) textual versions and his observations on response of audience to them. The author noted that since those plays would influence the pedagogical (educational) development of children, Oğuz's study was necessary to help the revival of Karagöz.¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, Oğuz claimed that those modernized plays in a general sense were not adopted by the public and according to his observation, the absence of Ottoman-Turkish speeches and of Muslim or non-Muslim figures did not have positive reflection on audience.¹⁸⁵ As to obscene language, such language was also perceived to be eliminated from Karagöz so as to be complied with the official vocabulary of the new regime. The ruling party and the People's Houses employed Karagöz to educate or 'enlighten' people about the ideal citizen of the Kemalist revolution and turned it into a folk tradition appropriate to the new meanings established by the nationalist Turkish culture and to the superiority of the supposed Turkish nation. Didactic positions and civilizing settings replaced the

¹⁸³ Actually, *Karagöz*, *Orta Oyun* or *Meddah* performances had been exhibited in (village) coffeehouses to the public without making any changes or regulations on them due to their obscene and inappropriate elements. Karagöz show, particularly, had been seen the medium of enjoyment, laughter, entertainment and political and sexual humor (Oğuz, 1946: 11-3; Erdoğan, 2014; Öztürk, 2006: 294-298). It was owing to its unlimited and free world and to "Karagöz's nonsensical, joyful, playful, immoral and abusive words and expressions" (Erdoğan, 2014: 13) that attacking to state officials had not be banned. However, when controlling and censoring attempts became realized, the visibility of obscenity or with Bakhtin's analysis, the grotesque imagery of Karagöz and clearly the political satire and criticism embedded in the content of it got disappeared. Yet Karagöz continued to be existed in coffeehouses at local level in spite of the period bearing on modernizing and revising traditional folk forms (Öztürk, 2006: 307-8).

¹⁸⁴ Ferdi Fahir. "Karagözde Halk Türküleri ve Halk Hikayeleri", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 38-9, 1946, p. 44-5.

¹⁸⁵ R. Oğuz. (1946). *Karagöz'de Halk Türküleri ve Halk Hikayeleri*. Kayseri: Erciyes Matbaası, p. 22.

obscene characters in Karagöz. Karagöz and other collected folk supplies were moralized or nationalized and given seriousness to be conformed to the spirit of the formulated cultural reforms (Erdoğan, 1998; Erdoğan, 2015).

To sum up, it may be asserted that the journal authors' works and in general the folkloric studies and researches of the People's Houses on finding the Anatolian pure culture collaborate with the strict boundaries of the constructed nationalistic-secularistic discourse over a national and secular folklore. Turkish national identity manifests both the imagery of real, true but well-mannered, not degenerated Turkish people and peasants and the appropriate and conforming taste of audiences as those who are the receivers of the transmitted messages by embracing the national sentiments on didactic cultural forms. The word 'folk' in a cultural or artistic material encompasses the dilemma of to be pure while to be modernized, nationalized and secularized.

4.5. Examining Turkishness through History and Language Reforms

Turkishness was a largely regarded notion in the provinces to rediscover the local history in terms of the republic's new revolutionary trends and to describe the people as the provider of the Anatolian Turkish culture and for national culture building process. The folkloric materials and traditions of local culture were deemed to be pure sources of the Turkish identity, as argued above. Therefore, the constituted folk culture was considered and stressed along with the interchangeable policies of the early republican period on history and language. While making researches on the local history of a provincial town, every author or member of the People's Houses also implemented the national duty of collecting and disclosing the hidden symbolic signs and the historical roots of the Turkish language. This is why the history and language reforms were two dominant ideological features of official discourse to be used in the activities of the Houses and for positions taken by the local actors in these cultural institutions. In the articles of the House journals, local history making was thereby to

represent the images of speaking and writing in the same language, in Turkish language.

The Kemalist visions on the Turkish History Thesis and the Sun Language Theory were emphasized in almost all articles of the House journals. Their historical and linguistic assertions were taken part in the articles where authors of the journals expressed the significance of reinvented Turkish history by relating the new, official, national, “shared” history with the folkloric and local pieces of a province and a village. From the perspective of a nationalist narration, the dynamism of questioning the past and Ottoman-Islamic traditions in excessive ways among the local actors of the periphery was to be formed. As the Turkish Republic, the new nation state, had led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire with the abolishment of caliphate and sultanate systems¹⁸⁶, the synthesis of the Turkish and Islamic cultural characteristics in reconstruction of a civilized or modern Turkish identity were seen inconvenient. In other words, the language reform and the history thesis did not count the Ottoman or Islamic past for constructing a new nation and creating its historical imagined origins. To discover the perceived heritage of the pre-Ottoman period meant to “reborn from the ashes of the Ottoman collapse” and to connect the past and present to the existence of the pure Turkish people.

The narration of official history was produced by neglecting the Ottoman or Islamic past but more importantly, criticizing the Ottoman history writing which was accused of neglecting the Turkish history. The Kemalist cadres tried to recover the humiliating image of Turks or the Turkish nation from being seen “uncivilized or barbarian”. The unacceptable influence of Ottoman history and the supposed Islamic historical statements on a high-spirited Turkish identity was to be eliminated:

¹⁸⁶ In Erciyes journal, a leading author who was the member of Museum and Exhibitions Branch in the Kayseri People’s House explained a great progress in national history and archaeology by saying that awakening of the Turkish self-esteem was realized through “abolition of the matters of sultanate, caliphate, medrese, temple of dervish by his own hands of the Sublime savior”. Naci Kum. “Cumhuriyet Rejiminin 15 yılı içinde Türk Tarih ve Arkeolojisine Mesut İnkişafı ve Kayseri Müzesi” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 6-7-8, 1938, p. 178. “*Nihayet saltanat, hilafet, medrese, tekke heyûlalarının, Ulu Kurtarıcının elile devrilmesi*”.

(...) the “Turkish history” in our country was one of the least examined subjects. There are various reasons of that:

- 1) Because of tension raising from the causes of Christianity and Islam, the act of showing the Turkish history terribly bad by the bigoted historians.
- 2) As for the Turkish and Islamic historians, they pursued a policy of the unity of the Islamic community by mixing Muslimness with Turkishness. So, the act of making the Turkish history preceding Islam to be forgotten.
- 3) Not long ago, the act of making many nations in the heart of the Ottoman Empire unified under the name of “Ottoman”; that is, as a result of pursuing the policy of Ottomanness, the act of not mentioning the title Turk.¹⁸⁷

The ‘other-image’ (Bora, 2003: 41), Ottoman period gave nothing special in the light of Turkishness for the ruling regime and party representatives. Besides, views of the Western (*ecnebi*) scholars were not taken for granted. Their historical claims on Turkishness and Turks were totally misleading, therefore they had to be persuaded by “scientific” evidences listed in the history thesis. A newly invented Turkish identity would be seen a partner of Western civilization¹⁸⁸ or more superior than it. In terms of a constructed glorious Turkish history, it was aimed that the people would firstly feel belonging to a unified nation which was formed through the supposed ethnic identity of that people and then, feel proud of a noble Turkishness without any danger of bigotry, backwardness or wrong thoughts developed by both the Ottoman and the Western scholars. “The great Turkishness ideal that had been inactivated and erased from minds” was revealed through proclaiming the Turkish nation/race as the leading

¹⁸⁷ Şefik Türker. “Tarih” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 16, 1940, p. 475. “(...) “*Türk tarihi*” memleketimizde en az tetkik edilmiş mevzulardandı. Bunun muhtelif sebepleri vardır:

1) Hristiyanlık-İslamlık davalarının doğurduğu husumet dolayısıyla mütaassıp müverrihlerin Türklerin tarihini pek fena göstermiş olmaları.

2) Türk ve İslam müverrihler ise, İslamlıkla türklüğü mezcederek bir ümmetçilik siyaseti gütmüşlerdir. İşte bunların, islamlığa tekaddüm eden Türk tarihini unutturmuş olmaları.

3) Yakın zamanlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun sinesindeki birçok milletleri “Osmanlı” adile tevhide çalışmaları, yani bir osmanlılık siyaseti gütmeleri neticesinde Türk adının ağızlara bile alınmaması.”

¹⁸⁸ T. Bora states that there emerges a constituted harmony between civilization or universality and locality or being local-national in the construction of an official national identity. This leads the ideal of catching up the Western civilization to be presented in a nationalist discourse and rendered as by nature a component of Turkishness or to-be-Turk (Bora, 2003: 23-6).

creator of culture and civilization and exalting Turks as progressive, pure, superior subjects of a unique nation.

Reinterpreting Turkishness and historical origins of Turks was maintained by making reference to the facts which were to be found and defined by archeological researches and studies in “precious” sites where the national narration of Turkish race returning to its homeland would be materialized. Through relating archeology with nationalism, the preservation of rediscovered historical cultural heritage and constructed national identity would be ensured in scientific, modern techniques.¹⁸⁹ Archeological connections, methods and fields were signified in the early republican period in order for facilitating the process of national identity and for showing the community that historical territory and geography to which they believed to belong were based on one region (Anatolia) where they still lived, resided in and cultivated its land and on another region (Central Asia) where the foundations of culture and language along with humanity and civilization were originally came into being. The ethnic and thus nationalistic approaches to the invented historical linkage between the Central Asian roots and the Anatolian culture and land were used to strengthen the ideal assumption of autochthonous Turks living in their own homeland. What was buried beneath the soil of “our” homeland was regarded as historical truth that legitimized the mythically created Turkish national history for reconstructing territorial shared past. In this respect, an author of Erciyes journal explained the significance and distinctive quality of the archeological excavations for the nation state by the following words:

We demand from our people that they do not ruin those sites in order to search for antiques or to move stone, sand as it happened in old times. (...) It is

¹⁸⁹ A. D. Smith writes about the importance of archaeology and its affiliation with nation building by mentioning that the myths and symbols of depicted historical roots are mostly supported by scientific grounds for the purposes of national unity and integrity:

That is to say, the ancient experiences are no longer simply retold as in the epic of former times; they are subjected to ‘interpretation’ and scrutiny, using present-day assumptions and the new scientific approaches and disciplines of philology, archeology, anthropology, sociology and history. These disciplines are necessary tools of modern social solidarity and citizenship, for they enable us to ‘make sense’ of our collective location in space and time, the limited space and calendrical time of the new era of nationhood. Without such ‘science’, there can, in a very literal sense, be no nation (Smith, 1988: 171-2).

disaster to change the place of any smallest integral part or to have broken earthenware, bottle and glass that are supposed to be the most unimportant. (...) Whatever is there under the soil is product of State. Sheltered nook on the surface of soil or indigenous ancient monuments are products of State as well and those who ruin and excavate them are guilty before the law and harm the history of homeland.¹⁹⁰

The archeology enabled the Kemalist discourse to rewrite the history of Turkey in which every excavated object was deemed scientifically valuable; material artefacts were deemed the historical evidences; and thus the Turkish history was recreated with these mythical and ethno-symbolic assertions (Aydın, 2007: 419).

Members at the same time the authors of *Erciyes* journal applied to relate the Turkish tribe coming from the Turkish land of “the great Asian continent” with Turks who were believed to be settled in the Anatolian region so long ago because of some difficult weather conditions. In accordance with the Turkish History Thesis, a tribal and ethnic identity of Turks was narrated, as Turks were assumed to be migrated from the Central Asia to the Anatolia peninsula by bringing civilization to that region. An author, for example, explained how *Erciyes* was named by a supposed Turkish tribe, *Ercaslar* by mythmaking over a mountain’s name in a nationalistic narration: “Turkish *Erciyes* is originally Turk and sacred because it has worn name of the *Ercaslar* for many years”.¹⁹¹ According to another author, although it was alleged that the word of *Talas* was originated from Armenian language or Greek language, it was undoubtedly associated with an ancient city near a river named *Talas* in the Central Asia.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Naci Kum. “Kayseri İlinde Tetkikler, Görüşler I” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 11, 1939, p. 314-5. “Halkımızdan rica ederiz ki, eskiden olduğu gibi antika aramak veya taş, toprak nakil etmek için böyle mevkileri eşip bozmasınlar. (...) Böyle bir mevkide en küçük bir yapı taşının yerinin değişmesi veya en ehemmiyetsiz sanılan bir çanak, çömlek, şişe ve sırça parçasının kırılması felakettir. (...) Toprak altında her ne varsa Devletin malıdır. Toprağın üstündeki eyreti veya yerli asariyatika da Devletin malı olup bunları bozup kıran ve çıkarırlar kanun nazarında mücrim ve aynı zamanda memleket tarihine kötülük etmiş olurlar.”

¹⁹¹ Sahir Üzel. “Türk Akınları: *Ercaslar* Buralarda” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 2, April 1938, p. 40. “*Türk Erciyesi, süt be süt Türk ve asıllardır Ercasların adını taşıdığı için mukaddestir.*”

¹⁹² Nuri Olcay. “*Talas*” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 16, 1940, p. 481.

The image of Anatolia was thereby directed to a Turkish identity which was used to support the assertions on the Turkish existence in Anatolia for many years. The omnipresent picture of Turkishness was constituted by means of either affiliating its historical past with the Central Asian roots and Turkic communities or taking the Anatolia as the central geographical location of Turks. The myth of Anatolia was exalted as the homeland of genuine, pure Turks and as a superior and fertile cultural center together with its prehistoric civilizations, traditions and even languages that were supposed to be coexisted with indigenous people of Anatolia, appeared as Turks. From this perspective, in the House journals, there emerged a tendency to make association between the depicted Anatolian old civilizations, the Hittites and the Sumerians and Turkishness.¹⁹³ The Hittites (*Eti*) were regarded most importantly the suppliers of high culture and a civilized life style as a model of the advanced civilization in Anatolia (Üstündağ and Yazıcıoğlu, 2014: 203). Again, the official discourse in the articles of Erciyes formulating the imagined Kayseri history (transition from local to national) for rediscovery and memory of an ideal past echoed such established connection in the same manner. “Our progenitors, Hittites who were the first owners of our homeland”¹⁹⁴ were subjected to be defined as the brachycephalic tribe of the Central Asia which showed the evidence of being ancient Turk. In particular, it was necessary to accept that the proto-Hittites, seemed even to be “the first people of Kayseri” had ties with the Central Asian origins. However, to support this acceptance, more archeological and historical evidences had to be found according to the authors as history writers.¹⁹⁵ The existing problems about finding supportive

¹⁹³ In *İçel*, the journal of Mersin People’s House, a serial of articles about the so-called scientific studies and examinations made to prove Turkishness of the *Nusayri* people was presented. See Tarsus Hars Komitesi. “Eti Türkleri Hakkında Bir Etüd” in *İçel*, Issue: 4, April 1938, pp. 17-8; Tarsus Hars Komitesi. “Eti Türkleri Hakkında Bir Etüd” in *İçel*, Issue: 5, May 1938, pp. 17-9; Tarsus Hars Komitesi. “Eti Türkleri Hakkında Bir Etüd” in *İçel*, Issue: 6, June 1938, p. 15.

Likewise, S. Şimşek cites an article of *Ülkü* Journal that related *Hıdırlı* village people with the Hittite rooted Turkishness while writing on the Adana People's House trip to the village (Şimşek, 2002: 137).

¹⁹⁴ Naci Kum. “Kayseri İlinde Tetkikler, Görüşler II” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 12, 1939, p. 343. “*Anayurdumuzun ilk sahipleri olan atalarımız Etiler.*”

¹⁹⁵ Halil Üstün. “Kayseri ve Etiler” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 20, May 1943, p. 600. “*Kayserinin tarihen bilinen ilk halkı Protu-Etilerdir.*”; “*Protu-Etilerinde Etiler gibi bir muhacir kavim olduklarını ve bunlarında Anadoluya sonradan ve hatta diğer Türk boyları gibi Orta Asya’dan geldiklerini kabul*

evidence remained unclear but on the other hand, the glorious past introduced along with the narrated historical connection was maintained by the Kemalist intelligentsia to be perceived as a privileged race in the light of universality and civilization.

In the same way with the history thesis, the language reform attempts seen in the case of Sun-Language Theory were served to the aim of proving the superiority of Turkishness as the only root of high civilization. The first attempt was the script change which led the Arabic and Persian languages and words to be replaced by the Latin alphabet and the second was the task of purification (in line with secularization) meaning the Turkification of language and culture on behalf of the people who were assumed to speak pure-Turkish. Disconnecting language from the Ottoman, Islamic writing elements and bringing it to same level with the Western civilization were put forward by the founding cadres of the new regime and maintained by the Kemalists during the process of building the language reform and pure Turkish (Zürcher, 2000: 275; Yıldız, 2013: 191-2). The Ottoman language was deemed “a container full of miscellaneous things (*kırkambar*)”¹⁹⁶ or having no connection with being appropriate to pure Turkish¹⁹⁷. In this sense, the fundamental tendency was the construction of national language because it was considered that the gap between spoken and written languages could be primarily eliminated through Turkification. And in this way, with the foundation of Turkish Language Society, the collection act of local dialects and the pure Anatolian words was realized and even the Kayseri People’s House sent 291 words to the center while it was confronted with the problem of competition among the Houses.¹⁹⁸

etmek icabeder. Fakat bu bir faraziyeden ileri gidemez. Bunun böyle olduğunu gösterir tarihi ve arkeolojik diğer deliller bulmak lazımdır.”

¹⁹⁶ Orhan Etker. “Dile Dair” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 55-6, August-September 1947, p. 7. “*Bu dil, Arap ve Acem dillerinin, din sebebiyle, tesiri altındaydı. Ve işte bunun için Osmanlıca, kırk-ambar bir dildi.*”

¹⁹⁷ Raşit Bener. “Osmanlıca ile Türk Dili Arasında Hoş bir Duruşma” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 44-5, September-October 1946, p. 9. “*Osmanlıca ne kadar hünerli olursa olsun özümüze uygun olmaktan çok uzaktı.*”

¹⁹⁸ Kazım Özyedekçi. “15. Dil Bayramını Yaparken” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 55-6, August-September 1947, p. 4. “*Bu iş o dereceye geldi ki, kurum merkezine önce kelime göndermek, başkalarından daha çok verim göstermek iller arasında sanki bir yarış konusu oldu.*”

Besides, in order to discuss the debates and problems over the script change and determine the regulations and principles for study of the Turkish language and lastly, to facilitate spreading of the language reform to the populace, the ruling party organized many language congresses. In these congresses, it was a new policy conducted by the Kemalist intellectuals in which the official language as a unifying element of the newly invented nation needed to be directed to the recreated and transformed vocabulary and terminology of pure Turkish language. The movement of purifying and thus Turkifying language was welcomed by the supporters of the state but carried out in a deadlock.¹⁹⁹ In this process, the Sun Language Theory was declared in one of these congresses, situating the Turkish language in a superior position and providing a basis for creation of the Turkish national identity. It was brought with the history thesis to the same level as a result of a claim that Turkish language, the first origin of all languages on earth, was the basic source of the Anatolian languages of old civilizations. And as observed in establishing association between the history thesis and the Erciyes mountain and Kayseri, being located in the historical regions of the Hittites meaning Turks, the word ‘Erciyes’ was also to be explained by relating it with the language theory. According to an author of the journal, name of Erciyes was appropriated to the Greek language by “some of the minorities (defined mainly the Greeks) who lived earlier in the homeland”. It was a misleading approach that reflected a “nationally biased thought (*milli gayretkeşlik*)”. Since the Hittites, assumed to be from the Turan region of Central Asia, established domination in Anatolia before the Romans came to the region, word Erciyes, hence, needed to be tied to the Turkish language. The author felt such a strong hesitation about the issue that he even asked for information from Atatürk who was believed to make the best analysis for the word.

¹⁹⁹ Zürcher (2000: 276) comments that presence of deadlock over the language reform was tried to be ended with the attempt of the Sun Language Theory. This demonstrates that the ruling cadres did not intend to put the liveliness of national reforms in danger during a particular time when the state power reached its peak. Indeed, according to the authors of Erciyes, end of the deadlock was achieved owing to the “scientific” outcomes of the language congresses. It could not prevent the spread of nationalization in language. See Kazım Özyedekçi. “15. Dil Bayramını Yaparken”, p. 4. “*Bir uyanma ve inanma ifadesi olan birinci Kurultaydan sonra yazı dilinde bir karara varma ve durulma devrini açan İkinci Kurultay 1934’te toplandı. (...) 1942 de toplanan dördüncü Kurultay vatan ölçüsünde bir genişleme alan dil devrimini yapıcı bir kavram ve uygulama alanına girmiş bulunduğu zamanda toplandı. 1945 te Ankarada üçüncü toplantısını yapan 5. Dil Kurultayı, dilde millileşme davasına yeni bir hız verilmesi üzerinde durdu.*”

In the end, for the author, the outcome indicated that the word Erciyes was suitable to the linguistic interpretation of the language theory.²⁰⁰

Even as the language congresses seemed to set up the scientific and technical programme of Turkish word formation, debates continued increasingly between those attitudes in which one was made to purify language by purging all foreign origin words, namely Arabic and Persian ones and another was made to modify writing and speaking habits without totally eliminating them or using effort to discover the Turkish equivalents of foreign words (Çolak, 2004: 79-83). For instance, an author of Erciyes Journal analyzed the debates and objections to the purification movement by stressing his own ideas as follows:

Those who do not approve of the works done claim that language shall be purified according to the evolution theory and say that invented language is not possible. We do not understand the language of new generation; they do not understand ours. There emerged a gap between. Anybody invents a word every day. While nationalizing language, we lose it; we do not be aware of it. We do not distinguish excess and understatement. (...) If it is not possible now to bring the dead passing away thousand years ago back to life, trying to make alive such words assumed as pure Turkish is something ridiculous. The purification, purity of language does not take place neither by trying to resurrect nor by inventing or putting supplements and affixes randomly. Firstly, the roots of pure Turkish are searched, evaluated, then general rules are created. (...) It is ridiculous to find new equivalents of foreign origin words by eliminating them from language which were the products of that language. (...) As we have mostly words from Arabic and Persian languages, we do not accept every style of inflection of them but we give new meanings to them with our own affixes.²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ A. Hilmi Kalaç. "Erciyes Kelimesi Üstünde Atatürk'ün Bir Tahlili" in Erciyes, Vol. 4, Issue: 46-7, November-December 1946, p. 2-4. "(...) daha evvel memlekette yaşayan ekalliyetlere mensup bazı kimseler Erciyes ismini doğrudan doğruya rumcaya mal ederler. (...) Hiç şüphe yoktur ki bu, hatalı bir görüşün neticesi, milli gayretkeşliğin mahsulü idi. Şu itibarla hatalı idi ki Anadolu, Romalılarından çok zaman daha evvel aslen turani olan Etilerin hakimiyet ve idareleri altında uzun seneler kalmıştır."

²⁰¹ Kazım Özyedekçi. "15. Dil Bayramını Yaparken", p. 4. "Yapılanları beğenmeyenler, dilin tekâmül nazariyesine göre arınması fikrini ileri sürüyor ve uydurma dil olmaz diyorlar. Yeni neslin dilini biz; bizimkini onlar anlamaz oldu. Arada bir uçurum açıldı. Önüne gelen her gün bir kelime uyduruyor. Dili millileştirelim derken kaybediyoruz; farkında değiliz. İfrat ve tefriti ayıramıyoruz. (...) Binlerce yıl evvel ölen bir ölüyü diriltmek bugün nasıl kabil değilse, öz türkçedir diye böyle kelimeleri dilde yaşatmaya çalışmak da gülünçtür. Dilin arınması durulması, özleşmesi; ne ölüyü yaşatmaya çalışmakla, ne

Another example of an article illustrates that two letters which could not enter to the new official Turkish alphabet were mentioned by the author who did not tend to create a state of criticism. He suggested that it could be possible for these two letters to be able to be preserved in spoken language, in the people's tongues, as written language was designated more or less with generalization of the spoken language in Istanbul and although "separation between written and spoken language, reciting a word in a different way than writing it are not demanded for an alphabet to be pure, clear and appropriate to real language".²⁰² On the other hand, another author of the journal insisted on the act of modification in Turkish language to remove foreign words as a national duty. The matter was not making revolution²⁰³ in Turkish language, since it was not transformed, yet reforming it on the behalf of national cause. He also complained about insufficiency of the efforts to reform the Turkish language recently by writing the following: "Placing other languages in school books assumed as belonging to us by changing articulation style of them is a serious harm to the progress of our national culture".²⁰⁴ All these statements make it obvious that the debates on the purification movement and on the loss of words which rooted in local dialects or the people's tongue were constantly argued by the authors of Erciyes Journal who engaged highly with issues concerning the Turkish language because behaving indifferent to

uydurmakla veya ek ve takıları gelişi güzel takmakla olmaz. Evvela öz türkçe kökler aranır, tespit edilir, sonra genel kurallar bulunur. (...) Artık dilin malı olmuş yabancı asıllı kelimeleri dilden atarak onun yerine yeni bir karşılık bulmak gülünç olur. (...) Biz daha çok arapça ve farsçadan kelime almış olduğumuza göre bunların her türlü çekim şeklini almaz, ona kendi eklerimizle yeni anlamlar veririz."

²⁰² A. Rıza Önder. "Alfabemize Giremeyen İki Harf" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 57-8, October-November 1947, p. 22-3. "Bu iki harfin yeni alfabemize girmesi veya girmemesi üzerine bir önerme ileri sürmeyeceğiz. (...) Çünkü tam olmasa bile büyük nisbette İstanbul konuşmasını resmileştirip genelleştiren yazı dilimiz (...) işi çözmüş gibidir. (...) [Y]azılışı hangi harflerle olursa olsun konuşurken bu harfleri, gerektiğe bildiğimiz gibi söyleriz. Böylece kitapların kabul etmediği bu iki harfi ağızlarında yaşatabiliriz. Yazı ile konuşma arasında ayrılık bulunması, bir sözün yazıldığından başka türlü okunması alfabenin sadeliği, açıklığı ve gerçek dile uygunluğu bakımlarından istenecek bir şey değilse de, bir iki harf için bu da üzüntü verecek bir sakatlık sayılmaz."

²⁰³ Cahit Uluğ. "Dilimiz Üzerine Bir Konuşma" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 69, October 1948, p. 4. "(...) *davamız dilde inkılâp değil*". In another article of the journal, however, phrase of "language revolution" was used. See Naci Cıngılı. "Ulusal Bayramımız ve Kutsal Günümüz", p. 217. "(...) *Dil inkılâbımızın açtığı kutsal elle bu işde kökünden hal edildi.*"

²⁰⁴ Cahit Uluğ. "Dilimiz Üzerine Bir Konuşma", p. 4. "*Bizden gayri olan dillerin telaffuz şekillerini değiştirerek onlara bizimdir diye okul kitaplarında yer vermek milli Kültürümüzün gelişimi için ağır bir darbe olmaktadır.*"

the language cause meant no taking responsibility in the face of national war for national language.²⁰⁵ Actually, in his book written in 1966, Cevdet Kudret also expressed necessity of the Turkification process, as he appeared convinced by the populist essence of language reform. For him, rise of counter revolutionary attacks against the language reform and decrease in purification efforts led “our language to be distanced from the people” (Kudret, 2015: 144). That is to say, language reform was based upon a popular narration in which the spoken pure Turkish language of the people or the communication language of Turkish peasants would be made closer to written language or be employed in a new alphabet that was to be freed from the Arabic and Persian letters.

To conclude, the certain point directed to the visible links between the history and language reforms and between their assertions is Turkishness. The label of ‘Turk(ish)’ was produced in the names of civilization, high culture, superiority and replacing the Ottoman past with the Anatolian heritage as sources of creating self-confidence; but also used for nationalization, secularization and modernization of a noble community of the world which was even historically and linguistically proved in scientific grounds.

4.6. Desired Development of Villages in Kayseri

With the myth of Turkishness or mythicized formulation of the ‘real Turks’, genuine folk life of the people and their living standards became the core issues of the republican regime and hence the Kemalist intellectuals. As argued above, the collection of folkloric supplies in the People’s Houses was to discover the folk culture of the Anatolian Turks, trying to depict it by idealizing and purifying in accordance with the nationalist rhetoric of Kemalism. The romantic depictions of village life, rural landscape and the countryside itself were presented explicitly in the publications, brochures, booklets and thus village monographs of the Houses. This romantic

²⁰⁵ Erciyes. “Dil Davamız” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 20, March 1943, p. 593. “*Dil davasına alakasızlık göstermek ise ulusal savaş safında vazife kabul etmemektir.*”

approach was partly important to make the people aware of the beauty of the countryside and villages limited only to the Turkish identity so that the national commitment to the new regime would not vanish. And it was partly necessary to indicate that rural conditions needed to be transformed and improved because in the views of Kemalists, country's development was dependent on village development (Aksakal, 2015: 150-8). In a similar vein, the director of agriculture spoke of the land reform and its impact on peasants and especially on a nation's economy and agricultural productivity by saying the following:

(...) Those nations which have been growing flourishingly are definitely obliged to keep the strata of peasant on a large scale. In villages, the population increases so faster than that of cities; the rise of our nation's population depends upon the growth of self-sufficient village families. Therefore, the land reform law targets to the growth of self-sufficient village families.²⁰⁶

Keeping in mind the phrase of "peasant is the true master of nation" and a fundamental task to contribute "the social, sanitary and aesthetic development of villages", the People's Houses members and local actors of them took active roles and positions in the Branch of Peasantism and its activities (İğdemir, 1974: 125). A group of people from the Houses arranged visits or trips to villages and in these visits, they, like "foreign travelers or tourists" (Kirby, 1962), observed the village life and people and wrote such village monographs that were abounded with writing styles of the Kemalist intelligentsia and the peasantist (villagist) rhetoric (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999; Öztürkmen, 1998: 125). To save Turkish countryside and villages from the chains of local backwardness and illiteracy, they were charged with the goal that was to educate and enlighten the Turkish villagers or peasants about the new regime and its reforms. And the village teachers also worked with the People's Houses as the official rural representatives of them and even of the party to increase the level of literacy among

²⁰⁶ Anonymous. "Tarım Müdürü Necati Arat'ın Toprak Kanununun Kabulü Münasebetiyle Halkevinde Yapılan Törende Verdiği Nutuk" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 29-30, June-July 1945, p. 17. "(...) *Serpilip büyümekte olan milletler mutlaka köylü tabakalarını geniş ölçüde tutmak mecburiyetindedirler. Köylerde nüfus şehirlerden daha çabuk ürer bizim milletimizin üremesinde müstakil köylü ailelerinin çoğalmasına bağlıdır. İşte kanun, müstakil köylü ailelerinin çoğalmasını hedef tutuyor.*"

young and adult villagers. On the other hand, according to Ahmad (1993: 82), such revolutionary educational measure remained at a low level on account of the fact that “the alliance with the conservative rural notables hindered the spread of education among the peasants”.

For the ‘desired’ construction of villages, the state and party officials put forward some kind of a mobilization (back-to-the-village) movement in village and the countryside to acquire a mass of Turkish peasants who would have been conscious of social, cultural or economic policies of the new regime. The expression of ‘desired’ is appeared available to be used here because a large number of articles about village studies and trips in the Erciyes journal demonstrate that the writers attempted to desire (or wish) their instructive views, advises and practical projects on such differently categorized issues as health, water, rural production, popular education and even superstitious customs resulting in positive and proper development/progress of village and thus the new nation.

Exalting the images of village and villager, the outlook of authors of the Erciyes journal resembled the peasantist ideology of the time which was concerned excessively and taken by the Ülkü editors and writers as a reference point to make rural life and village people civilized but by preserving their cultural authentic characteristics. In a sense, N. K. Köymen’s writings shaped the peasantist discourses of the Kemalist intellectuals and mostly the local actors of the provincial People’s Houses. The most influential part of his thoughts and basically the peasantist approach was that the village development was not situated in the industrialization, urbanization or morally and ethically corruption of villages and peasants as occurred in cities and lives of city dwellers (Karaömerlioğlu, 1998: 51-2; Karaömerlioğlu, 1999). Another important figure who was considered worthy to understand the peasantism of the 1930s and 1940s, Y. K. Karaosmanoğlu and particularly his novel, *Yaban* simply implied that “Turkey’s development and the future of Turkish nationalist ideology revolved around the transformation of the Turkish countryside” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2002: 134). *Yaban* also aroused an argument that the Turkish intellectuals of the country were indifferent to the problems villagers had, but they were assumed as the key actors for solution of

the problems and besides “to emancipate the villagers, to fill the gap between them, to transform villagers into Turkish citizens” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2002: 133-4). From these perspectives, it is inferred that the peasantist ideology together with the nationalist ideals was tied to the idea of escaping from the deteriorated and degenerated atmosphere of the cities so as to take breath in the villages which were supposed to be unspoiled but needed to be transformed by recovering their conditions²⁰⁷ and making them revitalized²⁰⁸. As a matter of fact, the village researches and trips, as observed in each People’s House, reflected the very nature of this ideology by bringing about a sort of overdesigned ideal village model²⁰⁹ and a complex village aid project that was meant to help peasants to understand the significance of Kemalist revolution on several topics including education, agriculture, social welfare and overall the rural progress.

Considering these utopian peasantist tendencies, the articles of Erciyes relating to the village development and village monographs may be perceived as basic features of mobilizing teachers, civil servants, doctors, lawyers and even students taking part in the Kayseri House to be familiar with the countryside and village life and to change the status of peasantry for the survival of the republican regime and its radical reforms. At first glance, the situation of national symbols and nationalist images of the official discourse employed in the village monographs was the primary matter of village researches and surveys. In terms of the nationalist narration, the village of Zincidere was welcomed to be appropriate to the picture of ideal village along with its symbolic sides and constructed modern elements. Here again, the Ottoman past was questioned because of its prevention to the development of villages and the republic promoted the prosperity in the war of development and superiority which would be response to the perception of ‘sick man’:

Wouldn’t be admirable for a person who sees such places as pharmacy, dispensary, patient examining rooms or maternity house in a small village

²⁰⁷ Nusret Köymen. (1939). *Türk Köyünü Yükseltme Çareleri*. Ankara: Çankaya Matbaası.

²⁰⁸ İ. Hakkı Tonguç. (1947). *Canlandırılacak Köy*. İstanbul: Remzi.

²⁰⁹ Şevki Urfalı. “Yirmi Yılda Yüzyirmi Bin Kilometre Köy Yolu” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 65-6, June-July 1948, p. 26. “(...) köylerimizi tahayyül ettiğimiz ideal köyler haline koymayı Cumhuriyet hükümetleri, Kemalist rejim bundan 24 yıl evvel en temiz imanla benimsemiş”.

with their midwife, doctor or nurse? The fact that there is even a village reading room furnished with books, newspapers, radio and its speakers informs us about how this fortunate village engages in cultural affairs as it does in sanitariness.

The monument of martyrs of the village arranged with a big bust of Atatürk, in front of it the bust of İnönü placed on a high marble base, a park with flowers, pool and benches, next to it children's playground, slaughter house, an isolation place for protecting animals from contagious disease, Turkish bath, (...) village court, shooting gallery, shelters, market place for winter and summer... Moreover, together with a perfect elementary boarding school and an art course established by our art school, Zincidere has undeniably obtained the character of an ideal village.

It is necessary to mention that this modern village has been vitalized by the tireless determination and creativity of Zincidere Gedikli Secondary School director, dear lieutenant colonel Halil Nuri Yurdakul.²¹⁰

The monument of martyrs meant to be filled with the national sentiments for Turkishness and to fulfill the ideal citizen's commitment to the homeland, the flag and Turkish identity: "How happy to have fathers of this village who were martyred, they could read red colored names of their fathers engraved onto the chest of a high monument arranged with heroic poems on two sides under the cold liberty winds of a most honorable flag of the world."²¹¹

²¹⁰ Şefik Türker. "Kayseri'nin Bahtiyar Bir Köyü Zincidere" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 22, April 1944, p. 667. "*İnsan, eczane, dispanser, hasta muayene odaları, doğum evi gibi müesseseleri eczanesiyle, ebesiyle, doktoriyle, hemşerisiyle küçük bir köyde görür de hayran olmaz mı? Kitaplariyle, gazeteleriyle, radyosiyle, hoparlörü ile beraber döşenmiş bir köy okuma odasının da bulunması bu bahtiyar köyün sıhhat kadar kültür işlerinde de talili olduğunu gösteriyor.*

Atatürk'ün büyük bir büstü ile taçlanmış köyün şehidler abidesi, karşısında mermer, yüksek bir kaide üzerinde İnönü'nün büstü ile süslenmiş çiçekler ve banklarla donatılmış havuzlu bir park, yanında çocuk bahçesi, biraz ileride mezbaha, hayvanları sari hastalıktan korumak için bir tecrithane, hamam, (...) köy mahkemesi, atış poligonu, sığınaklar, kışlık ve yazlık pazar yerleri... Bunlardan mâda mükemmel bir yatılı ilkokulu, sanat okulumuzun orada açtığı bir sanat kursu ile de Zincidere hiç inkâr edilemez ki ideal bir köy karakterini almıştır.

Şunu teslim etmek lazımdır ki kısaca arzettiğimiz bu modren [modern] köy, Zincidere Gedikli Ortaokul müdürü sayın yarbay (Halil Nuri Yurdakul)un yorulmayan azmi ve yaratıcılığı ile ihya edilmiştir."

²¹¹ Servet Dindoruk. "Yapma Kudreti ve Zincidere" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 25, February 1945, p. 5. "*Ne mutlu bu köyün babası şehit olanlarına ki, iki tarafında kahramanlık şiiirleri nakşedilmiş olan*

The presentation of villages and peasants as the pure roots of the Turkish culture and race was attached to the nationalist rhetoric implying only dissemination of the republican values and widespread, nationwide operation of transforming the peasantry into the Turkish citizenship. In two major village monographs of Erciyes, the author tried to find answer specifically to the questions of to what extent the villagers were faithful to the republic and ruling party and whether the villages were adapted to the land reform law or the new changes in agricultural, sanitary and social fields. These two village monographs exemplify simply descriptive and informative type of all village studies and surveys whose procedures and norms were published in *Ülkü* journal and expressed by some peasantist intellectuals.²¹² Behind the act of giving formal data on village population, water, cultural, hygienic, social, economic conditions, the desire for creation of an ideal Turkish villager and village seems to be masked. The village, Hisarcık was depicted as a place where there is no village square, village reading room, library; water is not clean especially in summer because of Turkmen's tradition of *yayla* (summer camping grounds); agriculture is old-fashioned, mechanized techniques are not used. And according to the author, the request of villagers was to have knowledge about childcare. On the other hand, most importantly, the people of Hisarcık village were narrated to be devoted to the republic and country.²¹³ This means that solutions sought for a modern healthcare, a good motherhood, an efficient agriculture, a proper moral villager were the core issues for the local representatives of the party and state. Additionally, the same author wrote

yüksek bir abidenin göğsünde dünyanın en şerefli bayrağının serin hürriyet rüzgârları altında babalarının ateş renkli isimlerini okuyabiliyorlar.”

²¹² Besides, a series of brochures/booklets about village trips and studies which were organized and presided by the governor of Kayseri and local party chairman, Adli Bayman reflected the same form of the other village surveys in the period between 1936 and 1938. For the thesis's evaluation about these brochures, see chapter 5.

²¹³ Fahri Tümer. “Hisarcık köyü” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 1, March 1938, pp. 27-30. “*Köy meydanı, köy odası yoktur. (...) köyde kütüphane, okuma odası yoktur. (...) su kışın oldukça temiz ise de yazın yaylaya çıkan Türkmenler çadırlarını su kenarlarına kurduklarından hayvanları ve kendileri tarafından pislenir (...) Ziraat eski usullerle yapılır. Ziraat makinası, pulluk bu köye girmemiştir. (...) Köy kadınları çocuk bakımını bilmediklerinden ölüm en çok çocuklardadır. Köyün bağlı olduğu nahiyede bulunan belediye kabilesinin ayda bir kaç gün bu köyde çocuk bakımı üzerine bilgi vermesi köyün dileklerinden biridir. (...) Halk Cumhuriyete, yurda bağlıdır.”*

that the village, Hacılar had almost similar problems; there is a municipal building and in its garden, even the bust of Atatürk is placed but municipality's activities are not enough to make the village clean. Again, water problem is revealed. The village people have not enough knowledge about healthcare; but they are 'large bodied', sturdy, brave and hard-working; honor and family are highly respected. And it seems that they are loyal to the republican government and country.²¹⁴ In another article of Erciyes, the village people, *Hacılarlılar* were represented in a picture of being responsible and morally hardworking persons. Depiction of strong bodies²¹⁵ was based upon the potential of becoming morally responsible to work for the development of country's economy and textile industry.²¹⁶ As a matter of fact, from these two studies, it is concluded that the desire for civilized, modernized and properly moral, bodily strong peasants was kept in mind so as to be regarded as the zealous follower of the national duty of making the reforms and policies functional in villages. Since the local urban actors as the members of a provincial House were mediators of the state and the ruling party and deliverers of the official aims and perspectives of the regime guided by regulations of the General Secretariat, they seemed to act like missionaries in the villages and thus carried the revolutionary republican ideas along with them to the region. The nationalist narration of good citizenship was then reproduced with the ideal prototypes of good peasant and peasantry and healthy villages; in other words,

²¹⁴ Fahri Tümer. "Hacılar köyü" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 4, June 1938, pp. 122-6. "5 sene evvel yapılmış iki katlı belediye binası vardır. (...) Bu binanın bahçesinde güzel bir kaide üzerinde Atatürk büstü konulmuştur. (...) Belediyenin faaliyetleri azdır. Köyde temizlik tamamen yapılmamaktadır. (...) İçilen, kullanılan sular pistir. (...) Halkın sıhhatini korumak için bilgisi azdır. (...) Halk iri vücutlu, gürbüz cesur ve çalışkandır. (...) Namusa aileye hürmet fazladır. Halk hükümete ve yurda bağlıdır."

²¹⁵ Another example of this kind of depiction: Hidayet Taştekin. "Kemer Köyünün Konum ve Tanımı" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 48-9, January-February 1947, p. 39. "(...) Gürbüz çocuklar, sağlam vücutlu delikanlıları ile diğer köylerden farklı bir üstünlük taşıyor."

²¹⁶ Kazım Özyedekçi. "Günün Alnından Öptüğü Köy: Hacılar" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 73, February 1949, p. 22. Furthermore, In Hacılar village, drinking water is a primary issue in the 1930s and it appears unsolved in the 1940s: "Köyün şimdi en başta gelen büyük derdi (Su) oluyor". The water issue was considerably to be repeated in another article of Erciyes, saying that the peasants did yearn for water so long. See Behçet D. Gökhan. "Köylü-Su" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 42-3, July-August 1946, p. 28-9. This gives the reader an impression of the fact that the desire to improve the living standards of the peasants and to penetrate to the village culture for changing its 'unhealthy and unclean' conditions became just an imagination and seemed to be not succeeded in reality, even though the regime's official discourse employed the desire in its texts and in the peasantist genre based literature as if it became realized.

with a romantic representation of the countryside in which the village is potential site of national values but lack of civilization and literacy.²¹⁷

The village researches of Erciyes exposed the existence of the superstitious beliefs in the villages which were supposed to be eliminated in a secular regime. The force of religion in Turkish countryside was not questioned only in the village monographs, but also in the fictional works of the renowned writers of the Turkish literature as seen in the case of Karaosmanoğlu's *Yaban*²¹⁸. In the example of Erciyes journal, the article about the village of Hacılar mentioned above is apparently worthy to discuss. The author said that superstitions on the tombs of some dervishes tried to be kept alive by the village people, while making sacrifices and offerings for them. Thus, the tombs were full of colorful wish-cloths, *yashmak* (veil) or silky handkerchiefs tied up to them. This was an undesired matter for an official member of the House whose views favored the republican reforms. He added that these superstitious behaviors were even criticized by a few young people of the village, untying the cloths to use, although some of them believed in these superstitions. They 'desired' that the tombs got to be removed or it was put an end to this kind of superstitions.²¹⁹ Likewise, in another village of Kayseri, the writer of an article talked about *evliya* (a shrine/an entombed

²¹⁷ For F. Üstel, the modernity project of the republican elites echoed the idea of making peasant citizen. On the one hand, the peasantry was subject to the act of locating it in the Turkish citizens' community and on the other hand, peasant would continue to be the only primary producer of the country for its development and progress with the help of modernized techniques and new methods (Üstel, 2004: 201).

²¹⁸ A. Karaömerlioğlu (2002: 132) notes on how the theme of religion and superstitious belief be depicted in the novel *Yaban* and clarifies how its leading character confronts to the religious attributes by making the debate more related with the nationalist context:

(...) The villagers drive him crazy when he witnesses them honoring and fearing an ordinary Sufi shaykh who visits the village. For our Kemalist observer, belief in such phenomena once again proves the backwardness of the villagers. Yet, how could the villagers, who for so long defined themselves on levels other than nationalism, subscribe to this "stranger's" notion of *vatan* (homeland) and Turkishness? Yakup Kadri is aware of the difficulty of winning them over to the nationalist cause. In one of Celal's conversations with a villager, the latter makes it clear that he sees himself as a Muslim and refuses to be called a Turk.

²¹⁹ Fahri Tümer. "Hacılar köyü", p. 124. "*Hurafeye inanmayan gençler mendil ve yaşmak bağliyanlar da vardır. Hurafeye inanmayan gençler mendil ve yaşmakları sıriklardan çözerek kullanmaktadır. Kurbanlar adanmakta ve kesilmekte olan, Hurafeler yaşatan eren mezarlarının kaldırılması köy gençlerinin en büyük dileklerinden dirisidir.*"

saint) which was visited and deemed holy by the village people and even those who came from the city of Kayseri. The writer commented that it was visited for healing to get rid of diseases or malaria and for praying and that it was believed healing would be *güya* (supposedly) realized by tying *paçavra* (rag/cloth) to a bush at that *evliya*.²²⁰ In this regard, it may be asserted that since these behaviors were thought as things able to cause to the rise of reactionary ideas and practices, the members of the Houses and the devoted teachers taking part in these cultural institutions (also the village teachers trained in the village institutes) could provide the spiritual renewal of the Turkish villages by replacing the ‘black’ force with the ‘bright’ (enlightening) educational and cultural revolutionary aspirations and nationalistic emotions.

Moreover, another article drew a picture of religious men (*hafız; hoca; imam*) in more moderate ways. The author expressed that it was good to have a conversation with them and this was because they were educated and literate. However, he also implied that they did not know the new alphabet and the only ones who knew writing in new alphabet were those who returned from army. For the author, thanks to the republic, a new primary school was opened and the teacher who graduated from Pazarören Village Institute was from the same village. This teacher was known as one having trueness and pureness.²²¹ This means that the old teaching and learning system was contrasted with the new one. Therefore, the education of the village people according to the new language reform was considered an instrumental part of the rural transformation and development so that reception of the nationalistic discourses would be possible smoothly.

²²⁰ Hidayet Taştekin. “Mahzemin” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 50, March 1947, p. 29. “(...) *Hasta, sıtmalı insanlar oraya gelip evliyanın hemen yanında çıkan suda yıkanır; dua edip namaz kılarlar. Oradaki bir çalıya paçavra takıp güya şifa umarlar.*”

²²¹ Nuri Ural. “Amarat Köyü” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 29-30, June-July 1945, p. 26. “(...) *Bu köyden olup doğruluk ve temizliği ile tanınmış bir genç Pazarören Köy Enstitüsünde yetişmiş ve aynı köye öğretmen verilmiştir.*”

Another article helps to answer the question of whether the new alphabet reform was conducted in practice in the villages, specifically considering the proportions of men and women: Kâmil Arı. “Büyük Çiftlik Köyü” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 84-5, February-March 1950, p. 22-3. “*1927 yılında yeni türk harflerinin kabulü ile köyde öğrenime başlanılmıştır. Buna rağmen, yeni Türk yazısı ile okur yazar nispeti erkeklerde % 50 kadınlarda % 3 tür.*”

In the continuation of an educational mobilization movement, the Village Institutes were taken seriously into consideration and used for creating virtuous-devoted teachers who would elevate the sentiment of nationality among the (Turkish) peasants and transform the peasant community to save them from backwardness and illiteracy. On the national duty of taking the messages of the republican regime back to the villages, the village institutes graduate teachers would carry out their works and projects by blending in with the village people. Having obtained the glorified and imagined knowledge of homeland which was able to be seen when looked at their eyes and faces²²², they needed to demonstrate a huge commitment to work for the sake of the Kemalist revolution. In this sense, to illustrate, the director of Pazarören Village Institute explained the institute's contribution to the village development by placing the village issue and the situation of graduate students in the imagery of Turkish nationalism and the nationalistic narratives:

Today we gather together to celebrate the second back to the village movement of young peasants who since 26 August 1940, in Pazarören, have grown up, become sturdy, obtained increasing soul and self-control strengths that will help them to challenge to the difficulties of life. (...) My young friends, you are more responsible than us in the cause of primary education to carry the heavy duty. While training you, we think of the works you will face tomorrow in the villages. The aims of works you did in the five-year Institute life were to achieve what is given to you, overcome the difficulties encountered, spread the seed of being more progressive and superior nation to the mind and soul of the growing siblings of yours. We are expecting from you to make positive changes in village. İnönü, who yesterday defeated the enemy together with your father, uncle in the labyrinthine narrow gates of Anatolia, believes in you today on the way of mobilizing people to be a nation, has faith in your character of thinking as you know and doing as you think.²²³

²²² Mehmet Ersoy. "Kaynar" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 36-7, January-February 1946, p. 48. "(...) *Kaynardaki çalışan iki genç enstitü mezunu öğretmenlerin mesailerini göğüs kabartacak derecededir. (...) Bu, usanmak nedir bilmiyen iki genç öğretmenin faaliyetleri, bizleri istikbal için sevindirecek durumdadır. Gözlerinden, simalarından vatan için çırpınan işaretler okuduğumuz bu asil delikanlılara, yeter ki iyi, güzel ve doğru görüş ve niyetle yardım edelim.*"

²²³ Şevket Gedikoğlu. "Pazarören Köy Enstitüsünden Duyulan Ses" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 33, October 1945, p. 20, 25. "26 / Ağustos / 1940 yılından beri Pazarörende boy alan, gürbüzleşen, nasırları katmerleşen, hayat zorluklarına kafa tutacak ruh ve idare kuvvetleri artan köylü gençlerinin ikinci

In addition, he also talked about the indispensable value of the Village Institutes to show the power of human will over nature which was considered as a blind force leading to struggle for overcoming its hard and tough circumstances. The struggle against nature meant destroying the backwardness or saving the human from ‘the crushing claw of social backwardness’. That is to say, for the village development, the struggle was not against social relations surrounding peasants (Karaömerlioğlu, 1998: 63), but against the ignorance of the peasants or ‘deep scars caused by the mystical mentalities of softa, predestination’.²²⁴ This was further based on the claim of peasantists which meant “there was nothing that the power of human agency could not achieve” (Karaömerlioğlu, 1999: 80). Thus, the students of the Village Institutes were guided by “the modest discipline formed by administrators who were of a strong ideal, a sturdy will and a strong method”²²⁵ and by “the principle of a human character eliminating slavery, immorality”.²²⁶

On the other side, the Village Institute experience was to be criticized of being discriminating, strengthening the state control in countryside, highly focusing on work and exploiting physical labour of the peasant and even of forcing students to work under the worst social and economic conditions (Karaömerlioğlu, 1998). In the articles of Erciyes dealing with the Village Institutes, it is obvious that the criticisms were

olarak köye dönüşlerini kutlamak için toplanmış bulunuyoruz. (...) Genç arkadaşlarım, ilk öğretim davasında en ağır yükü bizden ziyade sizler yüklenmiş bulunuyorsunuz. Sizleri yetiştirirken yarın köylerde karşılaşacağınız işleri düşünüyoruz. Beş yıllık Enstitü hayatınızdaki çalışmalarınızın amacı verilen işlerinizi başarmanız, karşılaşılan engelleri yenmeniz, daha ileri ve üstün bir millet olmanın tohumlarını büyümekte olan kardeşlerinizin kafa ve ruhlarına saçmanız idi. Sizden köyde müsbet değişiklikler yapmanızı bekliyoruz. Dün Anadolunun dolambaçlı dar geçitlerinde babanla, dayınla düşmanı tepeliyen İnönü, bugün millet olma seferberliğinde de sana inanıyor, senin bildiğin kadar düşünen, düşündüğün kadar yapan vasfına güveniyor.”

²²⁴ Şevket Gedikoğlu. “Pazarören Köy Enstitüsünden Duyulan Ses”, p. 21-2. “Milletçe girişilen geriliği yok etme savaşının Türk Milletine güvenli bir istikbal getireceğine inanıyoruz. Çünkü, kör kuvvet halinde karşımıza dikilen, bizi ya alt eden veya üste çıkaran tabiata şekil vermede, onun kuvvetlerini kendi lehine çevirmede, insan zekasının, insan iradesinin payı olduğu gibi, insanı şekillendiren, istikametlendiren, onu tabiatın, toplumsal geriliklerin ezici pençesinden kurtan yine insandır, insan zekası ve insan emegidir.”

²²⁵ Işıtman. “Bizim Köy Enstitüsü” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 6, Issue: 69, October 1948, p. 16. “Dikkatimi çeken sağlam bir ideal, sağlam bir irade, sağlam bir metot sahibi olan idarecilerin kurduğu mutevazi disiplindir.”

²²⁶ Şevket Gedikoğlu. “Pazarören Köy Enstitüsünden Duyulan Ses”, p. 22.

mattered and recognized and that the authors tried to respond to them. First of all, responding was to display that “the Village Institutes were not houses of sedition and disorder (*fitne* and *fesat*), but houses of renewal, corners of virtue, centers of culture where national pride and national consciousness were exposed”²²⁷ because the cause of Village Institute was the matter of homeland. Secondly, according to the articles, the main part of criticism was on the Law No. 4274²²⁸ and since the law was conducted in practice by wrong ‘incompetent’ people, it turned to be a heavy burden for villagers. It was in fact a perfect law; however, criticisms created controversy and thus “the students as our pure (*temiz*) peasant children and the teachers in the Village Institutes were treated with skepticism.”²²⁹ From this perspective, it may be asserted that on the way of social and economic development of the countryside and thus the country and for an agricultural productivity, the village mobilization was a must for the state which directed its control over the provinces and villages so as to prevent any obstacle leading to a slowdown in the acceleration of the spread of idea of being Turkish citizen and part of a homogenous nation. Therefore, for the authors, any kind of obstacles or namely “the degenerated ones, stones resembling rice” had to be removed.²³⁰

The persistent emphasis on the village development indicates that the village aid project -in the cases of both the People’s Houses and Village Institutes- was not carried out as it was desired or planned. Even though the unrealistic narration of the success in village development was exhibited in the official discourse and publications, the criticizing lines increasing the idea of failure were more common and persuasive.²³¹

²²⁷ Işıtman. “Bizim Köy Enstitüsü”, p. 16. “*Enstitüler hakikat gözü ile görülürse bir fitne, fesat ocağı değil, milli gurur ve milli şuurun taşıdığı kültür yuvası, yenilik ocağı, fazilet bucağıdır.*”

²²⁸ It was the Law on the Organization of Village Schools and Institutes declared in 1942. The law had articles focusing on the issue of village school construction. In these articles, it was stated that peasants were obliged to work in the construction of village schools.

²²⁹ SES. “Köy ve Köy Enstitüsü Davası Hakkında” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 76-7, May-June 1949, p. 25. “*Temiz köylü çocuklarımız olan Köy Enstitüsü öğrencilerine ve öğretmenlerine şüpheli nazarlar atıldı.*”

²³⁰ SES. “Köy ve Köy Enstitüsü Davası Hakkında”, p. 25.

²³¹ Kirby argues that the peasantist ideology of the People’s House experiment was not effective enough to concentrate on the village issue and that the intellectuals became indifference to the village realities and to the village development (Kirby, 1962: 72). Thus, this may be the main reason why the peasants

The example of an article in Erciyes is valuable to understand the problem of village development. The criticism against using peasants to construct buildings or roads in the villages made the author worried about the fact that if the road project of village development was not realized, the goal of transforming the Turkish countryside and the consideration of imagined ideal village would be in danger and the notions of improvement and development could come to deadlock.²³² As a result, it may be stated that the village issue which was also seen as the matter of homeland meant for the peasantists and members of the People's Houses to provide the development of nation, rural environment, agricultural production, education (eliminating the peasant's backwardness) or medical, social and economic healing of the villages. However, as is illustrated above, they were only offerings, advices, wishes and desires which were constructive and highly illusionary.

4.7. Concluding Remarks

The relationship between the local politics and the republican state or ruling party was mirrored in the seemingly official publication of a provincial House, Erciyes Journal. Every cultural policy and modernized, secularized but namely nationalized project for a homogenous nation took excessively part and place in the articles of the journal. To make the country available to civilization, modernization or contemporization was directly designed for social and cultural transformation of the cities, provinces and the countryside and thus the articles were written and published according to the party's structural directives and to the created ideals and supposed progressive goals. The conception of an ideal citizen who spoke pure Turkish was to reach to the desired level for the national education in which the people from old to young and from women to

could not trust them. Başgöz and Wilson also mention that village aid program of the People's Houses was unsuccessful to improve the living standards of the rural population, to rehabilitate and help the villagers to cultivate their lands (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968: 154-7).

²³² Şevki Urfalı. "Yirmi Yılda Yüzyirmi Bin Kilometre Köy Yolu", p. 26, 28.

men were perceived as potential future role models of the newly emerged regime. A large, moral, literate, modern nation was presented with a healthy, sturdy, strong body or was represented as similar to a family where woman was supposed to be mother or enlightened housewife. The duty of role modeling actually was given to the local supporters of the state and party meaning local social actors of the provincial towns such as doctors, teachers or lawyers. Therefore, the articles of Erciyes were not conflictual to the ideological principles of the party's center. This chapter also has mentioned that the past was reshaped and reinterpreted for the present not to face any obstacles or problems in the reforming process. Turkishness in a mythical history was illustrated for the defined people who would then feel belonging to a united country. And because the origins of the Turkish nation could be found among the Turkish villagers, the republican state took the countryside into account for development in the country by depicting civilized, not backward Anatolian villages as compared to the past. For this aim, as it has been seen in the example of the Kayseri House, the local actors of the People's Houses organized visits to the villages; however, these visits have showed that the perception of the center on villages dominated the minds of the visitors. Consequently, the articles in Erciyes and many House journals, was fitting to style of the Kemalist nationalist discourse and remained loyal to ideas, intentions and policies of the official representatives of the ruling party and also intellectuals of the period.

The chapter may be briefly summarized from the articles of two authors in Erciyes. One of the articles was about the dominant position of a few writers in the journal. In this article, the author defended the domination of some leading authors and claimed that it was because there was nobody who possessed a sense of duty and faith to work for the local studies. For him, Erciyes was a People's House journal which become step for educating the young people as 'Nationalist, Republican and Revolutionist'.²³³ Another author describing himself as 'Turkist' said that the House journals as the Anatolian journals could not be regarded as unnecessary 'fabricated/fake' journals, since they were written by "the idealist young people who walk barefoot on the

²³³ Kazım Özyedekçi. "Zaruri Bir İzah" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 59-60, December-January 1947, p. 23.

Anatolian soil, hear the voice of Anatolia and cope with its problems”.²³⁴ Actually, sense of belatedness of the province was based on feeling of shame stemming from not to be modern and civilized. In the texts of official discourse, the center insisted on to catch up the West; on the other hand, as seen in the case of the Kayseri House experiment, the province contrasted itself with the center:

(...) Those dear artists (!) do know only some magazines published in the capital [Ankara]; some art newspapers (!), *baldırbacak* [narrated as naked leg of woman] magazines published in İstanbul. (...) How could one call them Anatolian pure children; I think they are artists (!) of a particular class, puppets of degenerate pleasures.²³⁵

As the Anatolian image was increasingly persisting in a nationalistic but anti-communist rhetoric of locality and the conservative comments and reactions intensified in the Kayseri province and among the provincial elites especially in the middle of 1940s, the province felt the sense of looking down on it.

In epitome, this chapter has emphasized that the picture drawn in articles of the Kayseri House journal, Erciyes showed similarities with the performances and occupations of the other provincial House journals. The authors employed the same discourses in the context of the Kemalist nationalist writing characteristics. The official ideology of the Turkish state or the ruling party, in a sense, appeared to be a significant cause for the authors to write appropriate articles and to perform cultural activities in the People’s House of Kayseri, when the effort was to diffuse the cultural policies and reforms within the public and private lives of the Turkish people and of course, the local society. Publishing many articles and carrying on works about the designated and imagined form of the Turkish society or citizen, the Erciyes journal together with the

²³⁴ Nihat Kuşlu. “Uydurma Dergi (Lüzumsuz Mecmua)” in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 78-9, July-August 1949, p. 16. “*Anadolu toprağına yalın ayak basmış, Anadolu’nun sesini duymuş, dertleriyle haşır neşir olmuş idealist gençlerdir.*”

²³⁵ N. Kuşlu. “Uydurma Dergi (Lüzumsuz Mecmua)”, p. 16. “*O sayın sanatkârlar (!) ancak ve ancak sanat dergisi, mecmuası ve gazetesi olarak Başkentte çıkan birkaç mecmuayı, İstanbul’da intişar eden birkaç sanat gazetesini (!) baldırbacak mecmuasını tanırlar. (...) Hal böyle iken, gelinde, siz bunlara Anadolu’nun öz çocukları deyin, hence onlar muayyen bir zümrenin sanatkârı (!) dejenere zevklerin kuklalarıdır.*”

Kayseri House was charged to become the "successful" follower of demands by the state and ruling party for promoting cultural changes and transformation of the so called illiterate, uncivilized, sometimes immoral but supremely pure, genuine populace of the romanticized homeland. On the other side of the argument on the People's Houses, the House journals are considered not having information about the local social and political actors and the ordinary people's responses and reactions to the Houses and its activities and more importantly, to the republican party's position and role on the local politics and society. In the following chapter, some articles of the Erciyes Journal will be reviewed again in order for demonstrating that voices of the ordinary people are even able to be heard in these articles. It will be sought to shed light on the interpretive, oppositional or conflictual accounts of the House members and the party members from local to non-local and besides on the invisible but tactical popular and organic reactions of the people to the cultural policies formulated with secularization, modernization or nationalization/Turkification.

CHAPTER 5

VOICES FROM THE INSIDE AND THE OUTSIDE: REACTIONS, RESPONSES, COMMENTARIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE KAYSERI HOUSE

The effectiveness and experience of the pedagogical, secular, modern, national cultural reforms and policies in the provinces but namely, the local dimensions of the Turkish politics and culture and social dynamics of everyday life in the periphery have recently been studied in the literature of the early republican period and been put forward in the works of many scholars and researchers. (Adak Turan, 2015; Brockett, 2011; Lamprou, 2009; Metinsoy, 2007; Metinsoy, 2010a; Üngör, 2011: 200-204; Yılmaz, 2013).²³⁶ As discussed in the second chapter, the ideological imagination of the new regime and the ruling party together with modernizing and nationalizing process of the period was dependent upon internalizing the cultural reforms for the survival of the Turkish nation in the contexts of transformation of the province/periphery and the relations between the state and society/citizens. The positions and roles of the Houses were needed to be well-organized, as they were imagined, so to facilitate the penetration of the reforms and ‘dominant ideology’ of the regime into the society accepted as Turkish/the Turks. However, this kind of imagination for understanding the everyday practices of the local actors or groups in terms of their different political, ethnic, religious, social identities and class or gender oriented differences is assessed as dualistic, incomplete and neglecting the society by those scholars who examine the issue and early republican era in a more comprehensive argument. This means that all segments of the society are reread and reviewed according to their power relations,

²³⁶ The work of F. Cantek is also worthy to be noted because Cantek analyzes the everyday lives of the people in Ankara during the process of making it capital of the country. Actually, Ankara too, was seen one of the provincial town of the Central Anatolia, compared with Istanbul. See F. Cantek, *Yabanlar ve Yerliler: Başkent Olma Sürecinde Ankara*.

acts of use and consumption, sites of negotiation, resistance, compliance, and also their voices and everyday politics. Because the actual position-taking of the local people are not taken into account, the Houses are discussed only as cultural places for the center's reform diffusing attempts and thus the activities of the Houses appear like practices which are accorded with the directives and imagined plans of the state and the central party (Lamprou, 2009: 7-26).

In this regard, this chapter examines the implementation of the reforms, cultural policies and Kemalist discourses in the Kayseri House's activities and interpretations and responses of the local or non-local actors and of the ordinary people to them whose social, cultural and political positions and everyday practices or 'life-worlds'²³⁷ were diverse and reflected different forms of identities and subjectivities. These identities led to the creation of new public spheres and to the formation of a new realm, the realm of individuals, personal histories or in other words, discourses of the everyday. In the first part, for better understanding the point of intersection between the state and its citizen, it will be asked what is the function of the Kayseri House in the eyes of the House male/female actors and members and how their positions and practices appear as participation acts for accessing to space of power and responding to that power. Then, secondly, criticisms of the party center, opposing (antagonist) views of members of the provincial elites or local notables and of powerful families in the periphery, and critical opinions of the Kayseri House actors themselves will be pointed out in the context of both the Republican People's Party and People's House experiments in the province.

Finally, in addition to views of the Kayseri House actors and voices of local or non-local participants in the House cultural activities, voices of those who experienced and knew about the Kayseri House and voices of those who lived or born in Kayseri between the 1930s and the 1940s, though having said nothing about the Kayseri House, will be fruitful to analyze the House experience in the periphery in terms of everyday

²³⁷ For the best understanding the word, see Şerif Mardin. (2014). *Modern Türk Sosyal Bilimleri Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler*. In S. Bozdoğan and R. Kasaba (Eds.), *Türkiye'de Modernleşme ve Ulusal Kimlik*. 4rd edition, İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları.

responses of the people. This part of the fifth chapter mainly aims to explore discourses of woman, peasant, worker, or the poor and thus ‘the ordinary’ or ‘the other’ in the texts of local or non-local actors in Kayseri and in the House, memoirs of the ordinary people, and in general sources on the everyday life of Kayseri in the early republican era when the local public began to confront with the cultural policies. Although very few sources are available and some of them are fictional, these sources will be used to find answers to the questions of how the everyday practices of ‘the people’ in the province communicated with the Kemalist cultural policies and with the provincial People’s House and how the House did succeed or fail to transform the social and cultural lives of the local people or to change the context of locality in particular for continuation of the dominant ideology and for narration of national culture and identity.

5.1. Voices of the People’s House Actors and Members

The prototype of all the House members in the early republican period seems to be not unstable or changeable at the first glance. Their official ideal was situated in their established discourse to make the population from provinces to countryside be saved from backwardness, tradition oriented fanaticism; reach to the high levels of civilization and cultural modernization; and live in a secularized life. On the way to introduce and diffuse the cultural formulated reforms and policies into the public/people, the People’s House actors and members were undertaken a missionary duty because it was necessary to free from the severe sense of belatedness while comparing the homeland with the progressive West.²³⁸ In the provinces, teachers, state officials, civil servants or even students and members of the provincial elite groups who believed in the republican state due to the processes of nationalization in order

²³⁸ The sense of belatedness caused the province to feel itself distant from the center and thus the feeling of discontent with modern lifestyle was maintained. The commitment to traditional ties and values were never totally removed and got to be dominant in the expressions of the House members. As for the countryside, the situation remained unpredictable up until the 1980s when the myths of high and low culture began to be reinterpreted (deconstructed) and when popular culture gained importance in every segments of society. For more information, see N. Gürbilek. (2001). *Vitrinde Yaşamak: 1980’lerin Kültürel İklimi*. İstanbul: Metis.

for conserving the Turkish traditional folkloric elements (in the scope of conservative republicanism) were enlisted as the determined supporters and forces of the center and its principles. The official literature shows clearly that the aims, plans and policies of the state and the ruling party penetrated into the local population but on the other hand, does not show that the implementation, experience or use of the reforms in the provinces and villages by the House members gave the House experiment a different stance in which the ‘actual’ practices were brought to light.

In this part, the thesis strives to discover the self-positioning, participation or engagement of the House local or non-local actors and members in the Kayseri House, while they attempted to reproduce the Kemalist discourse, narratives of ideological social and cultural change; to rewrite the Turkish history for guaranteeing a myth of modern, civilized, literate, secular Turkish nation; and to implement or reinforce the symbolic regulations of the nationalizing and modernizing processes of the new Turkish regime. Having supposed that they were active, energetic, conventional members, it is inevitable to see them as the revolutionary intellectuals or urban elites who transformed the Kayseri province and its people dramatically. However, the crucial point is that the local/non-local actors and members were educated and almost most of them were coming from the families of Kayseri provincial/local elites.²³⁹ Their positioning and participation in the Kayseri House meant to make their commitment to the state and the ruling party become recognized by the party center directly.

In this regard, this part of the thesis focuses on the question of how as the spaces of socialization and mobilization, the Houses in general and the Kayseri House in particular were perceived and experienced by the actors and members. The structural significance of membership and active participation will be analyzed through the different expressions and intentions of the House local or non-local actors. Also, the female members together with male ones will be examined here so as to uncover the

²³⁹ M. Metinsoy (2010b) argues in his article that in the provincial party organizations, the members of the party were composed of ‘powerful, influential and wealthy’ families who were embedded in the social structure of the province. Their interests and ambitions were somehow conflicted with other interest groups or non-local state officials and representatives because for Metinsoy, the Republican People’s Party in the province was the potential site of power struggles. They were the nucleus of local bourgeoisie.

position, representation and visibility of woman in the People's Houses but primarily to understand how the role of woman as active participants be important for the female members themselves.

5.1.1. Use of Membership: The Narratives of Active Participation

The central role and participating position of the Kayseri House actors and members were analyzed as if they were totally under the control of the party center and its elites, the enlightened groups. In terms of mediation role between the state and citizen and their notable characteristics as the 'educated' individuals of the province especially within the powerful groups, local notables or provincial elites having influence in the local politics, the members performed so many such practices in the Houses as requesting, appropriating, conforming or complaining/expressing plans, aims or desires in a moderate language. Their practices and interpretations of the reforms, in a sense, were something making the other side of the coin obvious. As will be discussed below in detail, with their different occupations and specialties such as governor and chairman of the local Republican People's Party branch in Kayseri; foreman in the *Tayyare* (Airplane) Factory; local or non-local 'idealist' teachers; and a high school student and an inexperienced reporter (newsman), the House members and actors occupied considerable and leading positions as 'active'²⁴⁰ participants and as social and political actors of both the House and the Kayseri province. Therefore, this part of the thesis indicates that use of membership and acts of participation for some reasons and factors increased possibility of meeting the local population with the structural social and cultural reforms and policies which were aimed to be attached to the public and even private lives of them.

²⁴⁰ The state of being 'active' is actually inferred from utterances and discourses in the sources used in this part of the fifth chapter, as those sources are limited and subjective by nature. It is considered that it will provide the reader a reason for better questioning the local dimension of the People's Houses experiment, even if the attitudes of the members are regarded either active or passive.

After the process of merging the state with the party, the governors then had direct influence on the provincial party branches as the heads of them and on the People's Houses as they were appointed officials to perform their roles and directives given to them as mediators of modernization and nationalization attempts. The new regime's ideals, campaigns and principles had to be publicized, promoted and organized at the local levels; thus, the penetration to the society through the cultural institutions, the People's Houses was necessity in Anatolian provinces where the social and cultural life circumstances and practices were complex and heterogeneous. Appeared like a command of the official discourse, juncture of the state and society in the localities was regarded by state officials and the party's urban elites as a duty to support without giving any doubt and with a sort of sense of commitment to both the ruling party and its formulated policies.

Adli Bayman was appointed to the Kayseri province at the time when the process of merging began. During his state management and provincial party leadership, Bayman initiated many village visits and trips to prove its special attention to and active engagement in the works including the local state affairs, the party's administrative doings and as a matter of course, the cultural activities of the Kayseri House. To formalize the realization and adaptation of the new regime efforts and decisions in the province, Bayman took responsibility and educatory position so that the Kayseri province would be saved from being perceived as "very backward and extremely needed to be developed one part of our country" and "a periphery where social life was backward and there was separation between man and woman".²⁴¹ His informative reports sent to the General Secretariat between 1936 and 1938 were about what they did in the villages in terms of forming a scientific village research or monograph; what happened when they reached to the villages; and how they approached to the peasants (like peasantist actions). Together with the other House members and participants, men and women (housewives, daughters or female teachers), Bayman, a state official adopting new style of men's clothing in a European traveler like appearance, regarded

²⁴¹ A. Bayman's letter to Şükrü Kaya, General Secretary of the RPP, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 26 April 1937. "*Kayseri sizde bilir ve takdir edersiniz ki yurdumuzun çok geri kalmış ve kalkınması çok gerekli bulunan bir parçasıdır. Sosyal hayatı çok geride olan bu muhitte kadın ile erkek kaynaşmamış*".

the village trips as sort of walking activities (hiking) full of sincerity and honesty or joy and pleasure. After all, they resembled ‘a sweet journey going on in light and color’, through which “as the roots of homeland, the villagers are identified and enlightened and it is given at least a civilized life to them who were abandoned up until now”. It was as well important to “make them feel our emotions” or nationalist emotions.²⁴² Giving the picture of Atatürk as a gift of the House to the peasants was one of the examples.

Convinced that there were roles and responsibilities needed to be taken for developing villages, diffusing the nationalist and revolutionary regime’s ideals and indeed for transforming the countryside as suited to the economic, social and cultural policies and legal regulations, Bayman persisted to lead the way in realization of this kind of trips to and studies on Kayseri’s villages. As all participants of the village trips did, he believed that “the trips enabled the peasants to arouse positive feelings”²⁴³. This somehow indicates that the peasants were not still trusting them, even as village aid policies were introduced to remove the mistrust between the peasants and city dwellers. In this sense, the village trips experiment in terms of the Kayseri House reflected partly supportive accommodation of instructive directives of the state authorities by the House members and partly non-forcible (flexible)²⁴⁴ implementation of the invented national symbols in the Kayseri countryside, as seen in examples of the moments when Bayman and participants met with ‘the masters of the country’.

In the sources used here, Bayman is, in a sense, portrayed as a decisive governor and an influential political actor of both the party and the People’s House of Kayseri who could listen to the requests of peasants (“we make effort to fulfill your requests that

²⁴² Anonymous. (1937). *Argıncık Köyü (Köy Gezileri Tetkik Notlarıdır Seri: 4)*. Kayseri: Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası, p. 39. “yurdun temeli olan köylü tanınmakta ve aydınlatılmakta ve şimdiye kadar çok mühmel olan köylülere biraz olsun medeni bir hayat ifade edilmekte”.

²⁴³ A letter by governor A. Bayman to the General Secretariat of RPP, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 11 November 1936. “bu gezilerin köylü üzerinde çok müspet duygular uyandırdığı”.

²⁴⁴ Despite the authoritarian, disciplinary and organized picture of the RPP and the People’s Houses in the official literature, for Metinsoy (2010b), because of inadequacies of the substructural forces and organizational mechanisms in the provinces, the party and its ideological propaganda apparatus, the People’s Houses were somehow weak and lack of effectiveness in the respect of penetrating into society.

are appropriate to the laws of the Republic”²⁴⁵) and try to find remedies for the problems of them “by mingling with the crowd”²⁴⁶, all of which made it possible for him to describe himself a ‘successful’ government functionary. As a matter of fact, in his reports on the village trips, active involvement in the villages, engagement with the peasants there and the works done for evolution of the Kayseri province were represented as achievements. “Bayman’s reports were composed for the eyes of his superiors” (Lamprou, 2009: 262-3). On the other hand, some kind of disapproval, conflict or rivalry came out, even though he was depicted as an active state official.

While Bayman was reporting what happened during these Sunday trips to the General Secretariat of the party, Nafi Atuf Kansu, Erzurum deputy, member of the party executive board and ‘head of the 5th bureau of the General Secretariat’²⁴⁷, wrote a letter sent to the provincial party branch in Kayseri in which it was mentioned that information about the Mimarsinan village trip, the third of village trip series, was satisfactory and if available, copies of photographs taken during this trip should be also sent.²⁴⁸ Bayman posted a response letter saying that the copies as required was sent to the General Secretariat.²⁴⁹ After a few months later, in April 1937, Kansu sent another letter this time to the chairman of the Kayseri House appreciating efforts on village studies with reference to two village trips brochures which were the first (Tavlusun) and the second (Germir) of the series, but criticizing the brochures not appropriate to the criteria required by the center, lack of seriousness and more

²⁴⁵ “Argıncık Köy Gezisi ve Haydar Bey Köşkü”, *Kayseri (Vilayet Gazetesi)*, 26 November 1936. “Cumhuriyet kanunlarına uyan isteklerinizin yapılmasına çalışırız”.

²⁴⁶ Özdoğan, K. (1937). *Germir Köyü (Kayseri Halkevi’nin Tertip Ettiği Yaya Köy Gezileri Tetkik Notlarıdır Seri: 2)*. Kayseri: Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası, p. 16.

²⁴⁷ According to Lamprou (2009: 266), it was an official place “responsible for the monitoring of the Houses activities”.

²⁴⁸ A letter by N. Kansu to the Provincial Party Branch of Kayseri, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 1 December 1936.

²⁴⁹ A letter by governor A. Bayman to the General Secretariat of RPP, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 8 December 1936.

importantly, apt to bring about ‘bad effects’ to be likely ‘waste’.²⁵⁰ Kansu also sent a village trip brochure published by the Ankara House together with the letter to show how a village study would be. This was the beginning of conflict and war of words between two persons over significance of a village study and village development. Lamprou sees this letter as a disapproval to the unscientific, unserious publication of a village trip study by arguing that the conflict arises evidently from “a divergence between the ‘village operation’ as it had been planned/envisaged by the center and the manner it was actually carried out” (Lamprou, 2009: 267). On the other hand, it is as well obvious that this letter was the sign of a strong ongoing rivalry and some sort of envy. Bayman’s reply to this letter by sending another letter to supreme office, to Şükrü Kaya, the General Secretary of the party gives evidence about the truth behind the case:

Dear my Senior, Supreme Chief, on account of an event which affected me so sadly I have to annoy you with my letter; because of that, I throw myself to your mercy. In order to prove that I deserved belief and love you gave me by appointing to an important town like Kayseri, I have worked without considering my health and I have strived to perform activities that are very productive for the province, for the country during my governorship process lasting nine months. (...) Until now, we have published three brochures containing Tavlusun, Germir and Mimarsinan village trips. (...) While we are editing them, we are strictly attentive to the matter that they are relating to the facts and based on strong documentary evidences and indeed, we pay attention to the goodness of papers and photographs for viewers and readers to these brochures. (...) There may be some points required to be criticized in our efforts. These points can be corrected and modified immediately by the directives and signals of our elders. (...) Nevertheless, it is certain that every demand and directive shall be addressed to a receiver properly. All works submitted are presided by me. I never appropriate the works to myself, but instead to the People’s House which is under control of our Party I am the leader of its provincial branch in Kayseri. My purpose here is to make the House known to the people and thus to strengthen our party. Though the provincial party leader is governor and Adli bayman presides all works done, dear mister nafi kansu sent a letter to the chairmanship of the Kayseri House

²⁵⁰ Nafi Kansu’s letter to the chairman of the Kayseri House, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 6 April 1937.

in which there is his signature under the title of member of the party executive board. In fact, I know that mister nafi kansu is involved in the works relating to the People's Houses. However, in the matter of criticism and investigation regarding the works of our House controlled by our party and governor Adli bayman, I think, it should not be sent to the chairmanship of Kayseri House and should be sent to the leader of the provincial party branch of Kayseri and should be written directly by the General Secretariat itself. Indeed, about aids needed to support the People's Houses, the provincial party leaders, governors have been given orders. (...) The House committee rather than me feel badly about this situation and all their motivation and enthusiasm have been vanished. (...) Whatever the aim of the relevant letter [Kansu's letter] is, I accept the directives of your high personality and authority, assuming them as honor.²⁵¹

²⁵¹ A. Bayman's letter to Şükrü Kaya, General Secretary of the RPP, in *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 26 April 1937. "*Sayın Büyüğüm Yüce Şefim, Beni çok müteessir eden bir hadise dolayısıyla size bu yazımla Tasdi mecburiyetinde kaldığımdan dolayı beni bağışlamanızı yalvarırım. Kayseri gibi önemli bir merkeze atanmam suretile gösterdiğiniz inan ve Sevgiye layık olduğumu göstermek için sıhhatimi ayaklar altında çiğnercesine çalışıyor ve dokuz aya varan kayseri valiliğim zamanında il için Yurt için çok verimli olan işlerin peşinde ve amacında koşuyorum. (...) Şimdiye kadar Tavlusun Germir ve Mimarsınan köylerine ait olmak üzere üç broşür neşrettik. (...) Bu broşürleri neşrederken konusunun doğruluğuna ve neşriyatın kuvvetli belgelere dayanmasına çok özen gösterdiğimiz gibi bu broşürleri görenlerin ve okuyucuların zevkle okumalarını temin için kağıtlarının ve resimlerinin iyiliğine de çok dikkat eylemekteyiz. (...) İyiliğine isabetine kani olduğumuz bu mesaimizde muhtacı tenkit olan noktalar bulunabilir. Bu noktalar da Büyüklerimizin buyruğu ve işaretile derhal tashih ve tadil edilebilir. (...) Ancak her dileğin ve her buyruğun da bir yolu olacağı ve usulü mevzua dairesinde bir muhatabı bulunacağı muhakkaktır. Bütün arz ettiğim mesaiyi bendeniz şahsan idare etmekteyim. Bu mesaimde asla şahsımı istihdaf etmem ve bütün bu mesaimi bu ilde başında bulunduğum Partimizin tahtı himayesinde çalışmakta olan Halkevimize mal etmişimdir. Buradaki maksadında Halkevimizi Halkımıza tanıtmak ve dolayısıyla partimizi kuvvetlendirmektir. Burada parti başkanı vali olduğu ve bütün işlerin başında Adli bayman bulunduğu halde imzasının üzerinde C.H.P. Genyönkurul üyesi unvanını taşıyan örneği bağlı mektubu sayın bay nafi kansu Halkevimiz başkanlığına göndermiştir. Filvaki bay nafi kansu'nun Genyönkurulda Halkevlerle meşgul olduğunu bildirdim. Ancak partimizin ve Vali Adli baymanın himayesi altında çalışan Halkevimizin mesaisini ilgilendiren tenkit ve muahazeyi icabettiren bir iş için Halkevi başkanlığına değil kayserideki parti başkanına yazmak ve bilhassa Genel Sekreterlik tarafından yazılmak lazım olduğu kanaatindeyim. Nitekim Halkevlerine yapılması gereken yardımlar için hep parti Başkanlarına, valilere buyruklar verilmektedir. (...) Bu yazılışa benden ziyade de Halkevi heyeti müteessir olmuştur ve bütün şevk ve gayretleri kırılmıştır. (...) Bağlı yazının istihdaf ettiği nokta ne ise yüksek şahıs ve makamınızın direktifini, buyruğunu onur telakki ederim".*

Kansu then sent another response letter this time directly to the governor and leader of provincial party branch, Bayman in order to explain what he meant and probably to put an end to the heavy arguments: "(...) You do not have to feel sad. This is not personal matter, but the matter of business and duty. The letter involved is directed to the chairman of the House. If it was necessary to reply, the chairman could do it. (...) The criticisms expressed are reasonable, correct, suitable. Putting signature on the letter should have been assumed as a satisfactory evidence I have legal power to sign it. This aspect is a point known even by the Chief who is chief of mine and also of you". *BCA CHP* 490.1/837.310.2, 10 May 1937. "(...) Teessürlerinize sebep yoktur. Bu bir şahıs meselesi değil, bir iş ve vazife mevzuudur. Yazılan tahrirat doğrudan doğruya Halkevi başkanınadır. Cevap verilmeye lüzum görülmişse Halkevi Başkanı bunu yapabilir. (...) Yapılan tenkitler haklı, doğru ve yerindedir. Bu yazıya imza atmış olamam, imza

According to Karpat (1963: 61), in the period between 1939 and 1940, the Houses entered under the control of some educators and artists such as Nafi Atuf Kansu who began to acquire power within the party. They even caused changes in the party chairmen. One of the initiatives that this new bureaucratic power within the party led to was the separation of the party presidency from governorship and thus elimination of the party's direct control over the Houses. On the other hand, at local levels, the members of the local party organizations continued to be actors and participants of the Houses and their activities, because of existence of the influential families and local urban elites in both the party and the Houses.

Kansu's letter and Bayman's reply seems to explain how a controversial issue especially relating to management of the province and administration of the provincial party branch and the People's House turned into challenging and systematically bending top-down mechanisms and regulations between the center and the periphery in terms of uncertainty (flexibility) on who was right or wrong and who was dominant or loyal. It is also clearly apparent that even after merging state with the party, an authoritarian, monolithic party administration remained just an imagination in the provinces where the governors were made leaders of the local party branches but in actual manner and practices, this policy caused the dual character of the political system to be upside down (fragile hegemony) at local levels. As a matter of fact, the local administration (either provincial party organization or local People's Houses) attempted to prove its activeness, conformity or 'achievements'; on the other side of the same story, governors somehow looked like using their designated duties and their official position not for diffusing the reforms forcibly but for the political strategies as different acts of subjectivity to facilitate the unstable transitions between various power networks. Manipulation of power by both Kansu and Bayman produces some sort of conflicting dialogue but not in conforming attitude between the center and the periphery. There is even complaining of the center to the center in the context of higher authority, the General Secretary in the case mentioned above.

atmak salahiyetim olduğuna kağı delil telakki edilmeliydi. Bu cihet, benim gibi sizin de Şefiniz olan zatın bileceği bir noktadır”.

Another narrator of being actively participant in the Kayseri House and its activities, Mahir Şener, a foreman who was working in the Airplane Factory, demanded from the General Secretariat change of either salary to be paid monthly but not daily or workplace not being in Kayseri. In his request letters, he did not hesitate to tell his involvement and membership in the House and even his daughter's participation in the cultural activities to be helped and recognized. According to Lamprou, it means that the mediating dimension of the People's Houses was manifested, through which his petitions would be reached to the relevant offices of the party center. He even asked the support of a chairman of the Kayseri House, N. Özsan as an influential actor of the House to attract the center's attention to his demands (Lamprou, 2009: 111-2).

As for school teachers, undertaking national duty to enlighten and civilize namely illiterate adults of the homeland and to educate the younger minds as future generations of the new regime, they were required to have commitment to and belief in the state-initiated reforms, progressive measures or the Kemalist pedagogical, cultural and social policies produced for transformation/reconstruction of Turkish society in general and the local society in the provinces in particular. In this respect, the high level of membership and participation of local or non-local teachers is the most common feature of the People's Houses because they were seen the mass of intellectuals (*münevver/aydın kütlesi*) who contributed the spread of the official ideology, the Turkish nationalist point of view and the republican values; if required, mediated between the peasants and the city dwellers (for example, the village institute teachers); and were also imagined as the supportive and participatory agents of modern, national and secular education processes. Therefore, their negotiations with the new state employees and the local urban elite actors and with the students or the peasants took place within and through the People's Houses²⁵² where actual experiences and various interpretations and responses of the teachers were embodied in different forms of subjectivity and everyday practices. The actual stories of 'idealist'

²⁵² F. Cantek points out that the citizens of the Turkish Republic could meet with the other family members of the new imagined nation in the People's Houses. Since the Houses, as Baltacıoğlu remarks, were the spaces of cultural indoctrination, the citizens could be educated in moralistic and progressive ways to save the country from backwardness (Cantek, 2016: 51).

teachers within schools and the People's Houses meant to be signifiers of distorted (not official) meanings on determined boundaries formed in the nation building process in order to better understand the imagery of a nationalist and modern republican teacher in the provinces.

In the case of the Kayseri House, teachers of the new regime were either coming from outside Kayseri or was born in Kayseri, as some of Kayseri-born teachers were yet the members of the local well-known old families. Kemalettin Karamete, for instance, was a local teacher teaching French in the Kayseri High School of the period who had an enormous educational and professional background.²⁵³ He was one of the members of the Language, History and Literature Branch of the Kayseri House. He wrote many articles on the Kayseri history, the historical existence of the Hittite in Kayseri and the Kayseri people in the Erciyes Journal, made speeches in conferences and taught course of French language in the Kayseri House and published a book dealing with the Turkish history of Kayseri. On the way of promoting the reforms to the people especially to the Kayseri people, Karamete seems to prefer the history making myth of the new regime. His commitment to the party but most importantly to 'the Supreme Turk', Atatürk (*En Büyük Türk*) led him to write this book. His commitment and love were so profound that he took the initiative to make the first coming of Atatürk to Kayseri be celebrated as a national holiday (*Gazi Günü*). He made a formal request to the House Administrative Committee for this proposal and when it was approved, he felt proud of himself as he made it possible. And in the first day of celebration, according to Karamete, the people showed high emotions and felt excited about it and even an extraordinary stage play (in an orderly manner) was held in the Kayseri House together with many speeches about the importance of the celebrated day and Atatürk, singing the national anthem of the Republic and reading national poems. He felt energetic too: "I could not help myself to write the book as a gift for the happy anniversary of the day and to attend to the celebrations [held in the Kayseri House]".²⁵⁴

²⁵³ He applied to be deputy in the National Assembly in 1946 by showing his background as evidence. See *BCA CHP*, 490.1/307.1250.2.

²⁵⁴ K. Karamete. (1934). *Erciyes Kayserisi ve Tarihine Bir Bakış*. Kayseri: Yeni Matbaa, p. VII.

Moreover, Karamete saw the People's Houses in his words 'fruitful establishments necessary for the Turkish nation' and 'cultural sources for the Turkish unity'. In particular, for him, youth appropriated the Kayseri House to themselves which meant that each Erciyes child promised to maintain the Turkish ideals of civilization and progress in the future. Seemingly presented himself here as a devoted (enlightened) teacher, Karamete thought he managed to educate his students according to the ideals and aims of the Turkish revolution.

In his book, Karamete also talked about few things done for rebuilding up the city center by the governor and mayor in the republican era. However, the image of civilized Kayseri envisioned with new parks, cinema, theatre, roads or walkways revealed only the structural transformation of the Kayseri province. In the context of effectiveness of the reforms on the local society and its position of adapting to or objecting them, it is claimed it did not give any interpretation or account (Lamprou, 2009: 110-1). In an article written by him in the Erciyes Journal²⁵⁵, on the other hand, he attempted to respond the criticisms of N. S. Örik who travelled some of the Anatolian provinces including Kayseri (will be discussed below) and reflected his expressions of current conditions and developments there in a published book. What disturbed Karamete about Örik and his expressions was his traveler like appearance and his act of criticizing everything involving books written on the Kayseri and its history (pretending like a history critique); the central square of Kayseri (the case of mud); criticizing of the Atatürk statue (weirdness of it); and the coffeehouses of the city. Karamete found the reason behind Örik's disliking and dissatisfaction during his visit to Kayseri and it was that Örik was accompanied with a man named Hüsni İrkilata who had caused many bad things in the province. According to Karamete's claims, that man who was the provincial director of national education reduced the numbers of primary schools, sent those teachers not accepting his demands out of the town or to villages, misused his authority and even caused to the destruction of the Turkish bath made by Mimar Sinan²⁵⁶ about which Örik felt sorry. That man also appropriated

²⁵⁵ Karamete, K. "Yanlış Bir Görüşe Cevap" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 21, 1943, pp. 640-44.

²⁵⁶ More interestingly, in the destruction story of the Turkish bath told by Karamete, İrkilata threatens a civil servant who enables the Kayseri (Archeology) Museum to be opened to remove him from office

a publication of the Kayseri House to himself only just by putting his signature on it.²⁵⁷ This account of Karamete resembles the events happened in other provinces as conflicts of interest between contesting groups and individuals, local power relations and struggles and the position of the People's House as the space of indicating high status or using the membership for the political aims became the very characteristics of the events (Lamprou, 2009: 139-190; Metinsoy, 2010b).

Another schoolteacher teaching Turkish and elected as the chairman of the Kayseri House in one-year period, Kazım Yedekçi²⁵⁸ was the member of an old reputable family whose father was veteran of the first world war and mother was the daughter of a reputable artisan. He wrote many articles in the Erciyes Journal, made conferences, speeches, studies on the local history especially on the folklore of Kayseri and even became the editor in chief of the journal. His editorship was sometimes criticized by the readers as dominating the journal with his writings. He defended himself as having national sense of faith and duty when no one took the responsibility and because satisfying everyone was a hard job.²⁵⁹

because he identifies photographs of destruction event happening mostly at nights and attempts to send them to the Maarif Vekaleti (Ministry of National Education). This civil servant was actually assigned to the office as the first director of museum by the governor in 1930 when it was officially opened. See Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi. (2015). *Kayseri Ansiklopedisi Vol 1*. Kayseri: Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, p. 137.

²⁵⁷ H. İrkılata. (1934). *Kayseri Sözlüğü*. Kayseri: Kayseri Yeni Matbaa. He appears the chairman of Language, History and Literature Branch in the Kayseri House. In the preface of the publication, he magnifies the Turkish language and the Turkishness of Kayseri in which there is no other foreign language and even they are not adopted. In some villages, inhabitants are unspoiled Turks and folk poems use noble and exalted Turkish language. The collection board of the Kayseri House does select them and sends them to the Society for Research on the Turkish Language. And the publication is prepared.

²⁵⁸ His surname was appeared in the Erciyes Journal as Özyedekçi. He said he also used a nickname 'Ferdî Fahir' or just 'FF' in the journal. He explained why he did that as follows:

“It means a person who does something by oneself; pride oneself on one's doings. All alone, in a *tutucu* [conservative] periphery like Kayseri, it is so hard to supply text, find reader to texts, rather than finding reader, to acquire revenue that is meeting costs of printing.”

Yaşar Elden. (2013). Kazım Yedekçi ile Söyleşi. In Y. Elden (Ed.). *Kayseri'de Kültür ve Yaşam: Yazılar ve Söyleşiler*. Konya: Palet Yayınları, p. 204.

²⁵⁹ K. Özyedekçi, “Zaruri Bir İzah”.

While conducting positions of both the editorship and the House chairmanship in the Kayseri province, he claims in an interview that he strived to ‘do what had not been done before’: “Those things nobody thought before. Especially in the period when there were ones who avoided saying ‘I am from Kayseri’”. He mentions that he tried to sacrifice himself on the way of regulating financial and structural policies of the House and its activities, in case the administrative organizational duties and performances were in jeopardy. And the Kayseri House was located in “a periphery not intended and willing to study”, although it provided people opportunities for gathering and meeting (such as chairs to be sat in the meetings) or for correcting mistakes of the previous generations ‘before us’. He concludes: ‘Was it successful?’, ‘very much so’.” Except the physical training section (mainly the Sports Branch), all branches of the House worked well to provide cohesion among the people. He says his initiatives and efforts were not failure. However, he admits that some disagreeable events happened in the House but it was not because of him. Also, he states that it could be much better to continue the People’s Houses experiment in order for getting more information about the provinces.

Another issue about which he expresses his interpretations in the interview is woman’s involvement in the People’s House theatre stage. For him, it was a tough business to convince a shy fearful mass from children to workers to give speeches or perform plays in the Kayseri House stage. Most importantly, the young girls, female students were feeling ‘shy’ about taking part in the House plays. In order to overcome this shyness, he says he talked with their big brothers, fathers personally about it and tried to receive their approval, consents. For the families or parents, presence of young girls with the young boys and holding hands on school stage were things relating to ‘shameful ugly’ ones. He says that even in ‘our side’, the participation of girls and woman who would perform theatrical female roles on stage was perceived as bringing shame and dishonour and there were attempts to prevent it by targeting, blaming and gossiping (rumor). He says “I was in the head of this business in such a period when the *Kayserili* talked gossip and that gossip could reach to the target”. On the other hand, he mentions

that being part of the local society in a conservative periphery, in Kayseri was an advantage for making the families believe and trust him.²⁶⁰

Besides, in order to solve the problems of hygiene and cleaning for the poor and the needy, it was decided to open the Turkish baths in some districts of the province. It was announced the House would distribute ration cards and soap to the poor.²⁶¹ Yedekçioğlu recalls the case and how the House took the action to distribute them. He points out that as the House chairman, he and the provincial party boss of the period asked the *muhtars* come to the institution and told about what they would do while giving the soap to the poor. Actually, muhtars helped the House to distribute food, bread, coal, soap or provisions for the poor²⁶² and even in a novel of C. Kudret (will be detailed below) emphasizing the Kayseri House experience, the muhtars are used to conduct the social aid project.

It is apparent that in the interpretations of the local teachers, the Kayseri House experience was necessary to develop the region, discover the unspoiled folk materials and thus to rewrite (national) history of Kayseri, but it was also an exclusive place to be come together by the mass of intellectuals who had the regime's reforming ideals in their minds. And the House membership was used to realize the desires to which

²⁶⁰ Y. Elden, "Kazım Yedekçioğlu ile Söyleşi", p. 198-202. In order to better understand Yedekçioğlu's account, Lamprou's approach to the issue of woman in the People's Houses stage is to be involving. It gives further information on how it was expressed and narrated in the letters of the House chairmen, the members or local party inspectors sent to the party center. And he states that the discourses of language commonly used in the letters are 'accommodative' ones:

The connecting element among the above discourses is the polarity morality/immorality, which is unquestionably related to women and their place and function on stage and in society in general. At the local level, this distinction indicates the production of a – what I chose to call – 'accommodative discourse' about theatre, that is, about the participation of women. Accommodative in the sense that it attempts on the one hand to follow the regime's intentions and thoughts, while making, on the other hand, allowances for the widespread in society perceptions and moral reservations about theatre and, more generally, women (Lamprou, 2009: 235).

²⁶¹ M. Şanal. *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*, p. 182.

²⁶² M. Şanal. (Fall 2004). Türk Kültür Tarihi içerisinde Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri (1932 - 1950). *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, Issue: 161, p. 10.

local teachers as the parts of prominent local urban elites gave more attention so that they would have something ‘proud of and achieved’ in a province imagined as keen to be civilized but still conservative in terms of traditional ties and values. For the non-local teachers generally coming from Istanbul such as Cevdet Kudret, on the other hand, the Anatolian provinces and the People’s Houses along with its social and cultural activities were depicted respectively regions and places where illuminating hopes of being an idealist teacher and endeavors to ‘contemporize tradition’ (during the westernization process) emerged evidently.

Cevdet Kudret, as a renowned novelist or story writer, produced many works relating to history of the Turkish folklore and the Turkish shadow theatre and even was interested in collecting folkloric materials or folk stories. He was working as a high school teacher teaching literature in Kayseri in the 1930s and one of the members of the Language, History and Literature Branch through which he made speeches, gave lectures or took part in its activities such as collecting local folk poems²⁶³ and probably participated in the village visits organized by the House. His everyday life practices in Kayseri province and experiences he faced in the Kayseri House is better understood in his novel named *Havada Bulut Yok*²⁶⁴. For him, it was like confronting with the ‘scenes of the real life’ in which he saw students had social problems to live and it was hard to teach them ‘literature’. Thus, he participated the activities of the Social Assistance Branch of the House and spent his free times to take part in the village visits so that he would have the opportunity of ‘knowing the environment’ (Lamprou, 2009: 127).

The novel, *Havada Bulut Yok* brings the idealist teacher myth but generally images of enlightened bureaucrats, civil servants or the revolutionist/reformist intellectuals into more oppositional less conforming glance in discussions on the People’s Houses

²⁶³ Ali Rıza Önder, having writings in the Erciyes Journal about the history of Turkish press, local dialects and folk culture and also one of the students of Kudret, portrayed a picture of Kudret who engaged in making folk singers and their poems known to the people and even could prepare lectures concentrating on Nazım Hikmet in the House without getting any reaction or opposition (Lamprou, 2009: 127-8).

²⁶⁴ Cevdet Kudret (2006). *Havada Bulut Yok*. İstanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın.

experiment in the provinces and on their experiences dealt with by both the state officials and the people. The daily happenings observed by the protagonist is like a mirror of the real life experiences of the author who as an outsider in the province and member of the educated group in the Kayseri House witnessed serious social and economic pressures and difficult living conditions appearing on the side of the local others (workers, the poor, villagers) in the harsh realities of the Second World War. The story of the symbolic ‘we, the intellectuals’ (*biz aydınlar*) is narrated in an Anatolian province of the country where ‘it is not possible there to live renewed life’ because the everyday life in the province reflects the unusual life practices of any appointed civil servant.²⁶⁵ The protagonist, Suleyman too gets used to be a provincial civil servant. At one point, real life circumstances in the province makes him notice that the poor (village-town) children compared to the (city) children of the wealthy local families or local notables encounters so many difficulties to have education in school. He realizes that to be provincial civil servant is not ‘for the people’ but means away from them.²⁶⁶ He chooses to be one of the members in the Kayseri House owing to which he supposes he can work for those who are not known, ‘the people who are either present or absent’. He takes part in the works of the Social Assistance Branch. However, as the other House branches are, this branch is a sort of form/shape in which there is nothing to do for helping the poor people (no money, no enthusiasm). He finds out that the House is just a place where the civil servants (non-local or local), the party officials, merchants, landlords, artisans and members from old rich families gather together to make speeches, conferences or to get enjoyment from participating activities such as visiting villages by pretending that they desire to develop villages on behalf of national duty. Yet, it is mostly a report factory where the House chairman with his political aims (to be representative in National Assembly) prepares reports exaggerating the cultural events and works required to be done. When the war breaks out, shortage of food and poverty increase, a committee is formed in the House’s social

²⁶⁵ “*Kitap deseniz, buraya kitap gelmez; gazete deseniz, günün birinde artık İstanbul’da olup bitenler artık sizi ilgilendirmez olur, orayla bağlantısız o kadar azalır ki haber yabancı gelmeye başlar. Sinema deseniz sinema yok, tiyatro yok, bar yok, doğru dürüst kerhane bile yok...*” (p. 25).

²⁶⁶ “*Halk için çalıştığımı sandığı bir işde halktan bu kadar uzaklaşmış olduğunu görünce dehşet içinde kaldı*” (p. 138).

aid section to meet the needs of the poor people. It is unsurprising that collecting money for recovering the harsh living conditions of the poor leads to an act of categorizing the poor as those who are in the list written by the committee, those who have ration cards and those who are named ‘trashers of human being’, ‘remnants of humanity’.²⁶⁷ And, the protagonist wonders what happens to those who are not assumed ‘the poor’. Also, he begins to write some texts on the Kayseri’s everyday life and about what he observes there like a Turkish intellectual of the period. In the end, the texts are not acceptable for the minister of education because when someone becomes a civil servant, the works are required to be done for recognition by the superiors.

Kudret’s account of the Kayseri House and its members demonstrates that the existence of each participant and every activity mean to make the center recognize the Kayseri House as a successful, influential, active and full of work ethic body of the party in the province. Those who are the members regard the House as a meeting place to spend their spare time and to take part in the power relations for political purposes. The author criticizes the House intellectuals and even the state officials not doing anything to achieve the ideal of taking action for the people. They are only pleased with going to coffeehouse, tavern and restaurant for drinking rakı, playing backgammon or make dialogues with the other educated people of the province in order for alienating themselves from the locals and the others. Besides, in the event of social aid project, they look down on the poor, woman or villagers instead of helping and behaving them with honesty, sincerity and dignity.²⁶⁸ The money getting for aid is also tried to be collected from the reputable landlords or local notables to whom the

²⁶⁷ “(...) Şehir içinde ne kadar han, hamam, medrese yıkıntısı varsa hepsini bir bir dolaşıp, mahalle muhtarların defterinde kaydı bulunmayan bu insan döküntülerini (komisyon üyelerinden biri onlara “insanlığın tortusu” adını vermişti) ilk defa kağıda geçirdiler” (p. 216).

“(…) Kayseri’de komisyonun beğenebileceği yoksullardan bol bol vardı” (p. 164).

²⁶⁸ Karaömerlioğlu mentions that Sabahattin Ali’s village stories and particularly his novel *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* are not tolerable to the views and attitudes of the urban intellectuals on peasants. For Ali, the intellectuals are “content with unrealistic, utopian fantasies of their own”. Together with the prominent local notables and landlords and even with corrupt bureaucrats, the intellectuals show symptoms of “ignorance, insolence, selfishness, insincerity, and low moral values” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2002: 139-140).

House provides entertainment for satisfying pleasures and wishes.²⁶⁹ Suleyman seems to understand the eventual outcome of the House experiment specifically in the case of social assistance: “People are dying like flies staying outside of the window in the winter. We, on the other hand, just stare them as standing at the window. In a great Turkey, there is no any institution to give them a helping hand”.²⁷⁰

Finally, the accounts of Asım Yahyabeyoğlu, a young student and inexperienced newsman of the period between 1930s and 1940s in the Kayseri province, demonstrate that the House membership and participation in its activities were adopted by the young people because the House was deemed to be part of a cultural public service project of the new regime; conducted by very competent, wise, patriotic administrators, chairmen and members; and organized useful activities for the society.²⁷¹ It had a huge impact on the social life of the province and on the life of the newly emerged generation. According to him, the young population played an important role in the process of the People’s House experience. Becoming the young suppliers of the House activities, they took over republican duty and responsibility of spreading the national culture and the Turkish identity to the people which they learned from their idealist teachers and their elders (who were full of national emotions and enlightening or civilizing views in the House space). Owing to the House branches, the Turkish young people of Kayseri obtained the sense of enlightenment, civilization but also conservation of national heritage and symbols.

His memoirs²⁷² on the House experiment give the reader captivating information about how the everyday practices and responses to the House activities and cultural

²⁶⁹ Rüstem ağa (landlord), an influential person of the city, deals with the committee members by reflecting his thoughts about what the House means to him: “Eeee! Anlatın bakalım, ne var ne yok Halkevi’nde? Yeni kumpanyalar getiriyor musunuz? Şanoya karılar çıkacak mı yine? Ne ses vardı o geçenki esmer karıda. Vay anam! Tavan çingır çingır öttü be!” (p. 173).

²⁷⁰ “İnsanlar kışın camın dışında kalan sinekler gibi düşüp düşüp ölüyorlar. Biz ise, camın arkasından, bunları sadece seyrediyoruz. Koca Türkiye’de bunlara elini uzatacak bir tek kurum yok” (p. 163).

²⁷¹ Asım Yahyabeyoğlu. (2007). *Kayseri Kültür Tarihinden*. Kayseri: Kayseri Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, pp. 126-7.

²⁷² Asım Yahyabeyoğlu. (1999). *Anılarımda Kayseri 1957-2000*. Ankara: Beğendik Kültür Hizmetleri Serisi, pp. 50-59.

modernization and nationalization processes were formed and about the scope of his House experience. He remembers that he was once elected as one of members of a poem contest jury. He also talks about a concert performed in the House hall and he was one of the performer. Before that, he states that the concerts were either performed in the House or broadcasted in a studio. And by using speakers, the broadcast was ensured to be heard by those who gathered in the square of Republic. For him, although they did sometimes break down, the speakers were the most important devices of the House because in the province there were a few houses in which radio was possessed. He says that “the people were satisfying their taste of listening music under these speakers”.

In one of the organized concerts, he was playing tambourine (*tef*) and accompanied with some notable *saz* or *bağlama* players/minstrels and his friends. while they performed, his father and mother who attended the concert to watch their child heard something from a man who grumbled about the child’s playing tambourine and said “look at that bastard (*piçe bak piçe*)! He dares to play tambourine with his smallness” and so they felt so sad and ashamed. He later gave up playing it in the *saz* band of the House because of this shameful event. Also, the *saz* band of the House was not comprised of male players or singers; there were women who could be for instance the daughters of a chief of the state railways institution in Kayseri.²⁷³

In another story, he witnessed and listened a conversation between the former prime minister Hasan Saka and a former representative of Kayseri in the assembly (Ömer Taşcıoğlu) in the Kayseri House. The representative who was coming from a prominent old family in Kayseri complained about the shortage of sugar. Saka, however, got angry with that and said “I will increase the prices until the per capita consumption of sugar decreases to 250 grams”. Yahyabeyoğlu got shocked and this incident upset him. He decided to post the incident as a news to the *Tasvir* newspaper and after he assured the editor, the incident appeared in the front page of the

²⁷³ Nezahat Bayram, Necla Erol and Ülkü Beşgül. They were the members of the *saz* band in the House and even they participated in the concerts of folk music there. They are now well-known folk music artists of Turkey.

newspaper. In addition, while visiting the House, H. Saka were confronted with yet another complaint made by the House chairman which focused on the lack and failure of announcing equipment in the House for using it to deliver the House activities to the people. The House chairman and the deputies of Kayseri tried to impress him by talking about the successful works and activities of the Kayseri House. Then, he ‘rewarded’ the House by sending speakers, microphones and other required electronic devices.

He feels sorry about the closure of the People’s Houses and the Kayseri House in particular due to the fact that it contributed to the development of national culture and awakening of folk culture. However, for the ending of works and activities of these cultural institutions, he blames the Republican People Party turning them into ‘houses of the party’. Here it may be asserted that since he made contribution by his writings and speeches to the political organization of the Democrat Party in Kayseri and he believed in the ideal of Turkism²⁷⁴, his act of blaming seems to be similar to the other conservative Turkist²⁷⁵ interpretations of the local notables and those who were designated as ‘we, the Kayserili intellectuals’ (*biz Kayserili aydınlar*).

5.1.2. Position and Involvement of Woman

In the nation building process, the role of woman in the implementation and experience of social and cultural state led policies and reforms was taken into account by the new state so that they would show the model of new woman through their appearance in the streets, participation in the balls and their position-taking politically or socially as modern, good and loyal girls and women for the sake of homeland and for saving them from backwardness or traditional pressures. Woman was imagined as the agent of

²⁷⁴ Önder, A. R. (1972). *Kayseri Basın Tarihi (1910-1960)*. Ankara: Kayseri İşçi Kredi Bankası Kültür Yayınları, p. 190-1.

²⁷⁵ During the Second World War and even after the war was ended, the period of political oppositions and social resentment started to be evident. It caused to the rise of conservative and Turkist views among the provincial elites and to the diffusion of them in local societies of the Anatolian provinces.

change and new regulations on behalf of secularization, modernization and nationalization. On the other hand, what the Kemalist official discourse does not count is the everyday practice of woman and her ambiguous different approaches to the reforms, the cultural activities and exactly to the Houses. Actually, presence and absence of woman or woman members in the Houses depend upon the manner woman behaves and the flexible interpretation woman produces either for supporting or accommodating the experience she lives or for making selective decisions such as avoiding to accept the codes of femininity (gender relations) against male members and hesitating under the traditional pressure of fighting for honour, morality and womanhood. Woman teachers and stage players were most preferred (it is easy to hear their voices) to be appeared in the Houses, yet their presence was based on adherence to and conformity with being ‘modern new woman’. The reasons behind are that on the one hand, the republican ideal suggested the education of woman and thus the need of woman teacher to educate woman how to be a modern woman, mother, proper girl (like girls’ boarding schools or girls’ art institutes) and on the other, in the House stages, playing woman character by men annoyed the center; thus, man and woman had to take part together on the stage; this was obligation according to the official rules of the Houses. In the example of the Kayseri House, showing an envisioned modern looking, taking part in the House stage and mainly being female member were required to have an important family background, come from a prominent powerful families and local notables. If she was not born in Kayseri, she had to be daughters, wives or maybe sisters of the appointed state officials, governors or civil servants.

At the local level, woman’s exceptional participation and leading membership in the House were mainly based upon allowance of her father or brother (as mentioned above in Yedekçioğlu’s accounts), importance of her family (being member of an urban local elite family), and upon limited demands of the governing Kemalist cadres who defended the appearance of woman in the public sphere with their newly acquired rights, styles and ideals. Indeed, the local authorities also made either adaptive or selective choices according to local customs or traditions in the incidents which led

the House to be complained about that it was turned into a place where ‘shameful’ events or scenes of immorality²⁷⁶ happened.

First of all, woman owed her membership and being participant of the House and its constructed social environment to her dependence on a powerful family and a local notable who was well known among the local society. Mahmuran Özsan, for instance, was the housewife of the provincial party secretary in Kayseri and sister in law of one of the House chairmen, Naci Özsan. She was well educated, “the intellectual of the Kayseri women” and even described “sociable”.²⁷⁷ She was engaging in the social services as she took part in the Social Assistance Branch of the House and was the member of the Society for the Protection of Children. She also believed in the regime’s reforms relating to the revolutionary role of woman in politics and public sphere in the provinces and thus, requested to be considered as a woman representative in the parliament. In the request, she emphasized the high status of her husband and his family.²⁷⁸ However, although everything seemed to be going well by looking at her request letter for becoming deputy in her district, the war made her desperate to survive her lives and was merciless for her family. She had to send another request letter this time directly to the Party Secretary saying that the indispensable items to survive had been stolen from her house a year ago. She had to incur debts during the war time; her husband’s wage was not enough, and her active memberships in the social and political institutions of region such as the People’s House were just ‘to work heartily, from the soul’. She said that she was in ‘a very difficult situation’. The most disturbing thing was to be only woman in the membership of General Assembly in Kayseri. She was not well treated by her male friends because they were not willing to give the membership of daimi encümen to her. She was even a woman in the province who knew would lose her self-esteem (*izzeti nefsi*) because of connecting with male friends ‘always having the upper hand’. She was making do with this situation by asking help

²⁷⁶ For a better understanding the claims of immorality and shamefulness in terms of woman’s presence in the Houses, see Lamprou, 2009, pp. 227-244.

²⁷⁷ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/273.1094.1.

²⁷⁸ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/307. 1249. 1.

from the superior of those men (Lamprou, 2009: 117). She resisted to them and to their position of being advantageous in the locality.

Mahmuran Özsan was also controlled by the traditional ‘conservative’ eyes of the local society especially in the cases of her honour and morality and even her family’s reputation: “The role of local community control over women”²⁷⁹ or fear of public criticism. The conventional conceptions of public criticism, honour, decency, chasteness, morality, self-esteem and good citizenship affected the social life of that Turkish woman in the province whether she was coming from an urban local elite or was an ordinary woman. And she was sure that participating in the social and political environment of the province needed to be approved by the local society. The reactions to the energy and efforts of her were still apparent. In a complaint letter sending to the General Secretariat, she was “known among the people as a woman of low morals”. However hard Mahmuran tried to pursue her active position and role in the works and activities of the Kayseri House or General Assembly of Kayseri, it is better understood from her resignation letter²⁸⁰ sent to the party that she had to quit to make efforts and maybe even stopped to do things for the party and its revolutionary ideals.

Between 1932 and 1934, years when the Kayseri House was in the establishment process, the number of women as the female members in the House was counted as 22 or 25 women which was nearly one quarter of the number of the male members there. And, the number of women as the members of the House branches was counted as only three women in comparison to the number of men that was counted as 38 men.²⁸¹ In a 1937 list²⁸² showing the members of the branches, women members were once again only three, yet in 1940 list²⁸³, the woman members increased and was counted

²⁷⁹ This is cited as it is from the subtitle of Metinsoy’s article. See Murat Metinsoy. (2014). *Everyday Resistance to Unveiling and Flexible Secularism in Early Republican Turkey*. In Stephanie Cronin (eds.). *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in the Muslim World: Gender, Modernism and the Politics of Dress*. London: Routledge, p. 97.

²⁸⁰ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/450.1854.5.

²⁸¹ Anonymous, “Kayseri Halkevi Armağanı (Issue: 3)”.

²⁸² *BCA CHP*, 490.1/837.310.2.

²⁸³ Erciyes. “1940 Yılına Girerken: Yeni Çalışma Kadromuz”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 2, Issue: 14, p. 402-3.

as eight women. Even though the lists and tables are disputable in terms of accurateness and validity, it may be simply mentioned that involvement of woman in the House did not change drastically and was held limited, since the public or everyday life of woman was surrounded by some stereotypical patriarchic expectations and social boundaries and since the myth of woman's emancipation (re)produced the segregating and limiting pressures upon the appearance of woman both in the local public and in the House. This demonstrates that though the House was envisaged as a unifying community place, ideological certainties and centralizations, gender codes and relations dominated the House space and environment.

On the other hand, an instance of fusion of the imagined and the real or of finding "a way of using the imposed systems" (De Certeau, 1984: 18)²⁸⁴ may be exceptional for the House experiment in terms of woman's engagement and taking up position. It was to 'convince' woman participating in the House plays and appearing on the House stage that indicated one of the fragile obligations of the House and of the party's demands. The matter of convincing could lead sometimes to the official warnings indirectly (publishing writings in the local newspapers²⁸⁵); sometimes meant to take direct responsibility to make women do what the House administration wished and attempted (putting pressure to women (female teachers, schoolgirls) to go and take role on stage); or sometimes pointed to giving something like payoff/reward if woman acts on stage²⁸⁶.

²⁸⁴ The everyday practices in the Kayseri province and the House experiences of the ordinary, 'the other' will be emphasized below in detail.

²⁸⁵ As an example, Adak (2014: 67) points out that the anti-veiling campaigns were tried to be supported in the local newspapers:

The most apparent initiative of the local elites was the leading role they had in propaganda efforts, especially by using the local newspapers. Given the difficulties the regime was facing to penetrate society fully through established institutions such as the party branches because of limited state capacity, the local newspapers had gained an important function in 'convincing and leading' the masses on the necessity to reform and civilize women's dress.

²⁸⁶ Although the Houses bylaws noted the importance of voluntarily participation of any member to the Houses, the House local authorities, to solve the problem of womanless in the House stages, developed the method of giving salary or a job in the House (Lamprou, 2014: 13).

To bring men and women together and get their bodies close to each other was a rough thing and required some sort of encouragement and a driving force. In the Kayseri House stage, especially national plays were made attractive to the local society's perception on woman's presence on stage. The national plays named '*Mavi Yıldırım/Blue Lightning*'²⁸⁷, '*Anne/Mother*'²⁸⁸, and '*Ateş/Fire*'²⁸⁹ (written by Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel) were used to make schoolgirls players voluntarily and zealously acting on stage. In the play of Anne, the story was so emotional that the audiences admired it: Being in pain and feeling sad about her son, a Turkish woman kills him with a gun because he becomes one of the supporters of caliph against the Kuvayi Milliye (Turkish Revolutionaries). All the Turkish struggle plays and stories were regarded very attractive to the audiences because of their national emotions and didactic explanations they reflected. The metaphorical generalizations such as 'pure enduring Turkish mother' or 'unspoiled Turkish woman' were the most preferred in the discourses of speeches and writings relating to the House plays and also necessary to attract the attention of woman and the local community in order to take part and allow them to do it.

The woman members of the House were encouraged to act on the stage because the official rules of the House theatre regulation highlighted the necessity of more than one woman's participation in the House theatrical activities. In the Kayseri House play, *Taş Parçası/a Piece of Stone* written by Reşat Nuri Güntekin telling the story of a young man who finds out his stepmother having relationship with another man and tries to explain the situation to his father, there were a 'success' to make five women playing their roles. It was considered that this development seemed to save the House Theatre Branch from the situation of absence of woman in the plays and performances.²⁹⁰ Besides, what was underlying matter in the play was the participation

²⁸⁷ "Mavi Yıldırım Piyesi Halkevi Sahnesinde", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 4 İkinciteşrin (November) 1935.

²⁸⁸ "Atatürk Günü, Atatürk 20.12.1919 Günü Gelmişti", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 24 Birincikanun (December) 1936.

²⁸⁹ "Sekizyüz Bayan Sahnede", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 6 İkinciteşrin (November) 1939.

²⁹⁰ "Halkevi Temsilleri", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 1 April 1940.

of an 18 years old woman who was neither member, daughter or sister of a powerful local family nor a school student. Zatiye Tunu was provided accommodation in Kayseri province, probably after the end of the second world war as a refugee from Romania. She had some financial problems to meet the needs of her family. No doubt, for helping her and the poor family, as seen in the social assistance story of Kudret above, she was paid to work as a civil servant of the House in the library. She was both working in the House and taking part in theatrical plays. A party inspector seemed to be not pleased with the employment of such inexperienced girls and proposed a licensed clerk to be appointed to the duty of librarianship by the authorities. However, to lose the job meant destruction in her life and family:

For a whole year I had never left my duty (post) and I had been working every day till 11 o'clock at night. The other day I was ill, I took two days' leave from the Halkevi secretary and after being treated for two days I returned to my duty. By that time the Halkevi chairman had dismissed me from my duty. (...) Now they rejected me and a family of eight persons has been impoverished. This is why I write to you (...) I cannot work anywhere else because I am a girl and we cannot go anywhere else once we had been settled in Kayseri. That's why I ask for your mediation to get back to my post.²⁹¹

She added in her request letter that she had to take permission of the House secretary because the House chairman dropped by the office once a week. Thus, she thought this was not fair obviously and demanded the superiors of the chairman be interested in the devastating event. And the reply was sent by the General Secretary to the chairman of the Kayseri House saying that our little lady should be employed in the same job or provided 'a suitable job outside the House'. This means that like the party inspector did, the House chairman somehow endeavored to throw her out of the House, the local society and possibly the province. It is obvious that she was perceived unfit to be a family girl, not from the local people, partially a theatre girl and a poor girl who could have low morals. The party inspector's report, the play she took part and the House chairman's dismissing act were interlinked with each other. The chairman did take

²⁹¹ Quoted in Lamprou, 2009, p. 119-120. The English version belongs to A. Lamprou.

seriously the party inspector's accounts about her existence and participation in the House play whose story even touched to the moral value systems and considered his own interest not to be dismissed from his office and duty.²⁹² This was something fear of losing power and reputation in the province among the local society. The event would have been solved locally without informing the center by the cooperation between the party inspector and the House chairman: Reconciliation of interests.

In spite of semi-appearance and overemphasized participation of women and girls, the indifference and absence of them had more strong influence on the House stage to be remained open. In a sense, if there was no any female (*bayan*) player to act for the roles relevant to woman, it was the solution to make men performing woman roles in plays. Yet it was not enough to hold the House stage open and indeed, the Theatre Branch of the Kayseri House was even in danger of not being functioned. Thus, the party inspector, Agah Sırrı Levend specified that an invitation but insistent one had to be sent to women urgently.²⁹³

So, whatever the local administration did to solve the problem of absence, as all the other party inspectors' reports on the House stages display, woman's indifference, distrust and worries coupled with the local community's gender codes, morality and honour based views and local men' fear of losing control over traditional values and boundaries upon women and girls.

²⁹² The hero of Kudret's (2006: 229-236) novel tells how the House chairman is politically ambitious to be deputy. He even throws the hero out of his duty when the party inspector writes a report about the undesired actions of him in the province and in the House; he is blamed that he abuses his duty by getting so close to the (poor) people. The inspector writes that he tries to use the poor with his 'non-stop helpings' by making them obliged to him and his aids. And the House chairman tells that he worked for the House branch voluntarily but the aim of him was not known. The inspector's inspection, the House chairman's ambitions and the hero's 'critical' article in an opposing newspaper are interlinked.

²⁹³ "Bayanlarımızı Halkevi Sahnesine Davet Ediyoruz", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 4 Birincikanun (December) 1941; "Parti Müfettişimiz Temsil Komitesinin Toplantısına Reislik Ettiler", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 11 February 1943.

5.2. Opposition, Conflict and Discontent

While the imaginary community consciousness was exhibited in the official discourses as if it was the positive outcome of the Houses' socialization and unification processes, there were apparently multiple everyday practices, responses, reactions but mainly oppositions to and attacks on the forms of socialization and functional activities of the Houses; idealization of the ruling party initiatives; and partiality and bias centered structures. Though all these opposing views were reflected as "reactions of *the people*", they were produced and generated by the local interested groups of the urban elites/the city dwellers or by the members of the prominent local notables. Besides, some of them actively participated in the activities of the Houses and were members of the ruling party before they resigned from the party and stopped going to the Houses. The main reasons behind oppositions and complaints on the Houses, even if the opposition act was not directly associated with the Houses in the localities²⁹⁴, were based upon either the westernizing and modernizing dimensions of the House experiment or deviation from their founding aims and directives by "becoming like a RPP cultural agencies"²⁹⁵.

The Kayseri House, as a social (and cultural) reproduction place, was welcomed by the local elites and intellectuals in a seemingly conservative provincial town of the homeland because it was viewed that owing to the House and its activities, national treasures were rediscovered; the traditional was reinterpreted not to be destroyed but for the reconstruction of the Turkish nation and it was necessary for the national education of the people who and whose pure values and folkloric materials had been neglected before. The most important thing was that the images of Anatolia and the Turkish people being the real owners of Anatolia were well received by the members of the local notables and powerful families or even by the 'educated' Kayserili

²⁹⁴ For information about the ideological directions of opposition in the 1930s and the 1940s, See chapter 2.

²⁹⁵ Yahyabeyođlu, "Anılarımda Kayseri 1957-2000", p. 50. "*Bir kısım insanlarımız haklı olarak siyasal eğilimlerini sempati ile karşılamadığı için*" ve "*zaman içerisinde CHP'nin kültür kolları haline geldikleri için*".

intellectuals who were mostly interested in writing articles, editing columns in the local newspapers, and even publishing them. They took part in the House administrative committees, became members and frequenters of the House's various branches and cultural activities. The House was exhibited in a given romantic patriotic frame that described spaces of cultural activities in the House as the 'public service spaces': "The People's Houses produced unique services in the subjects of proliferation, assimilation and conservation of national culture via services such as literature, art, national plays, various sport branches, establishing public training centers [halk dershaneleri] and opening several courses".²⁹⁶

On the other hand, at the moments when the political and intellectual arguments or diversions on the definition of Kemalism became apparent, the movements towards to the people or villages in populist and peasantist ways and attitudes began to be questioned. The conflicts and opposition within the ruling party itself were uncovered by the interpretations of the former republican elites of the party in the center together with their national sensibility to locality and their national hostility to the western sources. This caused an opposing nationalist conservative outlook to be influential in the province where some of the local notables and landlords found opportunity to disclose their negative interpretations and ideas for denouncing the RPP's social and cultural initiatives in the local society and for criticizing the ideological state apparatuses of the regime such as textile factory, airplane factory or the House. It was national for the conservation of the national Turkish culture rediscovered in a struggle made against the enemies of the people. It was conservative because the people of the Kayseri province were discontented with the danger of degeneration of the Anatolian child, destruction of traditional value systems and with the harsh outcomes of the Second World War on the oppressed (*mazlum*) people²⁹⁷ or peasants.

²⁹⁶ Yahyabeyođlu, "Kayseri Kltr Tarihinden", p. 127. "Halkevleri Trk genliđinin edebiyat, sanat, milli oyunlar, eřitli spor dalları, halk dershaneleri, eřitli kurslar amak gibi hizmetleriyle ulusal kltrn yaygınlařması, kkleřmesi ve saklanması konularında eřsiz hizmetler retmiřtir".

²⁹⁷ Sleyman Sađlam. (2002). * Neslin Hikayesi*. Kayseri: Bilge Kitabevi, p. 37. "Anadolu'nun ezik insani".

Ahmet Rifat Çalika, a member of prominent local family in the Kayseri province, became both mayor and deputy in the National Assembly in different periods.²⁹⁸ According to his story, because he was opponent, he was put in a difficult situation and subjected to many local pressures by the local authorities²⁹⁹ in 1930s and the early 1940s. He says that he was kept eye on by the police and street watchman. He was not given water. He hardly managed to take his retirement pension but he accepts it as unfair money and prays for nation. He thinks that all these problems he faced are derived from his love of homeland, nation and Islamism.³⁰⁰ He also remembers that the People's Houses were calling the intellectuals of homeland to serve for them. He says that he was a civil servant too who was even the director of Kızılay (The Red Crescent) for charity but he had to resign from the office. Therefore, he implies that supposing that servant who serves to the humanity is not welcomed as he was, then the Houses are not places where the civil servants take part. "If teachers and civil servants are not included, I do not know how many members are left over".³⁰¹ As for the RPP, the party were the places of local intellectuals and its meetings were for him

²⁹⁸ His father's nickname was Çalıkağaoğlu meaning he was the son of Çalık ağa. Thus, he demanded his surname written as Çalıkağaoğlu when the surname reform was introduced. However, it was not accepted because of prohibition regulated by the law. He was given the surname of Çalika.

He was elected as the Minister of Justice in the first assembly and maintained this duty until 1923 when he was not mentioned as the deputy of the National Assembly for the second time. In the story, the newly elected deputies of Kayseri writes a report to Atatürk saying that he is not capable to be deputy. Thus, he entered the election as independent candidate but he failed to be deputy. It is said that he is asked to be governor of other cities by Atatürk but Çalika refuses him and tells him he prefers to stay in his hometown, Kayseri and work there. "This attitude of him is described as 'maintaining the opposition' and 'intending to gather political strength in Kayseri' and causes suspicion". Later on, in another story, Atatürk comes to the town, Kayseri as a part of nationwide tour in 1934 and in a dinner in the governor's house, it is told to him that the head of the Bünyan Textile Factory is the former deputy, Çalika. Atatürk gets angry and orders those who are in the table to dismiss him by saying 'Kick him out/Defedin' because he is an opponent of Atatürk. "Rifat Çalika", In Kalkan, E., Birol, İ. and Yerlikhan, M. (2006). *Kayseri Meşhurları*. Kayseri: Mazaka Yayınları.

²⁹⁹ The governor, Nazmi Toker was specifically mentioned in the memoirs of Rifat Çalika and his son, Hurşit Çalika. Hurşit Çalika stresses that he was the man behind the events happened to the Çalika family. Çalika, H. (1992). *Kurtuluş Savaşında Adalet Bakanı: Ahmet Rifat Çalika'nın Anıları*, İstanbul, pp. 162-174.

³⁰⁰ "Rifat Çalika", in Kalkan, E., Birol, İ. and Yerlikhan, M. *Kayseri Meşhurları*.

³⁰¹ Çalika, H. *Kurtuluş Savaşında Adalet Bakanı: Ahmet Rifat Çalika'nın Anıları*, p. 165.

the implications of accumulating unmeasured wealth and of richness. “The meeting of intellectuals means alcohol and dance”.

For Osman Kavuncu, the party was the saver of ‘our’ homeland and attempted to create important social reforms and became successful in the implementation of these reforms.³⁰² Kavuncu was an educated civil servant in the airplane factory working as accounting supervisor. After resigning from this office, he became the member of the RPP³⁰³ and of the Kayseri House Administrative Committee³⁰⁴. He published a local newspaper named *Doğruyol*³⁰⁵ aiming to show the faults of the party he was member and corruptions in the state offices and to lead the way to correct them. However, ‘the defender of truth’, Kavuncu decided to leave the party after facing ‘nasty (*nahoş*) actions’³⁰⁶ and made efforts for the establishment of the provincial organization of the Democrat Party. He became the member of the new party and then, in the first elections, he was elected as mayor of Kayseri (Doğan, 2007: 128-140). *Doğruyol* newspaper was now regarded as the new party’s organ and displayed a ‘severe’ opposition against the ruling party (RPP) and its activities.³⁰⁷

³⁰² A. R. Önder, *Kayseri Basın Tarihi*, p. 63.

³⁰³ Muharrem Barut narrates that “his private life was not regular, balanced”. Yet, “he does not care about imbalance in the state of his health. At nights, he drinks so much, spends the night on the top of game tables”. However, he understands in the end that he cannot endure to be like this, to be like a bureaucrat who behaves compliantly in the form of ‘salla başını al maaşını’ (nod your head, take your salary). Then, he quits drinking and playing games and is registered to the RPP. Kadir Dayıoğlu. (2014). *Öteki Şehir-Eski Kayseri’de Sosyal Hayat*. İstanbul: Heyamola Yayınları, p. 52-3.

³⁰⁴ In the election of the House administrative committee dated 20 March 1946, Kavuncu was appeared as the member of the Fine Arts branch. Şanal, *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*, p. 160.

³⁰⁵ Among the writers of *Doğruyol*, Mehmet Ali Aybar and Yaşar Kemal were included. Aybar states that in the post-1945 period, there emerged a cooperation between the right and the left against the national chiefship of İnönü. Uğur Mumcu. (1993). *Mehmet Ali Aybar ile Söyleşi - Sosyalizm ve Bağımsızlık*. İstanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, p. 36-7. Kemal also knew Kavuncu and even came together with Kavuncu and Aybar in Kayseri after he and Aybar were sent away from İstanbul to go to Kayseri as soldiers. He also mentions that the state was in the hands of İnönü and he even wrote an open letter to İnönü questioning the claims of corruption in the 1946 election. Yaşar Kemal. (2002). Önsöz. In M. A. Aybar (Eds.). *Marksizm ve Sosyalizm Üzerine Düşünceler*. İstanbul: İletişim.

³⁰⁶ “Osman Kavuncu”, in Kalkan, E., Birol, İ. and Yerlikhan, M. *Kayseri Meşhurları*.

³⁰⁷ This severe opposition caused the newspaper ending to be published in Kayseri. It is claimed that the threats, pressures and obstacles of the state officials about the state of publishing an opposing newspaper affected the owner of Sümer printing house and stopped publishing it. The owner gave some

In a story, İnönü visited the city of Kayseri and gathered together with the party members in the Kayseri House. Kavuncu as a journalist participated in the meeting and complained there about the dirtiness of water. Muharrem Barut narrates the story of the event happening in the House by stressing that the official writing on visit of İnönü was sent to the civil servants and teachers and they ran to participate in the meeting because those ‘small number of so-called elites’ were assumed as the people. When İnönü’s arrival was late, in the House hall, there were even those who wanted to leave but the staffs did not let them go.³⁰⁸

Barut also mentions that in the Kayseri House, before resigning from the party, he was actively participating in the activities of national music and folk music compositions. He was one of the members of the House bağlama band and even found opportunity to meet with Muzaffer Sarısözen. He led the Kayseri folk songs to be picked for the repertoire of ‘Voices from the Country/Yurttan Sesler’ playing on radio. “This is the first victory of him as pure and unspoiled Kayseri child in the fight of proving art power of Kayseri, the Kayserili”.³⁰⁹

The activities conducted in the Kayseri House created a criticism that was presented in a writing published in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper.³¹⁰ This writing extracted the criticism from a letter sent by a regular frequenter of the Kayseri House. This person complained about some inappropriate situations in the House. It was firstly mentioned that there were two halls of the House named as theater and reading. Particularly, the reading hall or library was used for conferences, meetings and even for engagement ceremonies and weddings. These activities and events happened so frequently that the reading hall lost its purpose and character to attract the people for reading something.

reasons for this by expressing that he was the member of the RPP and the writing were reached to the printing house lately. Later on, Kavuncu sued the house and the owner. Instead of his newspaper, the printing house began to publish ‘Voice of the People/Halk Sesi’ as the media organ of the RPP. A. R. Önder, *Kayseri Basın Tarihi*, p. 65.

³⁰⁸ Satoğlu. A. (1977). *Kayseri'nin Efsane Adamı Osman Kavuncu*. Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, p. 22.

³⁰⁹ Kadir Dayıoğlu, *Öteki Şehir-Eski Kayseri'de Sosyal Hayat*, p. 51.

³¹⁰ “Kayseri Halkevi Reisinin Nazarı Dikkatine”, *Cumhuriyet*, 27 November 1937.

It was also expressed that if the House chairman was not in his office, the House public library could be open or closed according to desires of the House secretary and caretaker. If caretaker was away, the library was completely closed. Lastly, it was interesting according to the frequenter that the newspapers were taken by the House as two copies. This meant that one of the copies belonged to one person and a private copy became as if it was official regular equipment of the House library.³¹¹

The governor, Adli Bayman did read the writing and sent a reply letter to the newspaper. He confirmed the complaint about the case of halls. The reading hall was compulsorily used for the events mentioned above because the stone and old theater hall was so big that warming the hall was difficult and the reading hall was small and available for the meeting and gatherings. When the new House building was constructed, the library or the reading room would be used for its basic purpose, for reading. He also stated that ‘at nights’, the library was open for the readers and the public to be used effectively. The closure of the library could be possible only in holidays. As for the case of newspaper, he claimed that one of the copies was for reading it in another day if any newspaper was not reached to the House library.³¹²

Moreover, the conflicting sides within the ruling party, the impact of transition acts of the state to democracy in the locality and the competing interests of the local notables, provincial merchants or owners of small business during the DP government in terms of the Kayseri province are also considerable subjects of a novel written by Süleyman Sağlam entitled *Üç Neslin Hikayesi*. The novel depicts formally the political strategies made by the provincial party organizations in two party system-looking province and demonstrates electoral policies of those who support either the dominant power or the opposition.³¹³ What is important is that before the DP government comes to power, the

³¹¹ The newspaper clipping was sent by the General Secretariat to the governor and the head of provincial party organization, Adli Bayman for investigating the event. *BCA CHP*, 490.1/837.310.2.

³¹² The copy of reply letter was sent to the General Secretariat. *BCA CHP*, 490.1/837.310.2; Şanal, *Kayseri Halkevi ve Faaliyetleri*, p. 80-81.

³¹³ The novel also portrays the short episode of life story of an Anatolian child, a son of provincial merchant family in Kayseri that confronts with the conditions of being opponent in DP government in a province but maintains to support the RPP. The main character, son feels tired of these local politic struggles, cares about the unique landscapes of Kayseri and natural violent beauties of Erciyes to climb

Kayseri province is surrounded by the provincial old families and their supporting actions, commitments and positive attitudes towards to the state. Yet, because of transition to the multi-party system, there is also the act of ‘uncovering corruptions of the state without destroying it’. This is the essence of democracy. For instance, if an opposing newspaper (*Tan*) publishes reports making ‘the propaganda of communism’ and criticizing the state’s economic policies, the son of a local powerful (wealthy) merchant fights to destroy ‘the enemies of homeland and nation’.³¹⁴ This man believes only in the Republic and Atatürk, in the meantime, supports and welcomes the DP in the circle of his friends but he is also afraid of his father to learn his support. And this man pursues the purpose and ambition of being deputy. His father on the other hand, supports the ruling party with his heart and energy and praises the political success of İnönü explicitly.

The powerful merchant father of the urban local family has a personality that helps the party whatever happens for its survival in the locality, even if this causes the danger of bankruptcy in his shoe shop and he is the member of provincial party administrative committee. The party members, urban local notables or *ağas*³¹⁵ with their fedora hats come together in his shop and criticize members of the new party as *kasketliler* (those wearing flat cap), *baldırı çıplaklar* (the vulgars).

Here again, like in the story of Kavuncu, the novel tells the story of İnönü’s visit to Kayseri and his meeting with the party members in the House. Before he comes to provincial town, the members gather together in the House building and make discussions on claims of the new party and its supporters and matters of criticism such as situations in the airplane factory, wastes in state spending and in weddings,

there, while he studies law in an İstanbul university and even become involved in the student protests against the DP government so as to save the country for democracy, the Republic and indeed, he is one of the Atatürk youth. Süleyman Sağlam. (2002). *Üç Neslin Hikayesi*. Kayseri: Bilge Kitabevi.

³¹⁴ “(...) Nuh Naci o kalabalığın elebaşlarından biriydi ve bayrak çekiyordu. Nutuklar atıyor, “vatan ve millet hainlerine ölüm!” diyordu” (p. 14).

³¹⁵ These ağas are even discontented with a newsman who accuses them in his writings of making corruptions and profiteering in the black market by letting the people to live in famine. To prevent him, they start to circulate whispers and rumors about him. And he gives up writing criticisms on the ağas and now, he gets along with them and criticize the leaders of the other party (p.24).

despotism of ağas, wheats and grains in the mosques, unveiling women on the streets, and the hostility of the Republican People's Party to religion. When İnönü meets with the party members, the merchant father complains about the situation in the airplane factory where the employees receive their salary without making any effort to work. İnönü, in return, mentions the importance of opposition in the country and replies him that if the voice of hammer is heard, then the factory operates. The merchant thinks that the local people learn to hit with hammer and then, become artisans. It is a kind thought of İnönü. This is why he says "in your every difficult situation, consult İsmet Paşa".

From this perspective, it may be asserted that the novel's merchant family and the party members of the post-1945 appear like those nationalist-conservative wing within the ruling party who were criticizing the party inside just to make the party even more stronger and powerful so that it complied with the changing atmosphere of the local politics between 1946 and 1950. The criticisms directed to the ruling party had to be eliminated and for this, they had to be corrected. The fear of losing power in the locality put them in that situation. It was the illusion of renewing and revitalizing the party against the possible political happenings (Çınar, 2013).

On the other side, Sağlam somehow bends the actual story with the fictional so as to demonstrate somewhat with a Kemalist nationalist outlook that local members of the RPP are the followers of the national identity and symbols; and the ağas have the control of the party but after the loss of elections, the young members as the Anatolian children work hard to make the provincial party organization known to the people who are ignored by the ağas. They even make visits to the villages in order to listen the peasants and for the unity of the people. In the novel, for the provincial children of the country (the Anatolian youth), the matters are to unite the divided people with solidarity and fraternity and to overcome partisanship so that the rules of democracy and the ideal Turkish revolutionaries are able to be well functioned and conducted.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ "(...) Toplumunu uyarmalı ve gerçekleri anlatmalıydı. (...) Gençlerin eski ve köhnemiş partiye girmesi yöresel örgütte bir hareketlenme başlattı. Çeşitli meslek gruplarından yüksek eğitilmiş genç insanlar bu kez de CHP'nin kapısını çalıyordu. Parti de artık eskiyen kişileri, yıpranmış insanları dışlıyor ve

Consequently, opposition, conflicting and competing interests and discontent with the political aims, ambitions and ideological maneuvers of opponents or supporters were issues relating to the acts of becoming the only dominant local power and maintaining the existing orders and traditions in a province where various but common ideological preferences such as traditionalism, Kemalism, conservatism or nationalism were expressed in local politics and local power relations or struggles. The reactions of the people in official discourse meant political opposition of the urban local ‘notable’ interest groups and individuals but also meant absence of real stories and actual experiences of the ordinary people.

5.3. Voices of Woman, Peasant (Villager), 'the Ordinary People': (In)Visibility of Other

The official discourse’s illusion about direct impact of the reforms and cultural or social policies and unresisting conformity of the people to them have been taken into account by different authors and researchers who have exhibited multiple approaches to the issue. The nationalist-modernist approaches believe the success of the modern Turkish state that provided civilization and transformation in the lives of the people, while the critical approaches contend that the reforms hardly reached to the lives of the masses specifically residing in the countryside, the villages. In a sense, these approaches commonly display indifference to reactions of every segment of society and neglect other ‘history and stories coming from below’. Uncovering the untold history means visibility of other or voice of the ordinary people and this account have been recently analyzed in the subaltern studies and various researches about everyday life practice and popular resistance.

yenilikçi bir kadro ile politika yeniden başlıyordu. Şimdi bu genç insanlar Atatürk, cumhuriyet ve devrimler diye uğraşıyordu” (p. 27).

“(…) Köy köy dolaşıyor, konuşmalar yapıyor ve halkı birlik beraberliğe çağırıyorlardı” (p. 261).

The usage and consumption of imposed products in a dominant order reveal new forms of subjectivity, different subjective conscious actions in daily life or in limited spaces and circumstances. Given that the positions and responses of the subordinate subjects are produced in ‘tactics’ and ‘making with’ techniques, the everyday experiences of the state initiated policies in the early republican period become important to figure out the in(visible) space and culture of the people placed in official sources such as complaint petitions and inspection region reports³¹⁷ and seen in novels, jokes or folk songs/poems, and to find out the actual practices of the target constituted by the reforms and regulations in the memoirs of the targeted. The power of the political and the rational (and the moral) primarily depends upon the presence of other who is backward; uncivilized; illiterate; mother or daughter of the Republic; unspoiled Turkish peasant; or strong and sturdy producing worker. Therefore, reappropriated³¹⁸, decentered³¹⁹ but undeclared³²⁰ acts of the ordinary people are silent voices of them in the texts used in this thesis manifesting the “hidden transcripts of the weak”³²¹.

³¹⁷ The complaining petitions were written to be sent to the General Secretariat by the people, the House frequenters or the other non-official political actors of the provinces in order to negotiate with the state and the party. they were very important to take the information of public opinion and citizen’s requests. See Yiğit Akin. (2007). Reconsidering State, Party, and Society in Early Republican Turkey: Politics of Petitioning. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 39(3): 435-457.

The party inspectors wrote reports about what was going on in the provinces, in the provincial party administrations and the People’s Houses (and the People’s Rooms). Metinsoy asserts that the reports of the party inspectors were not the outcomes of top-down mechanism but they were something like monitoring forces so as to ensure the continuation of the single party’s fragile legitimacy and hegemonic power. It was fragile because it was possible to occur many administrative weaknesses and selective implementations or adaptations of the reforms and policies in the provincial state institutions and party organizations. See Murat Metinsoy. (2011). Fragile Hegemony, Flexible Authoritarianism and Governing from Below: Politicians’ Report in Early Republican Turkey. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 43(4): 699- 719.

³¹⁸ “(...) These ways of reappropriating the product-system, ways created by consumers, have as their goal a therapeutics for deteriorating social relations and make use of techniques of re-employment in which we can recognize the procedures of everyday practices” (De Certeau, 1984: xxiv).

³¹⁹ “(...) This verbal-ideological decentering will occur only when a national culture loses its sealed-off and self-sufficient character, when it becomes conscious of itself as only one among *other* cultures and languages” (Bakhtin, 1981: 370).

³²⁰ “(...) What gives these techniques a certain unity is that they are invariably quiet, disguised, anonymous, often undeclared forms of resisting claims imposed by claimants who have superior access to force and to public power” (Scott, 1989: 37).

³²¹ Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and The Arts of Resistance - Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

On the other hand, the state of visibility is limited and flexible, that is, distorted in terms of social relations and confrontation between the state and its citizens. Non-elite encountering and everyday practices in the locality are somehow situated in an invisible context that involves clandestine nature of the responding and resisting organic interpretations of those who try to escape and avoid (simulation or dissimulation) without being noticed and attracting attention. This quasi-invisibility, in the conception of De Certeau, either undermines the dominant order and the imposed products of obligation and repression or negotiate with the authorities and regimes in order to pretend that public measures of power together with desired social and cultural transformation policies are well conducted and not severely rebelled, disobeyed or dissented.

Established for pursuing actions and activities to transform local society and to implement the reforms in the provinces, the People's Houses were perceived by the center as tools to provide mediation between the state and the ordinary people. The local urban elites and the state appointed employees, teachers and the supportive Turkish youth were called to undertake the duty of spreading the national identity and the desired images of Turkish nation along with an exalted Turkish culture. However, the periphery reacted to this call via political opposition to the state imposed initiatives, conflict within the ruling party over taking the control of local power and discontent of the local notables with the nasty and shameful situations and events in one of the cultural state apparatus, the Houses, as seen in the case of the Kayseri House. In the context of Islamic political dissent, because the state was perceived as having a strict control over the periphery in terms of top-down mechanism, the periphery in which the religious elements were considered the important reasons behind opposition and discontent echoed the everyday resistance of the people against the government pressures on their traditions, customs or on their religious popular rituals. This were in return described as religious fanaticism, backwardness and reactionary (anti-secularist) attempts of those who were not supporting them and the republican regime. Therefore, the periphery was recognized as the resistance space of politically suppressed Islamic groups, clerics and local notables who thought they lost power in the locality over the everyday exercises of power. The real ordinary people and the

actual responses of them were missed and undefinable in both the nationalist-modernist discourse and the Islamist discourses. The people was regarded either the supporters of the imposed reforms or the victims of them. How the poor, peasant, worker or woman reacted was ignored and vanished in the official, elitist or conservative-nationalist interpretations. In this sense, three sections of this part will attempt to uncover the actual life experiences in the Kayseri province and to explore responses and everyday practices concerning the Kayseri House.

5.3.1. The Kayseri People in Everyday Life

In the Kayseri province, formal character of the social and cultural environment and landscape was depicted in a conservative romantic structure. Although the Kemalist cadres of the local party organization seemed to show modern secular endeavors and affinities to the desires and ideas of the center and the local people confronted with the social and cultural change processes, the province tried to protect its nature as a place where Muslim and Turkish cultures were attached to each other but the other regional identities were absent or remained at a low level. The social life of the province represented the national values filled with traditional rituals and pure unspoiled folkloric resources. For rediscovering the pure Turkish culture and folklore of the mass in Kayseri and for touching to their national sentiments and sense of nationhood, the People's House and the local urban elite in this mediating cultural institution conducted social activities and trainings for the local people who would reach to the levels of civilization and modernization. It was obvious that the imagined everyday life of the province occupied the minds of the local elites and notables and mostly the state representatives and officials to make the social transformation possible in a conservative province whose appearance was like 'Arabistan'³²², not just like İstanbul and full of 'mud, dirt, rubbish and dirty water'³²³. However, the myth of a modernized

³²² Nahid Sırrı Örik. (2000). *Anadolu'da Yol Notları: Kayseri, Kırşehir, Kastamonu. Bir Edirne Seyahatnamesi*. İstanbul: Arma Yayınları.

³²³ Murat İğneci. "Bir Geziden İntibalar", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 20 March 1939; Lamprou, 2009: 125.

and nationalist everyday life in a modern but backward looking city was overturned by ‘very painful realities’. The local authorities seemed to be not very successful in transforming the city into the desired conformations and developed-civilized conditions.

N. S. Örik, made an author of the Erciyes Journal angry about his interpretations and travel notes on Kayseri, visited the province for sightseeing and publishing them in an İstanbul newspaper³²⁴. He went to the House in order to find out what the people were involved with and saw young people were reading books in the library and spent their times of rest taking part in the House activity. In the first day of his visit, he entered the coffeehouse and experienced sharply a heavy, smoky and suffocating atmosphere of the place. The coffeehouse was so noisy and crowded (full of civil servants and tradesmen playing backgammon) that he left the place with disappointment. This was even the cleanest coffeehouse and for him, the analysis of peculiarities of a city is only made by going to coffeehouses. Karamete criticized him that he did not go deliberately to other coffeehouses which could satisfy everyone. He added that in Kayseri, it was believed if there were many customers of a coffeehouse, they were probably the unemployed:

In Kayseri, so many frequenters of coffeehouse meant so much unemployment. The Kayserili, recognizing coffeehouse as the main source of all evil bad things, preferred to be busy with their works and business instead of going to coffeehouse. In their spare times, if the weather is summer, they went to their breathable summer houses (*sayfiye*); if the weather is winter, in their neighborhood or districts, they participated in their special meetings along with their own peers. And notables of the hometown came together in the houses one after another.³²⁵ (...) As a matter of fact, in those times, going to coffeehouse was assumed by the Kayserili as shame.³²⁶

³²⁴ F. A. “Bibliyografya”, *Ülkü*, Vol. 13, Issue: 75, May 1939, p. 287-8.

³²⁵ For useful information on traditional gatherings in the Kayseri city, see Cengiz, K, Küçükural, Ö. and Shkreli, E. (Autumn 2015). At the Borders of Public and Private: The *Oturmalar* of Kayseri. *The Middle East Journal*. 69(4): 582-600.

³²⁶ Kemalettin Karamete, “Yanlış Bir Görüşe Cevap”, p. 641. “Kayseri’de öteden beri kahve müdavimleri ne kadar çoksa işsizlik de o kadar çok addedilirdi. Bütün fenalıkların anası işsizlik olduğunu bilen Kayserililer işlerle güçleriyle meşgul olmayı kahveye gitmeye tercih ederlerdi. Serbest

Kudret's hero in his novel, on the other hand, depicts the same situations in the coffeehouse as Örik: the civil servants playing backgammon and card games to alienate themselves from the locals in their leisure times. The civil servants, teachers, the appointed state representatives were indeed the members of the Kayseri House and took part in its activities. Örik also saw only one newspaper, Cumhuriyet being read in the coffeehouse. Karamete criticized this comment and said that in the all coffeehouses of Kayseri, lots of daily newspapers and journals were regularly found. However, here again in the Kudret's novel, the situation and number of newspapers are ambiguous because the newspaper are delivered to the province not regularly and if they are found, someone finds the opportunity to read only the old news.

An appointed civil servant, Murat İğneci, who was as well one of the members of the House, made a tour of Kayseri with his friend coming to see the province and was astonished by what he saw and experienced in this tour. He disliked the city's dirtiness and mudness. Garbages were on the streets. It was very disturbing to hear shouts of village women and tradesmen in the market place and even there was no a public sanitary convenience. He asked to himself: "Why so much dirt, why is not there any price tag, why do they need to shout, why do the sellers try to fool the customers, why do not the authorities do something?"³²⁷

İğneci commented on cinema in the city center in which so many shouts and so much noise were also perceived there. "The social and psychological manners (*terbiye*) of the spectators" and the cuts in the film aroused the feeling of being ashamed from the badness of the cinema hall. Savaşçın stated in his conference notes that according to the etiquette rules, while watching film in cinema, speaking or talking very loudly was shameful.

zamanlarında mevsim yaz ise herkes temiz havalı sayfiyelerine, kış ise mahalle veya semtlerinde kendi akranlarıyla hususi toplantılarına giderlerdi. Memleketin ileri gelenleri de sıra ile birer evde toplanırlardı. (...) Zaten o zamanlarda kahveye gitmek bir Kayserili için ayıp sayılırdı".

³²⁷ Murat İğneci. "Bir Geziden İntibalar", *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 2 March 1939; p. 2; Lamprou, 2009: 124.

Our cinemas, besides, are the places where plenty of pumpkin seeds and peanuts are consumed. When the film ends, floors are similar to garbage square. In a period when throwing cigarette butts on the streets is either shameful or prohibited, it is not necessary to tell that it will be so ugly to pollute such public places as cinema.³²⁸

As a matter of fact, there were two cinema halls in the province: The House cinema and the *Tan* cinema hall. The House cinema hall was used for showing didactic instructional films to audiences who were mostly composed of state officials, bureaucrats, local urban elite members of the House and their families but the local notables (and the petty bourgeois) were approaching to the films unwillingly and cautiously, although the films were made to attract the interest of the audiences in terms of touching to the national emotions³²⁹. In 1937, the House administrative committee declared that in order to benefit from the popular education side of cinema, it was decided to show free films once in fifteen days to women who either did not see any cinema hall or knew what was cinema but could not go to cinema because of social and financial problems and inadequacies. And it would be also a conference on the problems of woman before the film got started.³³⁰ Later on, this decision somehow did seem not to draw attention of women to cinema; then, the committee took drastic measures so as to increase ‘good manners’ of woman by writing the names of fifteen women in cards, sending the cards to them and by making them feel obligated to go to cinema hall.³³¹ The money for tickets in cinema was an important problem. The House found the solution to make free film screening but it was not enough to attract the attention of the people. İğneci, nevertheless, said that he gave 35 piasters for tickets but the seats were uncomfortable and the understanding of cinema hall was so different

³²⁸ Savaşçın, H. (1938a). *Kayseri Halkevinin Konferans Neşriyatı: Adab-ı Muaşeret Seri-1*, p. 20.

³²⁹ The films screened in the Tan cinema were specified as İnönü’s visits to the Eastern provinces, national holiday celebrations or the RPP’s congress videos. The elite audiences were so crowded. “Halkevi’nin Gösterdiği Filmler”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 11 March 1940.

³³⁰ “Halkevimizin Güzel Bir Kararı”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 25 January 1937.

³³¹ “Halkevimiz Bedava Sinema Gösteriyor”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 11 February 1937.

from that of Ankara or İstanbul.³³² Not just for women, the useful films were sent by the General Secretariat of the party to the factories (for instance, Sumer Textile Factory) for workers to indoctrinate them in the ideal of being modern enlightened and well-mannered citizens.³³³ In addition to the House cinema hall, more exclusive cinema hall was founded as a private enterprise. It was rather crowded with the local state elites and the party representatives in the province who wore modern-looking dresses to show off their republican glamour.³³⁴

The experience of man's education, man's clothing and hat reform in the Kayseri province demonstrated different interpretations to the issue of wearing what was demanded from men and actual practices of multiple segment of the local people in the public sphere. The state officials like governor, Bayman and lots of the House members were dressed in suits and ties and wore the new western style jackets, pants and hats on their heads, while visiting the villages and towns. In the story of Sağlam, the local notables put on "dark blue suits, wore fedora style hats, had pocket watches and shining shoes" for the visit of İnönü.³³⁵ Another novel of Sağlam named *Dağı Dağa Kavuşturan*³³⁶ reflects the state of man in the period of single party in the same ways. The story of the same protagonist, the Kayserili merchant is told in the novel and he is detailed in this banditry oriented story. He is not member of a local notable family because he is born in a suburb. His wife's family is a local notable and she teaches him to be good mannered and to wear tie and ironed pant; to write in new script or to read newspaper. "Owing to these things, he manages to make friends", friends that are mostly members of the ruling party and its supporters in the province. Örik also depicts the appearance of man while walking around the city as follows: "After a

³³² The House cinema was not well operated and conducted due to lack of equipment or specialist on cinema management. See chapter 3 in this thesis.

³³³ *BCA CHP*, 490.1/1208.10.3.

³³⁴ Y. Gürhan Topçu. (2012). Kayseri'nin Düş Şatoları: Kayseri Sinemaları. In Asiliskender, B., Ceylan, B. and Tozoğlu, A. E. (Eds.). *Kayseri'nin Yirminci Yüzyılı: Mimarlık, Kent Tarihi ve Kültürü*. Kayseri: Abdullah Gül Üniversitesi Yayınları, pp. 357-8.

³³⁵ S. Sağlam, *Üç Neslin Hikayesi*, p. 21.

³³⁶ Süleyman Sağlam. (2012). *Dağı Dağa Kavuşturan*. İstanbul: Çitlenbik Yayınları, p. 19.

while the doors started to open and men exited the houses. The frock coats they wore with their grey backs resembled long overcoats, or even the robes of the ulema. They rarely wore collars or ties, while some had caps” (Quoted in Lamprou, 2009: 123).³³⁷

As a matter of fact, in the late 1920s, the modern and civilized image of everyday life shaped man’s appearance in the public and clothing but of those men who took the responsibility of controlling the local people and implementing the policies and measures in the province. It was needed to dress ironed clothes, pants to be looked civilized and wearing *şalvar* (baggy pants) was not appropriate.³³⁸ In this regard, the clothing reform was seemingly embraced by the local educated authorities and urban elites. In daily life of the local people, nevertheless, it was partly not possible to afford new dresses and hats and partly difficult to use a different hat for praying. Then, those men who were not behaving adopted new identities produced some solutions to the rules and reforms. In 1932, some of men wore *entari* (loose robe) with jacket and entered the coffeehouses with such uncivilized forms of dressing which was totally against social orders and rules.³³⁹ A foreign traveler depicted the townsman’s everyday mood in the province in his notes as following:

[The townspeople] had not changed greatly, for they had still the fierce, brutal, hard outlook of the Mediaeval Ages. They were uncompromisingly religious. I heard the *muezzin* cry to prayer five times a day; the *hodjas* were respected and the mosques full with young men as well as old. Forced by the law, they wore European caps, but with the peaks drawn over one ear or slung round the back of the neck like a motor-cyclist, so that they could still touch to their foreheads on the ground in prayer as ordered by the Koran.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ “Bir süre sonra sokak kapıları aralanmağa başladı. (...) Sırtlarında gümüş renginde ve uzun paltoya, pardösüye, hatta lataya benzeyen setreler, çok azı yakalıklı ve kravatlı, başları kasketli erkekler de evlerinden ayrılmaya başladılar”.

³³⁸ Muhsin İlyas Subaşı. (2003). *Bu Şehrin Hikayesi*. Kayseri: Kayseri Ticaret Odası Yayınları, p. 253.

³³⁹ “Hayret Ettik”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 9 June 1932.

³⁴⁰ Harold Armstrong. (1930). *Turkey and Syria Reborn: A Record of Two Years of Travel*. London: J. Lane, p. 166.

The question of the townsmen being reactionary and religionist is also argued in the texts on the Kayseri province. In these texts, the people's responses to the imposed rules and measures are more apparent to the reader. The Islamic circles of Kayseri, religious clerics and *şeyh, şih* did not feel themselves comfortable in the public but not resisting directly against the state. In memoir of a young local teacher of the late 1940s, his father who was religious and was preaching in a mosque during the time of Ramadan, saw a poster on the door of the mosque writing "give *fitre* and *zekat* to the airplane association (*cemiyet*)". He got angry and ripped the poster up. Two persons complained him to the prosecution with the accusation of "opposing to the reforms and provoking people against the Republic". He was put in jail but later got out of the jail with the help of Sait Azmi Feyzioğlu, another powerful local urban elite and member/deputy of the ruling party. Feyzioğlu defended that the poster belonged to an association and there was no serious crime against the state.³⁴¹ In this sense, it is understood that the local religious men and communities resorted to the help of local notables of the party so that the reaction would not be seen as resistance and they were negotiating with the state via the provincial party representatives or members. In the novel of Sağlam, in the 1940s, the Islamic circles begin to raise voice to the state initiatives and in mosques, the hodjas criticizes the state for reducing the influence of religion and letting woman walk on the streets freely and nakedly.³⁴²

The Kayseri city dwellers, state officials and the House members were also obliged to encounter and engage with the existence of the urban poor and 'helpless' street people of the province. Especially those who panhandled and did strange jobs such as the drudgery of being a porter (*hamallık*) were perceived as the black sheeps of the society and were needed to be saved from this jobs. An author of the Erciyes Journal³⁴³ experienced this kind of action while chatting with his friend in that friend's shop. He said that a man who was in a bad condition and seemed to be an 'Eastern' which was

³⁴¹ M. Cemal Cebeci. (2013). *Doksaniüç Yılın Ardından – Hatıralarım*. Ankara: Başkent Klişe Matbaacılık, p. 27-8.

³⁴² S. Sağlam, *Üç Neslin Hikayesi*, p. 20.

³⁴³ SES. "Dilencilik Hakkında", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 7, Issue: 80, September 1949, p. 18.

understood by his voice entered the shop and begged for money to get bread for his family that were hungry. They could not stand and felt pity for him and gave him money. After he left, the author and his friend began to have a talk on panhandling. The friend of him told that he saved fifty piasters for the Ramadan to give one piaster in this set to each of the poor or beggars. On one occasion, he once again chatted with other friends in his shop; a woman ‘beggar’ came into his shop and he gave one piaster. She threw one piaster to his face and said “You bastard, you have so many properties, one piaster you consider appropriate for beggar?”. One of his friends got angry and attempted to turn her over to the police but she ran away. In the novel of Kudret, a number of women living in the Glk Hamamı (Turkish bath) come to the Kayseri House to get some flour and when the protagonist asks who they are, women say they are Kurds and they have no paper for getting bread or flour. He insists that they need to have it but he considers what to do. At that moment, a local notable who became the committee chairman of writing names of the poor enters the room and say that he does not write down names of the Kurds and Armenians that are believed to live in the remnants of churches. Later on, the committee of Social Assistance branch decides to give ration paper to the poor people in Glk after they cause to troubles in front of Municipality building and resisting incidents in the Republic square to get bread from bakery.³⁴⁴

The conditions of the poor people and their survival practices in the everyday life of the province were mainly associated with the Second World War period when there emerged famine or scarcity of basic food products. A. Yahyabeyođlu talks about the period by mentioning that the people could not find sugar to put it in their teas and had to use grape for sweetening because in the black market, sugar was sold with high prices.³⁴⁵ In the novel of Sađlam, in his youth, a poor peasant faces with the harsh difficulties of the period and together with his mother, tries to cultivate and harvest wheat in their land. Once the gendarmes raid his village and take some part of a stack of wheat as tax needed to be paid. In the village, peasants thus attempt to hide the

³⁴⁴ C. Kudret, *Havada Bulut Yok*, pp. 207-216.

³⁴⁵ A. Yahyabeyođlu, *Anılarımda Kayseri 1957-2000*, p. 53.

remaining wheat from the government by filling sacks with them and burying them under soil.³⁴⁶ In his another novel, *Dağı Dağa Kavuşturan*, the main character, *Osman* struggles with and escapes from the local authorities and a powerful ağa who is also the RPP member. The story of him is described as legend of a bandit³⁴⁷ who goes to mountains because his enemy ağa provokes the peasants against him and begins to struggle for the survival of the poor oppressed peasants with the government senior officials, gendarmes and ağas in the province. Thus, in the period called famine, the poor rural people respect and help him to escape. The actual story is also the same but with a different end. In the novel, the state grants an amnesty to him but he does not accept the amnesty. He continues to struggle with military men and security forces in the mountains up until he succeeds to run away. Then, he leaves Kayseri.³⁴⁸ In actual story, on the other hand, he accepted the amnesty, turned back to his village and died there.³⁴⁹

Besides the state's peasant politics and economic and agricultural imposed policies in the Anatolian countryside, everyday life of the working class in the newly established factories of urban areas or in the provinces was as well regulated by the government officials. In Kayseri, the typical example was the Sumer Textile Factory³⁵⁰. The workers and civil servants stayed in the lodging houses of the factory and took part in

³⁴⁶ S. Sağlam, *Üç Neslin Hikayesi*, pp. 129-130.

³⁴⁷ Metinsoy (2010a: 380) mentions another story of banditry happened in the 1930s of Kayseri:

Bandit Cello was another famous bandit in the early 1930s. He was a poor young peasant, who herded the cattles of his ağa in the İncedere village of Kayseri. Because he had not given any money or crops to him in return for his service for a long time, he decided to challenge to the ağa. Thereupon, Cello bought a gun by selling one of the ağa's donkeys and began to challenge the ağa. He robbed a mail car in order to survive in the mountains.

³⁴⁸ S. Sağlam. (2012). *Dağı Dağa Kavuşturan*, İstanbul: Çitlembik Yayınları.

³⁴⁹ K.Ö. "Boz Ahmet'in Osman'ın Destanı", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 42-43, 1946, p. 34; M. İ. Subaşı, *Bu Şehrin Hikayesi*, p. 271-2.

³⁵⁰ For a better understanding the Sumerbank factory experiment in the Kayseri province and information about the everyday life experience and memoirs of those who stayed in the houses and worked there, see Burak Asiliskender. (2008). *Modernleşme ve Konut - Cumhuriyet'in Sanayi Yatırımları ile Kayseri'de Mekansal ve Toplumsal Değişim*. Unpublished PhD Diss., Graduate School of Science Engineering and Technology, İstanbul: ITU.

the cultural activities in the factory campus. It was aimed that modernized ways of life and attitudes and the new Turkish culture of the nation would be taught and indoctrinated to the workers and civil servants so that they could contribute to the statist policies and measures of the ruling party for the economic development of the homeland. It was somehow isolated the workers and civil servants from the Kayseri province. They worked day and night with national energy, yet they could play football. Woman civil servants played tennis and woman workers skated.³⁵¹ In the official discourse, the factory provided socialization spaces for the workers and civil servants that were to be civilized citizens of the new Turkish nation. On the other side, the actual life experiences did not represent what was idealized in such workplace. According to Metinsoy (2010a: 554), the workers were paid low wages under heavy working conditions and could quit work due to that. The other issue was that the director complained about pilferage of factory products by the workers. For this reason, as Lilo Linke witnessed, they were “searched for stolen goods. The men from Kayseri had given the lead. They were notorious all over the country for their cleverness and cunning in business, and it seemed to be one of their principles to help themselves to as much as they could.”³⁵². Therefore, instability in labor force took place.

Consequently, the official language of the Kemalist cadres about the idealized and modernized lifestyle of ‘the imagined Kayseri people’ did not express the real experiences. The ordinary people in the Kayseri province could choose not to adapt to the state policies and government measures and responded the socialization projects with different forms of everyday practices. The important point is that the powerful

³⁵¹ Sahir Üzel, “Endüstüri Hayatımızda İnkişaf 1”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 1, March 1938, p. 13.

³⁵² L. Linke (1937: 304-5) illustrates the searching case as follows:

In the spring there had not been a single day without a riot. The workers, infuriated by the endless and, to them, incomprehensible delay at the gates, attacked the overseers, strangely enough mainly those who had been kindest to them. Again the young engineer came to the rescue. Jumping into the scrimmage, he pulled off the numbers from the jackets of those whom he thought to be the instigators of the disorder, took out their wage-cards, and tore them to pieces in front of their eyes – which meant that they were dismissed and would not get a single piastre for their work. Since they were paid monthly, it meant a serious loss to them.

local notables (ağas), state or government officials and appointed civil servants even dealt with the cultural and social policies by pretending to transform the local society. Those who were members of the ruling party and the Kayseri House thought over and wrote articles on social transformation of the province and on ideal citizen project for the local people; however, their articles do not focus on interpretations and experiences of the ordinary people. On the other side, the articles are worthy to find out what the Kayseri people intend to speak and besides, in novels, memoirs or in travel notes, voices of the ordinary people are even heard: Existing in an invisible space and time.

5.3.2. What the Peasant Speaks

The presence and ghostly³⁵³ visibility of peasantry and peasants in the Anatolian countryside or their everyday experiences in the rural life were exhibited in the texts of the official discourse with the peasantist outlooks. Peasantry was just subject of the village visit project of the House and brochures/booklets examining the villages of the Kayseri province. While visiting the villages, examining their ‘beauties’ or the unspoiled Turkish national treasures and instructing the ‘peasants’ what to do or not to do, the members of the Kayseri House and the participants of the visits or very pleasant, enjoyable journeys did reflect the dialogical connection of the ‘us’ with the other. In the texts, they were ‘listening’ and trying to find solutions to requests of peasants, but the peasant who was defined as the ‘master of nation’ could be heard just through a modernized, civilized, educated, moral or intellectual language used by the authors. And the requests were to be like what the authors desired (interests of provincial elites): no resisting, resenting, objecting or rebelling against the ruling party’s principles and measures, exercises and regulations of the state in the countryside. On the other side, some of the peasantist statements and limited dialogues

³⁵³ For the homeland tours (Yurt Gezileri), painter, Turgut Zaim visited the villages of the Kayseri province and painted the picture of two women who climbed to the mountain, Erciyes with donkeys loaded with bags. In Ulus newspaper, it was commented by a writer, Ahmet Muhip: (...) For example, Erciyes opens us a way to the world of tales we see in miniatures of India. Yet, it has too got so unfaithful manner... One is afraid of them being once upon in a time” (Quoted in İlğün, 2012: 327). It meant that there was neither *presence* nor *absence* of the images in the picture, the rural life and two peasant women.

mirrored what the peasant tended to mean in the brochures, village survey booklets. For instance, the issues of water, droppings in the streets and swamps were mostly identified problems of the villages. In the Argıncık village, there was a lack of clean drinking water. The diseases such as malaria, dysentery were presented as the main results of it. However, the peasant indirectly expressed that “flowing water does not show dirt (*akan su pislik tutmaz*)”. The author insisted that there were many reasons that showed the opposite and it was needed to enlighten the peasant about the reasons and diseases, sanitary affairs. Another issues were to eliminate the act of committing theft³⁵⁴, to prevent profiteering (state’s monopoly on alfalfa seeds), tax collecting (livestock tax and land tax) and the poor peasantry (possessing no any land and sharecropping tenancy on farms of urban landowners/ağas).³⁵⁵ In the Tavlusun and Mimarşinan villages, it is understood that due to economic problems, rarity of farming and narrowness of land, the peasants went to the province to be employed as workers so that they could earn money for their livelihood.³⁵⁶ Moreover, in the village visits, when the poor peasants were concerned, the attempts were to give money³⁵⁷ to them and make list of them and prepared reports about the problem of poverty.

³⁵⁴ A Yahyalı born writer points out that their family possessed so many horses in stable and wheat crops in their warehouse. While the family was in highland, thefts entered the warehouse and stole the crops. The family also tried to escape from the livestock tax collectors and somehow avoided paying it. The writer’s mother told him that he would not open the door, if those authorities expropriating their livestock and crops came (Parlak, 2014: 42).

³⁵⁵ Anonymous. (1937). *Argıncık Köyü (Köy Gezileri Tetkik Notlarıdır Seri: 4)*, water and swamp, p. 39; poor peasantry, p. 43; alfalfa seeds, p. 44.

³⁵⁶ Özdoğan, K. (1936). *Tavlusun Köyü (Kayseri Halkevi’nin Tertip Ettiği Yaya Köy Gezileri Tetkik Notlarıdır Seri: 1)*, p. 13; Özdoğan, K. (1937). *Mimarşinan Köyü (Kayseri Halkevi’nin Tertip Ettiği Yaya Köy Gezileri Tetkik Notlarıdır Seri: 3)*, p. 26.

In the Zencidere village, as it was mentioned above in chapter 4, a new modern village model was constituted and the construction of this idealized village was made by the peasants. Because the land was so narrow, they lived in an extreme poverty (*fakruzaruret*). They were provided food and bread from the leftovers of the school of the village. They were ‘forced’ to work for the re-construction of the village so that they would ‘learn’ the necessity of working hard not to be accustomed to laziness. Şakir Sungar. (1943). *Zinciderede Neler Gördük?*. Kayseri: Sümer Matbaası, p. 34-5.

³⁵⁷ Two peasant old women with their heroic but exhausted bodies were given silver coins of Turkish Lira by the governor, Bayman and the author illustrated the scene: “(...) while they put them into their pockets, they were praying with trilling voices”. Sahir Üzel. “İki Asrı Birbirine Bağlıyan 130 luk Bir İhtiyar”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 6-7-8, 1938, p. 189. “*Valinin gümüş liralı ile fabrika müdürünün verdikleri notları ceplerine endirirlerken, titreyen dudaklarından dökülen dua sesleri*”.

In the context of village visits, the novel of Kudret also gives voices of peasants but through the language of the enlightened. When the protagonist and the House members embark on an ‘adventurous’ journey to the villages, they encounter with some nasty situations. The villages are ‘out-of-the-way’ or “places of God’s trouble” (*Allah’ın belası yerler*). The chairman asks the villagers about their requests and demand them to tell what troubles they have. A villager complains about the headman’s act of collecting money constantly. The chairman gets angry and says “You called it trouble?”. In another visit, the chairman again wants to know their problems but the villager answers “what is trouble, who are we?”.³⁵⁸

In the Erciyes Journal, the image of peasants, their negotiations with the House members and the fusion project of the House for destroying the gap between the city dwellers, intellectuals and peasants were also introduced. The peasant, in the articles of Erciyes, was apparent but according to rules and demands of the authors. Peasantry was regarded as an object of the village researches, a source of authenticity and beauty of the Anatolia and a raw material of the folkloric elements of the Kayseri province to collect the formal items of national culture. In particular, folk poems and songs of the popular folk poets, singers or *aşıks* (minstrels) and their organized communication with the authors whispered what the rural life voiced, shouted and what the peasantry reacted.

The folk poems were required to be valuable for the collector and the author because as a headman of Gülabi village expressed, there could be some folk poets who “babbled something meaninglessly” (*boşboğazlık edenler*).³⁵⁹ Those who were not babbling but so nervous and uncomfortable ones were listened by the authors in the House. They felt uneasy when they met with the high officials of the House because they knew the officials had been indifferent to the peasantry for many years. Then, the poets attempted to communicate with the House serious misters in order to tell the stories of their true feelings and pains while writing down their life experiences and

³⁵⁸ Kudret, *Havada Bulut Yok*, p. 138-145.

³⁵⁹ Fikret Sezgin. "Gülabi (Gülebi) Köyü" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 31-2, August-September 1945, p. 28.

about everyday politics of peasantry. And the officials promised the folk poets to publish their poems in the publications of the House.

The depiction of the peasant folk poet was drawn as the following: a forehead full of deep lines seen in those who dealt with a lot of troubles; a jacket in coarse fabric, a pure Anatolian child. The author stated that he looked like embarrassed of being in the House. He feared to be perceived as not having a good writing style. The folk poet wrote some religion oriented poems but avoided telling them to the author. The author understood the matter and tried to explain secularism and the republican government's approaches to religion so as to comfort him and guaranteed that the government did not take action against him and his poems.³⁶⁰ Another peasant folk poet demanded to publish his poems, yet he had no enough money to do so. For this reason, he was firstly sent to the governor but governor was not in the office. Then, he was sent to the House chairman and did not find the chairman either. In the end, he met with the author in the printing room. After making conversation with the poet and listening his poems on the rural life of his village, the author thought but did not say directly to his face that the poems were not so good but amendable and because the poems reflected the state of an uncivilized poet, they were tolerable.³⁶¹ In these poems, it was not possible to see whether there was resentment to the government economic or social policies in the villages or not.

In a responsive poem of a *sazsız* minstrel, the act of shouting out against the government measures in the period called famine is clearly observed. The author depicted him by mentioning that he was doing the job of plastering; he was illiterate; and he was died of disease in 1945. The poem was believed written in the spring of 1942 and echoed the poor's resentment to the period when the World War II intensified and had a huge social impact mostly on the daily life of the poor peasants in Turkey:

³⁶⁰ Özyedekçi, K. "Akkişlalı Halk Şairi Mustafa Bayhan ile Bir Konuşma" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 38-39, 1946, pp. 36-8.

³⁶¹ Özyedekçi, K. "Halk Şairi Kululu Mehmet Türk ile Bir Konuşma" in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 40-41, 1946, pp. 38-41.

The rich stocked up wheat in their home
Called *vesika*, a ratio paper was brought out
Those who saw famine got tired of living
Now the state of the poor is so bad³⁶²

Among the folk stories of villages in the Kayseri province, the stories of two popular peasants escaping from the security forces and government and beginning to survive in the mountains were told. One is the story of Osman mentioned above. The gendarmes failed to catch him and he lived in the mountains for a long time. He went back to and died in the village, Yavaş. The poem, lament concerned in the article of Erciyes belonged to his wife, written on his death to show his heroism.³⁶³ Another one is the story of a peasant named *Çerkez Mahmut* who marries with a daughter of one of ağas doing tobacco selling illegally. The ağa chooses him as the head of banned tobacco selling in the Hacılar village. Watchmen (*kolcular*) of the village learn the illegal selling, smuggling act and raids the village. The villagers hide some of smugglers; but the others go to the mountains and vineyards. A person named *Balağın Ali* tells the place of them to watchmen. The smugglers fight with watchmen and men of Mahmut escape but Mahmut fails to escape and surrenders. However, he is shot by a watchman deliberately or by accident and dies. A folk poet wrote a poem about him and Ali. It had sort of vulgar language:

Balağın Ali jumped roof to roof
He got five hundred golds all at once
He did get, he fucked his dignity up

³⁶² A. R. Önder. "Halk Şairi Osmancıkoğlu (1903-1945)", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 4, Issue: 40-41, May-June 1946, p. 24.

"Zenginler buğdayı evine tıktı
Vesika diyorlar bir karne çıktı
Kıtlığı görenler canından bıktı
Şimdi fukaranın hali yamandır".

³⁶³ K.Ö. "Boz Ahmet'in Osman'ın Destanı", p. 34.

Ohh! Balağın Ali, what kind of situation is that

The head of the dishonored is Balağın Ali³⁶⁴

Lastly, a nationwide known folk poet, Habib Karaaslan is another important figure in terms of responding to the ruling party and its economic measures. Although he wrote poems praising the Kayseri House, the House chairman, Naci Özsan and dealing with his daily life in the Kayseri province³⁶⁵, he criticized the ruling party and its exercises in the public sphere especially in the 1940s when the ordinary people began to face with poverty and economic troubles occurred by the daily conditions. Besides, he firstly appreciated the works and efforts of the Democrat Party but later he criticized the new party not paying attention on the expectations of the people and felt disappointed about doings of the party (Başgöz, 1986).³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ K.Ö. “Çerkez Mahmud’un Destanı”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 5, Issue: 51, p. 29-30.

*“Balağın Ali damdan dama hopladı
Beş yüz altını birden topladı
Topladı da namusunu b.kladı
Aman Balağın Ali bu nasıl haldir
Namussuzlar başı Balağın Ali’dir”.*

³⁶⁵ The title of poem relating to the Kayseri House was “It’s Just That Citizens Gather Together and Come (to the House) Always/Toplansın Yurttaşlar Hep Gelsin Diye”.

*Halk evi toplanır haftada bir gün
Biriksin âlem de hep gelsin diye
O gün de yaparlar toplantı, düğün
Toplansın yurttaşlar hep gelsin diye...*

The title of poem relating to Naci Özsan was “I Could Have Seen Your Face Again, Mister/Bir Daha Yüzünü Göre İdim Bey”. A poem on his state in the Kayseri province was titled as “I Shan’t See My Homeland, My Hand/Göremiyom Vatanımı Elimi”. Derya Yılmaz. (2011). *Kayseri’de Aşıklık Geleneği ve Halk Şairi Habib Karaaslan*. M. A. Thesis, Kayseri: Erciyes University.

³⁶⁶ It was a very strong political stance against the ruling party:

*Habip bu hileyi sezen
Yedi yıldır gurbet gezen
Halk Partisi halkı ezen
Parti değil baş belası.*

And even he criticized the new party and its leader:

*Çok memleket gezdim ben kana kana
Usandım millete dert yana yana
Zengin Egeliyi bastı bağına
Demokrat dediği lordlar partisi.*

In summary, the peasants were just allowed to speak their voice in the official discourse of the authors and in accordance with their interests and desires. They produced less visible responses. The muffled voices of the peasantry, vanished existence of the rural life and countryside and guiding nationalist-populist outlook of peasantists or the House members were all correlated with each other. Discontenting with the state imposed policies or opposing directly to the state were not displayed in the sources of the village visits. In this sense, while aiming to reach closer to the true master of country, the House experiment recreated dualistic categorization and produced new forms of border between the peasants and the city dwellers, the intellectuals and the state. The peasant did not trust, felt anxious and avoided appearing against the government and the local authorities. They employed some popular silent elements of tactics such as folk poems and peasantry reactions so as to express themselves. On the other side, the members of the House enjoyed the journeys and discovering national resources and pretended to inform the villager, the other about instructions on how a modern village was constructed in order for reporting their ‘village development operation’ conducted as it ought to be.

5.3.3. What Woman Speaks

In the Kayseri province, woman’s unveiled appearance on the streets, in the public sphere, participation in the official institutions’ activities or labor force and experience of modernized and civilized social changes of the new regime were situated in inclusion/exclusion centered frames of gendered codes and meanings, conforming womanhood, and masculine idealization of the Turkish nationalism. Social position and role taking of woman or the republican modern girls of the Turkish nation demonstrated different ways of daily life responses to the woman’s emancipation ideals in Kayseri. The Kayseri House was the main part of the visibility space of woman in the province. Woman was obtained movement in the activities of the House branches, the membership of the local party organization and openly (with the official photographs) in the village visits. For example, as seen in the case of İlmiye Bergman, woman climbed to the mountains and dressed modern European clothes (jacket, pant

and sport shoes) while walking around the mountain, Erciyes and when she went to the bazaar or market place, she wore modern hat and overcoat.³⁶⁷ The motto was that “after our great revolution saved woman from *kafes* (cage), *peçe* (face veil) and threw bigotry (*taassup*) away, it has made civilizational principles of the West our national slogans and symbols”.³⁶⁸

The public presence of woman in the local society was seemingly in the Kemalist discourse welcomed by the provincial urban elites of the province who committed themselves to the party and its principles and were ready to take republican responsibility to spread the reforms. The men of the ruling party and the House made their wives, sisters or daughters members of them³⁶⁹ and even woman teacher were obliged to take part in the House. It was provided limited socialization space for them in the House by placing woman in the works based upon womanhood and femininity and in the activities making modern woman publicly visible in the official discourse. Particularly, the republican dress code of the modern nation shaped their everyday life experiences. Her lifestyle was redrawn and civilization and modernization obligations were highly underlined by the authors of the local newspapers³⁷⁰ and the journal, Erciyes (as mentioned above). Decisions to ban the *peçe* and the *çarşaf* (charshaf), civilizing regulations on the women’s clothing and urban rules imposed on the peasant woman were taken and emphasized.³⁷¹ Conferences and speeches on the woman’s

³⁶⁷ Yaşar Elden. (2013). İlmiye Bergman ile Söyleşi. In Y. Elden (Ed.). *Kayseri’de Kültür ve Yaşam: Yazılar ve Söyleşiler*. Konya: Palet Yayınları, p. 177.

³⁶⁸ Savaşçın, H. *Kayseri Halkevinin Konferans Neşriyatı: Adab-ı Muaşeret Seri-1*, p. 2.

³⁶⁹ “Kadınlarımızın Halk Fırkasına Girmeleri”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 27 March 1930; “Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası’na Giren Hanımlar”, *Kayseri*, 11 September 1930.

³⁷⁰ “Kadın ve Serbesti”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 6 March 1930; “Kadın ve Serbesti”, *Kayseri*, 26 March 1931; “Türk Kadınının En Büyük İşi – Kadınların Yüksek Tahsile İhtiyaçları”, *Kayseri*, 21 December 1935.

³⁷¹ “Nahiye Kongresi ve Kadın Kıyafeti”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 7 December 1933; “Yuvallı Köy Derneğinde Kadın Kıyafeti”, *Kayseri*, 18 February 1935; “Çarşaf ve Peçe Yasağı”, *Kayseri*, 18 February 1935.

rights, social duties for the survival of nation and the ideal family life of woman³⁷² were hold in the halls of the House.

The unveiling of woman was another issue in the Kayseri province. The “backward looking” woman was replaced by the modern woman in the early republican era. The peçe, çarşaf, kafes had to be removed from the daily practices of woman as soon as possible. Social life of woman was not under the control of traditional reactionary mentalities and restrictions. Woman’s honor was protected by the republican regime owing to the removal of backwardness and introduction of civilization into the everyday life of woman. Veiling badly affected woman’s moral rights and clean character.³⁷³ Before çarşaf was abolished, woman suffered from being not free in the public sphere and woman suffocating in the veiling clothes was saved and began to wear modernity and act in appropriateness.

On the other hand, the real story and true dimension of what woman reacted to the regulations and the republican policies and of how she appeared in practice on the streets remained hidden and misleading. Besides, in the Anatolian province, Kayseri, the prototype of modern woman was interpreted differently. For instance, it was forbidden to dress peçe or çarşaf and if women did not enter into the civilized way of life and maintained to dress such ‘shapeless’ clothes, they would be punished. In the province, women were given time to change their clothing and accept the planned unveiling measures. Some women did not demand to conform to the rules and it was decided that they were to be punished. Nevertheless, it was not given evidence of whether they succeeded to punish them and eliminate veiling or not.³⁷⁴

The impressions of foreign and native travellers were also important to see how woman responded to the reforms and dress change policies. H. Amstrong (1930: 176) stressed that he did not see any women unveiled in Kayseri in the late 1920s and

³⁷² Erdi, Ö. S. (1939). *Aile Psikolojisi*. Kayseri: Kayseri Vilayet Matbaası.

³⁷³ Sahir Üzel, “Yüzler Açılıp, Çarşaf Çıkarılırken. 8 Eylül Pazar Gününden İtibaren Çarşaf ve Peçe Kalktı”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 9 September 1935.

³⁷⁴ “Kayseri’de Kurban Bayramında Kadınlar Çarşaf ve Peçeyi Atacaklar”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 28 February 1935; “Çarşaf ve Peçelerin Yasağı”, *Kayseri*, 26 August 1935.

described what women were wearing in the public: “They wore thick, black veils drawn down, and *shapeless* dresses, consisting of cloaks to the wrists and skirts to the heels, and made of white and blue print with a heavy blue edge, which was characteristic of Kaesarea [Kayseri]”. And N. S. Örik pointed out that no woman was seen in the public at once but later, “he saw a small number of women wearing black overcoats and black gloves. Some women also had black umbrellas with which they managed to hide their faces completely. He wrote that he could not see the face of even one of these women” (Metinsoy, 2014: 107).

In workspace, the presence or absence of woman workers were yet specified in the texts of the House members. S. Üzel illustrated two woman workers doing skate in the campus of Sumer textile factory³⁷⁵; however, in another text of him, he called the Kayserili local women to take part in the works of the Bünyan weaving factory.³⁷⁶ This meant that women were avoiding to enter this ‘modern’ place and narrow-minded local men also produced rumors about women demanding to work. According to Metinsoy (2014: 94), “it is not surprising to see that working and unemployed men perceived the easier entrance of woman into public and working life as further competition for employment”. This case may be also associated with the situation of Mahmurhan Özsan who faced with dominant position of her male colleagues in the provincial party organization and in the House as well. In addition, the complaint letter of Zatiye Tungaç demonstrates that she was forcibly dismissed from the working life, although she needed it for economic and financial ends. Moreover, Üzel added that the others, women considered what their husband said, gave importance to honor and had unreasonable prejudices for working but he emphasized interestingly that the people who criticized the presence of woman expressed that it was given low wages to women workers.³⁷⁷ Linke (1937: 312) as well stated that the Kayserili women ‘living in the

³⁷⁵ Sahir Üzel, “Endüstüri Hayatımızda İnkişaf 1”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 1, March 1938, p. 13.

³⁷⁶ “Kayseri Kadınları. Bu Nimetten Neden İstifade Etmiyorlar?”, *Kayseri Vilayet Gazetesi*, 11 May 1936.

³⁷⁷ In Isparta, women working in the carpet-loom were employed with low income: “(...) Although these female workers have to work the great part of the day, their wages are very low and barely subsistence level” (Metinsoy, 2010a: 458).

most conservative part of the country' did not act enthusiastic to work with men 'side by side'.

The governor, A. Bayman admitted the absence of the female workers in the working life and described the province as a backward side of our homeland, devoid of connecting man with woman: The result of backwardness was no presence of woman as workers in the textile factory. He mentioned that although the director promised to give high daily wages, there was no any woman and girl in the factory.³⁷⁸ And he emphasized that in order for making woman participant of the activities and duties conducted by the House and the ruling party, he led the way of combining woman with man in the village visits and even of providing the public presence of woman as the educated and enlightened female citizen of the country: Women who were already given special priority to take part within the limited borders of the local society.

A peasant woman, who was recognized by the members of the House to become visible in the national cultural space of the urbanities, was represented in the article of Erciyes journal. She was the daughter of a landowner in Dimidere (Turan) village and she wrote folk poems in her village secretly. This was because she feared to be treated with contempt and not be welcomed by the people of her village. The author described her as "a very clean, authoritarian and religious woman". She was known in her village "black Şerif" due to her authoritarian character, but when the villagers saw her, they called her "aunt Şerif". She somehow isolated herself from the villagers. Almost the half of the villagers were not aware of her folk poetry. And the important thing was that she hardly accepted to give her poems to the author.³⁷⁹ It is uncertain whether she was brought to the Kayseri House or not but it is obvious that she avoided to be known as a woman writing poems or probably be condemned by both her family (not acting like a family girl) and the patriarchal authorities of her village (morality issue).

³⁷⁸ In a letter written by Bayman in 1937 to be sent to the General Secretariat, Şükrü Kaya. *BCA CHP*, 490.1/837.310.2.

³⁷⁹ A. R. Önder. "Kadın Halk Şairi Şerife Soykan (1879-1945)", in *Erciyes*, Vol. 3, Issue: 26-27, 1945, pp. 15-17.

As for the poor and peasant women who were only the other subjects of social aid claims of the Social Assistance Branch of the House for helping them with money; of reports dealing with their poverty situation; and of photographs portraying them with traditional clothes and ‘unspoiled appearances’, they were responding to the state imposed measures and the House experience via undeclared silent and tactically disguised forms of resistance and popular politics. In Kırınardı village of Kayseri, two peasant old women with their heroic but exhausted bodies were given silver coins of Turkish Lira by the governor, Bayman and the author illustrated the scene: “(...) while they put them into their pockets, they were praying with trilling voices”.³⁸⁰ In the novel of Kudret, the poor woman encounters with the House social aid committee members and tries to figure out the reason of helping her: “Are you making play with me? In these days, no one helps anyone. (...) Who is the House? Very rich? So then, there are good men in this world!”³⁸¹ Besides, the voice of those women who were not found in the pages of the House publications or local newspapers were sounded in the reports of internal affairs. To illustrate, collecting tax from their crops was the main reason for their invisible resentments:

On 10 June 1934, fifteen women in Kayseri came together in front of the government office. By shouting in the square before the building, they demanded the decrease of the rate of the Wheat Protection Tax. The security forces did not disperse them. After that, the women went on with their protests in front of the Municipality. When the local authorities told them it was impossible to decrease the tax, they replied by shouting together, “What kind of law is that?” and “What kind of government is that?” In same day, some women came together in front of the government office of the Develi district of Kayseri. They shouted slogans against the government and the Wheat Protection Tax. Alarmed by the growing protests, the security forces prosecuted some of them (Metinsoy, 2010a: 264-5).

³⁸⁰ Sahir Üzel. “İki Asrı Birbirine Bağlıyan 130 luk Bir İhtiyar”, in *Erciyes*, Vol. 1, Issue: 6-7-8, 1938, p. 189. “*Valinin gümüş liralariyle fabrika müdürünün verdikleri notları ceplerine endirirlerken, titreyen dudaklarından dökülen dua sesleri*”.

³⁸¹ Kudret, *Havada Bulut Yok*, p. 153.

As a result, woman's involvement in the activities of the House was limited to the members of the House who were also residing in the urban areas of the province and daughters, sisters or wives of the powerful local families or appointed state officials. The other women who were excluded from the activities and halls of the House remained silent and quasi-visible in the texts of the village visits and the articles of Erciyes journal. The republican ideal for woman dressed with modern clothes and vision of working woman reflected the official language of the local urban elites but in reality, some women responded to the issues differently and continued to wear traditional old-styled clothes and avoided to work with men in the factories. The focus on morally degeneration³⁸² of the family girls was still taken into account by the local men and male members of the House and thus woman hardly resisted to the state's initiatives and economic and cultural policies.

5.4. Concluding Remarks

The interpretations of the local urban elites, local House members and non-local actors in Kayseri demonstrate that participating and taking position in the House meant to be present in a special place where political interests for administering the House, the local party structure and even the local politics and practical aims for increasing social status superficially within the local society or among the urban elites were crossed with one another. 'Regular' participation in the House, 'active' engagement with the House activities and thus 'useful' membership of it provided them opportunity of negotiating with the state and directly with the center. In this sense, the local participants, members and actors of the House showed favorable strategic reaction to the People's House experience in the Kayseri province. On the one hand, they defended that they endeavored to make the ideal of a joint Turkish nation be absorbed by the local people, on the other, they created a separate social and cultural space where the real people

³⁸² In his fictional novel named *Rita*, K. S. Güntekin (2010) disfigures the morality-immorality categorization and questions the state of honor in the Kayseri province of 1955 by using objects as narrators of the story of a non-Muslim woman who is perceived by both local men and the Kayserili women as a foreigner and the story reflects male gaze on women, either native or foreigner, in the context of masculine codes of the traditional and the modern.

could not be seen in the activities but found in the texts. In order to ‘melt with the people’ or, as Habib Karaaslan’s poem implies, for citizens coming together in the House, the members seemed to produce their own purposes about the national culture and identity but on the basis of the power relations and according to social domination dynamics in the locality. The poor folk poet had place in the articles of Erciyes; nevertheless, s/he was not regarded as an actor of the activities or administration of the House, but the object of the instructions, national beauties or civilizational-enlightening practices.

The circle of opposition in the so-called conservative province or the opposing reactions against the House and the activities of its branches displayed the same official state centered and elite discourse in the comments and accounts of the local conflicting and interest groups and individuals; however, there is one exception. Their comments did bear on mainly nationalist-conservative approaches and forms of populist discourse in contrast to the republican accounts. In their comments, the Kayseri House was ‘turned into’ the cultural division of the ruling party in the province and ‘inappropriate nasty’ things happened there. As a matter of fact, the harsh conditions of interwar period and mostly during the 1940s when the World War Two affected the ordinary people negatively, the conflicting side found the opportunity to break the power of the ruling party’s members and local bureaucrats of the state so as to seize the local power or to exchange ideological state apparatuses in favor of the other powerful local forces, those who had been the members of the provincial RPP before and even taken part in the activities of the House.

The ordinary people’s responses to the House experience in Kayseri are analyzed in limited scopes and frames. The texts relating to the House and its activities, written whether by the members or by the opponents, did not sound openly the voice of the peasants, the poor, workers or even of women. It is understood from the texts and publications (i.e. village visit brochures) that the local and non-local House members echoed what they imagined in daily life of both the urban public and the peasants, cherishing in their minds the Turkish revolutionary imagination of a developed and civilized nation, and educated and good citizens of it. Within the populist outlook of

that kind of imagination, the myths of village development, socially emancipation of woman, the enlightened working masses and beautiful rural life and the unspoiled Turkish peasantry were overemphasized ‘intellectually’ (or sophisticatedly). On the other hand, the real stories of the exalted people or others and their reappropriating and resisting off-stage (non-official) attitudes in the Kayseri province (e.g. women who did not attempt to unveil and dress as it was ordered and peasant who went to the mountain and became bandit because of his enemy, landlord) were neglected. Though the House experience were not openly responded by peasants or women, anonymous presence of peasant in the village visits (e.g. two peasant women), the fictional story of peasant or woman in the novels and the limited recognition of folk poets/aşiks in the House mirrored the quasi-visible popular forms of voices. There is one exception that focuses on a young girl (Z. Tunğuç) who was the House actor but an outsider and coped with the limitations and demands of the Kayseri House administration and members. It may be mentioned that her case was tackled by the party center. However, it is obvious that in the province where the fear of moral degeneration and worry on losing traditional values of the locality were prevailing and in the House where the male members had control over the functioning of the House and its activities while conducting the official requirements of the House bylaws, a girl or woman was exposed to engage in the biased, gendering and categorizing policies and views of the House men (mostly the local Anatolian men).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The People's Houses were imagined as the core cultural myth diffusion places for reproduction of the republican values and ideals and the modernization projects of the central state in the periphery and as the gathering spaces of the people who were supposed to be civilized and modern in the official discourse. In their nationalistic historiography, the collective consciousness of the people together with nationalist sentiments was being revitalized through these 'successful' ideological means of the early republican period. This is because the Kemalist intelligentsia, who were semmed to be prepared, organized, educated and ready to conduct duties of what is demanded from them, regarded the Houses as "social necessity of the new Turkish Republic, the Turkish Revolution" (Kaplan, 1974: 131). The Anatolian people who were deprived of any civilizational development and chained to backwardness and superstitious beliefs had to be adapted to the sense of good citizenship. In this point, the nationalist followers of the republican regime in the provinces attempted to display the reinvented meanings of national belonging which is seen an important aspect of the official nationalism for erasing the past and renewing the future. While the supposed people were being civilized and enlightened in the Houses, the zealous intellectuals were required to collect the national folkloric elements of the country so that they would harmonize them with the modernized and secularized contemporary methods and styles and so that they could create new national but contemporary values, tastes and characters. Therefore, the House project was initiated for 'popular education' owing to which the republican principles, reforms and policies and the feeling of progress

(together with self-confidence) would become stronger in the minds of the people and even in the minds of youth.³⁸³

In the critical accounts of the Houses, on the other hand, the gap between the people and the intellectuals or between the society and the state was not eliminated and even widened (Karpas, 1963). Having been regarded as the state controlled institutions designed with top-down mechanisms of controlling and administrating a state agency in the periphery, the Houses were seemingly political centers of the ruling party for indoctrination of the Kemalist ideology and principles and the central state was highly authoritarian on the implementation and conduct of the cultural reforms and policies in the Houses for transmission of the messages to the masses. However, the Houses was ‘unsuccessful’ to reach to the people because it was believed that the Houses were the places or social engineering projects for destructing the traditional (Islamic) values, eliminating the Ottoman past/heritage, and even for teaching Westernized way of life and forming a classless society. Therefore, the Houses were assumed not to be meeting spaces of the people but of the revolutionary elites who mostly participated in the activities of the Houses.

In this sense, analyzing the House experience in the context of nationalistic or critical approaches leads to a state-centered outlook on the Houses which “neglect the social actors and their individual experiences” (Fındıklı, 2014: 37). In this thesis’s assumption, it has been the neglect of voices and interpretations of local society and their reactions and responses to the Kayseri House and its activities. In order to answer the questions of how the (local) society affected the state in terms of process of social change and what were actual uses of the nationalizing and modernizing cultural policies in the Kayseri province, this thesis has mainly focused on the People’s House of Kayseri together with its own produced policies and activities which was needed to comply with the republican ideals but at provincial level functioned as a new public sphere of using and coping with these ideals and aims of the central party. That is to

³⁸³ “Halkevçilik” means indoctrinating youth in those reforms carried out and imprinting them on the minds of people (whether they are villagers or urbanites) in order for diffusion and survival of them (Kaplan, 1974: 131-2).

say, it has been argued in the thesis that even though the House was deemed as a social engineering project to make the society absorbed into modernized, republican and moral ways of life, this project³⁸⁴ also manifested ambiguity in reinterpretation of an imagined cultural space which disguise undeclared forms of subjectivity and overlapping social junctions between the state and society.

The thesis has rested on the House official texts which denote provincial experiences of the people occurred when they involved in the Kemalist cultural policies and the House experiment in Kayseri and on the non-official texts whose availability was limited and did not show anything about what actually the real people did say. Most of the official texts used in the thesis have reflected reformulation of the border between center and periphery/province but in general revealed interdependent dialogic (and sometimes contending) relationships between modern and backward; contemporary and traditional; secular and reactionary/religious; civilized and uncivilized/out-of-date; moral/good/virtuous and immoral/vice/criminal/shameful; national and local; or maybe originality/authenticity and belatedness/barbarian. This means that the province communicates with the center through these relationships. The local society, comprised of urban local elites, appointed state officials, landlords, members of the wealthy prominent families (either men or women), teachers (local and non-local) and even the youth trained in the Kayseri House, produce the provincial policies in the House space and pretend to undertake the role of mediating. Those who are the educated ones of local society and members of the House write articles in the House journal, Erciyes and local newspaper, while they are also able to criticize the faults of the state within the party and complain about functioning of the House and its branches. Therefore, it has been seen that the texts reveal voices of the House members appearantly but reproduce the cover over voices of the ordinary Kayseri people who are exposed to face with new cultural norms and policies of the central

³⁸⁴ Ahıska (2005: 31-45) attempts to decode the conceptions of copy, model, project and bridge in terms of radio broadcasting in Turkey and argues that they only draw the border between the East and the West consistently. She contends that the image of Turkish nation is shaped according to historical context and subjectivities are formed in this context meaning that the different positions of political subjects are seen only by linking the image to the occidentalist fantasy. "From this perspective, the imagination of nation in Turkey is at the same time the imagination of both to be Western and to be Eastern".

state and official narratives placed in the discourses and interpretations of the Kayseri House actors. Reactions of the real people are quasi-visible in the texts of the House members, only depicting them in romanticizing, instructing, disciplining and nationalistic narrations.

Although the Houses were designated and envisioned as holy/sacred places, it was hard to make the people believe to this holiness and problems of membership and participation appeared in the Kayseri House and its branches. The myths of voluntarily active involvement and public service in the House activities constitute the basis of the House experience. However, the House members as the parts of local society use their membership with different identity formations and employ the party and state offices such as the provincial party leadership, governorship and the House chairmanship for being able to struggle with the power relations and local political forces in the province and within the House space. The House members tend to show commitment to dichotomies and dualities originated from the republican ideals and nationalist narratives of the state, as seen in the chapter 4, on the other hand, in the everyday practices and in the local context, some of the members and participants of the House produce their own accommodative tendencies to the cultural activities of the House. Particularly, the local members develop nationalistic -or Anatolianist- practices and discourses for making the Kayseri people aware of the reforms and the House without giving any harm to the local traditions and without creating any feeling of dishonor, shame or inferiority among the Kayseri people. For the non-local House members, the outsiders³⁸⁵ in the House who are mostly appointed to the province, the House is the place of spreading of the state imposed policies for removing backwardness, contemporizing traditional (folkloric) elements and they depict the province where problems of dirty streets or conditions of the poor people in the city center are needed to be tackled.

³⁸⁵ This is even valid in the case of Ankara as another province of the Central Asia in the early republican period. Cantek (2016: 127) mentions that the outsiders met with the Anatolian culture for the first time and they felt that Ankara was a tough place to live. And, the locals felt that their presence would make their lives more difficult and complicated.

It has been also inferred from the texts used in the thesis that the outsiders are deemed as those who look down on the locals because they do not hesitate to speak about the difficult living conditions and isolated places and unhealthy, painful realities of the province. Those outsiders are not welcomed if they criticize the coffeehouses (e.g. N. Örik) and if they pursue their own interests (e.g. H. Irkalata, Ö. S. Erdi). Besides, while as seen in the novel of Kudret, the House actors pretend to make achievements in village aid project and the House is depicted as a means of entertainment for the local notables to satisfy wishes and ambitions, in the novel of Sağlam, the House is deemed as a meeting place of the provincial party elites. Actually, the texts written whether by the locals or by non-local people reflected different peripheral forms of subjectivity produced for dealing with the social change encounters in the province and during the House experience.

Woman's membership and participation, on the other hand, is depended on becoming member of a prominent local family or being daughter or wife of a state official. The official texts seem to present woman in modernized and civilized appearance and to defend the emancipation of woman from domestic life. However, they reproduce nationalist-traditionalist discourses and even conservative looking on woman. While woman is depicted as sturdy republican mother (not mercy to abortion), she is also an exalted Anatolian woman who concerns about traditional customs and local practices. Also, necessity of woman's presence in the House project let the House members to make some efforts. For instance, a female schoolteacher writes about the absence of woman in the House stage and tries to give courage to the Kayseri woman but she admits that the House stage and plays are regarded as obscene and shameful things. The obscenity and shamefulness in the House stage is the main public criticisms affecting the local practices of the House members. Conservative looking associates woman's presence in the House stage and plays with obscene and nasty-inappropriate activity. Therefore, the local House members do not attempt to insist on the case. Furthermore, the image of family girl seems to be prevailing in the House space and discourses used in the House publications because the question of low morality influences the presence and absence of woman in the House membership. In this sense, it is obvious that though depicted as the republican mothers and daughters,

women are able to escape from involving in the House activities, taking part in the House stage and even giving folk poems to the House editorship for publishing 'appropriate' ones in the House journal. For instance, there is the problem of anti-veiling policy in the province. The veiling of woman is deemed by the House members and writers of the journal as the sign of backwardness, but in the actual story, there are fluctuations and distortions in the decision making and implementing the anti-veiling policy in the province. In the case of listing the names of women for bringing them to the House cinema activity compulsorily, women do not interest in this activity either.

As for the absence of peasants and workers and also the indifference of civil servants to the House activities, it has been understood that the House is turned into a space of local power struggles, conflicts of interest and complex power relations and where influence of the local urban elite marks in the House and its formulated nationalist cultural policies. In the questions of membership, selection of the House chairman, functioning of the House branches or construction of new House building, the role and position of provincial (party) elites or local prominent notables become more observable. Also, although the official texts relating to the village visits present an image of unspoiled Turkish peasantry and seem to reflect the desires of the state such as eliminating the gap between the city dwellers and peasants, the texts redraw the border between the urban and the rural. In the cases of publishing folk poems, peasant tries to avoid from going to the House and giving their folk poems because peasants do not trust the officials who collect taxes for their harvests but they cope with the demands of the House journal writers and editors for publicizing their poems.

The everyday forms of coping with the cultural policies and the local urbanities' daily practices in the Kayseri province have been also dealt with in the thesis. Especially in the late 1920s, when the reforms were initiated and began to be apparent in the Anatolian provinces and in the 1930s and 1940s, when these reforms were attempted to be implemented in the provinces, the local society became the influential force of the social change and nation-building processes. In the case of Kayseri, this displays somehow unorganized and multiple acts of reinterpretation and reappropriation towards to the ways what the central state desired or ordered. These acts are mostly

visible in the nationalist-conservative looking and writings of some of the House members and actors but invisible in nature. This kind of looking of the officialdom decides what is proper, good, and bad, ugly. However, as the thesis have demonstrated in the chapter 5, this look resembles what S. Žižek³⁸⁶ calls, 'the looking awry' which means for the Kayseri province that voices of peasants, women, workers and the poor are overlapping voices of the House members and the writers of the House journal. This also means that the lack of sources relating the voices of the ordinary people has pushed the thesis to reconsider the official texts. It is needed to decenter and recontextualize division between the center and the periphery and mainly to focus on 'identity of who looks at province' (Türkeş, 2013: 164). Thus, while the local society seems to present cultural imaginaries of the regime and express what the ruling party desired in compliance with official discourse, ambiguity in expressions, interpretations and adaptations of them also uncover the actual life experiences behind the obscured stories: The invisible history that is embedded in the official-nationalist narratives and discourses used and the texts written by the local society having control on implementation of the Kemalist cultural policies inside the province. These 'non-western' local people praise the modernizing way of life as a civilized lifestyle and even sometimes blame those who are not behaving civilized and modern as backward or dirty. They have worries that the Kayseri House may be regarded as an unsuccessful, inactive House by the ruling party headquarter because malfunctioning of the House activities catalyzes the feeling of inferiority. They employ the official discourse through romanticizing the province and its Anatolian culture in order to show that the provincial party organization manage to melt with the people, the Kayseri public. And the official discourse then tends to speak on the behalf of the ordinary (local) people so that voices of them (or the subaltern forms of voices) could be masked. The local

³⁸⁶ See Žižek, S. (1991). *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, p. 11.

(...) we have commonsense reality seen as "substance with twenty shadows," as a thing split into twenty reflections by our subjective view, in short, as a substantial "reality" distorted by our subjective perspective. If we look at a thing straight on, matter-of-factly, we see it "as it really is," while the gaze puzzled by our desires and anxieties ("looking awry") gives us a distorted, blurred image.

people are ghostly presented in the nationalistic and patriotic (heroic) narratives. This is why the thesis and alternative studies on the early republican period could find the possibility of daily practices in the provinces towards the state imposed policies in the official texts to uncover the history of the unspoken.

On the other hand, the local House people do not totally break the rules of traditionalist forces or the local social norms in a so-called conservative province because there is a fear of gossip about their honor or fear of loss of reputation (i.e. duty of being a House chairman). Some of them quit going to the House activities because of shamefulness (e.g. not playing tambourine anymore) and even criticize the inappropriate situations taken place in the House space (e.g. misuse of reading room). In this sense, the thesis has also demonstrated that complex social dynamics of the locality give rise to the political opposition against the House and the party's cultural policies in the province. This opposition is based on conflicting interests of the local notables and becoming dominant power in the local politics. Nevertheless, the important thing is that the power struggles disclose the organic connections between the opposing groups/individuals and the urban local notables/elites. Therefore, no matter how political opposition is represented (e.g. degeneration of Anatolian child or the House losing its character as public service space), the official discourse is reused and reinterpreted according to the ideological preferences and ambitions which are all based upon conservative and nationalist definitions of the Kemalism. As Sualp (2010) contends, the Kemalist official discourses of the republican elites encompass traditionalist considerations and narratives of the local conservative circles in order for extending the scope of dominant ideology and a modernized conservatism (linked to the conservatism of province).

Moreover, efforts to cultivate the nationalist-patriotic narration in the minds of the masses (i.e. the Turkish youth) bring about the question of how these efforts are received and accepted in the thesis. The answer has been found in 'the Answers of Erciyes to its Readers': Resisting against the nationalistic and monolithic symbols of the House by imitating the official discourse. The readers attempt tactically to put pressure on the editors to accept their writings and poems "without leaving the

dominant social order” (Highmore, 2002) or in a space in border. In return, the editors attempt to delimit their appearance in the House journal. It has been understood that the Erciyes journal is the main instrument of the House actors to diffuse the cultural policies and nationalistic and moralistic discourses and meanings but it is also reappropriated by those who do not have lots of writings in the pages of the journal and resist the House limitations and regulative and instructive policies through using the journal’s column of answers. In the answers and articles which are didactic, disciplining and even moralistic, the image of Turkish youth (i.e. not degenerated (Bobstil), committed only to the Turkish nationalism (anti-communist) and not interested in fena habits) is represented. However, the articles relating to the nationalist narration are criticized by the youth who sees them as made-to-order works.

In this respect, it is obvious that the articles in the Erciyes journal about the Kayseri House’s village development project, social assistance policies, rationality of hygiene, gendered roles of woman, reconciling religion with secularism, collection of folk materials and also the local history of the province were written in accordance with the party’s ideology and nationalizing, modernizing and secularizing outlooks of the central Kemalist intelligentsia. There is the illustration and illusion of an imagined province but there are also the worries, criticisms and complaints about the actual appearance of the province. This points to the meaning of province moving beyond being a space in which the sense of deficiency and the feeling of having nothing as compared to the chances of central spaces break out (Gürbilek, 1995: 52). And the province turns into a kind of experience or a state of displeasure with actual painful outcomes of the adoption of state initiated reforms and rules. Besides, some of writers try to prove the exalted/holy Turkishness of the province as the core part of nationalistic rhetoric (e.g. the House journals as the Anatolian journals, not sources of degenerated pleasures). Therefore, the efforts of the House actors to be included in the desires and plans of the center reveal uncertain (relative) transgressions and even ambiguities in terms of rewriting and redefining the romantic nationalist history of the province.

In this thesis, I have underlined that the domination of local urban elites, the educated-privileged Kayserili people and non-local appointed officials and the quasi-visibility of woman, peasants and the poor in the official narratives relating to the House mirrored ways the local people experienced, reused, received, accommodated and maybe resisted at the provincial level. No matter how the national cause calls the educated people to work for the sake of the center's cultural policies and social measures, the local merges with the national in order for reflecting its own subjectivity and identity formation. The power relations and struggles, ways of using membership in the House and flexibly authoritarian approach (sometimes indifference) of the central state in the cases relating to works done and activities of the House have demonstrated that the House experiment and experience in the province reveal diversity and deviation of implementing and administrating the official cultural products and policies. The local society's act of developing new meanings to the Kemalist-nationalist discourse in a new public sphere becomes the main determinant for analyzing the everyday practices of the House actors and their activities in the province. It is also important to find out the popular responses to the different interpretations of the cultural policies and reforms produced inside the Kayseri House.

I have attempted to make an alternative reading on the Kayseri province in the early Turkish republican period especially including the 1930s and 1940s because there has been a lack of study on a province appeared like embodying effectively a conservative or traditionalist ideology. Therefore, the House experience of the province not only answers the question on how the dominant Kemalist official ideology over the cultural and social formations affected or did not affect the local society, it also helps to understand why the province has been evaluated in a conservative perspective. In the early republican period and even today, Kayseri advances on a similar line which is complied with nationalization, modernization, industrialization and even Turkish-Islam synthesis. I have suggested that in the natioanalist languages and discourses employed by the Kayseri House members, there is a claim of authenticity against Westernization, but also claims of civilizing and moralizing the ways of life of the 'Turkish' people of the Kayseri province. This is something related to the assumptions (or paradoxes) of the official Turkish nationalist thought and ideology. The House

space in Kayseri narrates a meeting (sacred) place of ‘the people’, reflects an image of place where the members of the Republican People’s Party, the state officials, the local notables (elites) come together. However, it is not a space of diffusing the Kemalist cultural policies or the identity of being an ideal Turkish (republican) citizen for the (ordinary) people who are only quasi-visible in the official texts of the House, nor does it have compatible directions and tendencies towards the policies and principles of the House project of Turkey. The Kayseri House is a new public sphere for the province and it brings out its own provincial cultural and social policies in terms of its association with the Kemalist official ideals and modernist desires. I would also like to suggest that despite the ‘certain’ definitions and claims of the new regime on secularised life and secularism, the Kayseri House and the Kayseri local society of the period try to insist on national character of the regime or the idea of national belonging for making the province accept the socio-cultural policies and maybe ‘trust’ in the members of new society of Kayseri.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez çalışması, erken cumhuriyet döneminde çevredeki ya da taşradaki Halkevi deneyimine yoğunlaşarak, Kayseri taşrasında yerel toplumun ve sıradan halkın sergilenen modernleşme, laikleşme ve millileşme politikalarını nasıl ve ne şekilde alımladığını, başa çıktığını ya da içselleştirdiğini sorgulama ve yeniden düşünme amacındadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, resmi ideolojinin yerel dinamiklerinin incelenmesi ve tartışılması ile Halkevi literatürüne katkı sağlarken, aynı zamanda, erken cumhuriyet dönemi kültür politikalarının ve reformların da yereldeki akıbetini anlamak açısından da önemli bir çalışma mahiyetindedir.

Milli kültürün ve kimliğin taşrada kurgulanmasında, Kayseri Halkevinin üyelerinin veya aktörlerinin yorumları, gündelik pratikleri, söylemleri ve anlatıları üzerinden bir çalışma gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda, yerel toplumun yapısı, yerel siyasete etki eden faktörler, Halkevinin geliştirdiği kültür politikaları ve etkinlikleri ya da gündelik hayat pratiklerinin varlığı gibi olasılıkları düşündüğümüzde, çalışma giriş ve sonucu çıkarırsak, dört ana bölüme ayrılır. Bunlardan ilkinde, 1930'ların ve 1940'ların - Türkiye'de Halkevi deneyiminin başladığı ve son bulduğu zamanlar arasındaki dönemi kapsayan- Kemalist kültür politikaların analizine odaklanır ve bu kültür politikalarını tek tek açıklamak yerine onların arkasında yatan sebeplerin ve dönemin kısa bir yorumu yapılmıştır. Ardından, Halkevlerinin yine kısa olarak örgütsel yapısı, idari yönetim şekilleri, şubelerinin ve görevlerinin, fonksiyonlarının neler olduğu anlatılmış ve resmi metinlerdeki Halkevi projesinin prosedürleri Kayseri Halkevi ile olan bağlantıları açısından değerlendirilmiştir. Bu tez çalışmasında, Halkevlerin örgütsel yapısı, idari olarak nasıl yönetilmesi gerektiği hakkındaki resmi yükümlülükleri, şubelerin kültürel etkinliklerinin ilkesel içeriği gibi meseleler

özellikle verili yükümlülükleri ve görevleri Halkevlerinin gerçekte yürütüp yürütmediğini anlamak için ele alınmıştır.

Ayrıca çalışma, devlet-toplum ilişkilerini ve merkez-çevre ikiliğinin Halkevleri bağlamında izahını içermektedir. Merkez-çevre ilişkisi ya da çatışmasının teorik zemindeki sınırlılığının ötesinde, bu tezin varsayımları, Açıklık'ın (2006) de belirttiği gibi, çok katmanlı toplumsal ilişkilerin ve çok boyutlu iktidar ilişkilerin analizinden yola çıkmaktadır. Böylece, çevredeki Halkevi deneyimindeki toplumsal dinamikler ve bu deneyimler bağlamında devletin toplumu ne kadar etkilediği ve nasıl bir toplum-devlet ilişkisi oluştuğuna ilişkin savlar açığa çıkarılmaktadır.

İkinci bölümde, Kayseri taşrasının yerel toplumuna ilişkin bir harita çizilmektedir. Taşralı seçkin ailelerin ve yerel parti örgütlenmesinde üye olan bireylerin Kayseri Halkevi deneyimindeki etkileri araştırılmıştır. Yerel toplumu oluşturan bireylerin kimler oldukları ve bu yerel toplumun kapsamı incelenmiş ve kimlerin dışarıda kalabilecekleri saptanmıştır. Yerel ya da yerel olmayan Halkevi aktörlerinin/üyelerinin nasıl bir 'aktif' rolü benimsediği ya da benimsemediğini anlamak için bu yerel toplumun haritası önemlidir. Bu aktörler Halkevinde ve etkinliklerinde katılım gösterebilen veya sadece üyelik sahibi bireyler de olabilmektedir. Bu durum, Halkevi üyesinin 'yakındığı' şekliyle, halkevi üyesi olup etkinliklere katılmayan ve alakasızlık gösteren kişilerin olabirliğinden ileri gelmektedir. Ayrıca, bu bölümde taşra parti örgütünün pozisyonu ve etkisi ile Kayseri Halkevinde parti üyesi olmanın ne kadar önemli olduğunun tartışması da geliştirilmiştir. Parti merkezinin Halkevinin yönetiminde, işleyişinde veya etkinliklerinde otoriter bir kontrolünün olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Son olarak, Kayserinin coğrafik, toplumsal veya kültürel öğeleriyle uyumlu geliştirilen Kayseri Halkevi şubeleri etkinliklerinin üzerinden kısaca geçilmiştir.

Üçüncü bölümde, Halkevinin resmi dergisi ve yereldeki 'sözcüsü' olarak tasarlanan Erciyes'in seçili bazı makalelerine yönelik argümanlar mevcuttur. Dergi, Halkevi üyelerinin yorumlarını ve seslerini duymak, Kemalist kültür politikalarına yerelde oluşan popüler tepkilerin varlığını araştırmak, metinlerde görülebilen milli terbiye ve ahlak anlatılarının ve söylemlerinin karakteristiğini anlamak açısından önemlidir.

Derginin 'Erciyesin Okuyucularına Cevapları' bölümündeki seslerin ve yorumların, milliyetçi söylemlere yönelik 'cevapları' gösterilmiştir. Ayrıca, bu bölümde derginin ideal vatandaş tanım ve tarifleri üzerinde durulmuş ve fiziksel terbiyenin milli-halk terbiyesiyle olan bağlantısı vurgulanmıştır. Metinlerde, köycü söyleme yatkın şekilde köy ve köylü tanımları yapılmaya; dinin, sanatın ve halk edebiyatının millileştirilmeye ve milli yerel tarih ve hafıza kurgularının oluşturulmaya çalışıldığı saptanmış ve böylelikle, Türklük etiketine atfedilen kutsallık irdelenmiştir.

Dördüncü bölümde ise, seçili Halkevi üyelerinin, aktif üyelik anlatıları içinde Kayseri Halkevi deneyimini nasıl yorumladıkları gösterilmektedir. Gönüllü katılım kurgusunun yerelde nasıl anlam bulduğunu keşfetmek için bireylerin deneyimlerinden yola çıkmak önemlidir. Kadın üyelerin ilgisi ve katılımı, örneğin, Kayseri Halkevi bağlamında sorunludur ve beraberinde kadınların Halkevindeki mevcudiyetine ilişkin tartışmaları gündeme getirmektedir. Halkevi deneyiminin bireylerdeki yorumu ayrıca bazı muhalif sesleri ve rahatsızlıkları ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu muhalif seslerin varlığı, bir biçimde yerel siyasette oluşan iktidar ilişkilerine indirgenebildiği söylenebilir. Bu bölümün bir başka önemi de söylenmemiş, 'diğerinin' tarihini kaynak eksikliğine rağmen araştırmaya girişmiş olmasıdır. Köylünün, düşük maaşlı işçinin, yoksulun ya da yerel toplum resminin dışında kalan kadının, Kayseri taşrasındaki gündelik hayat pratikleri ve tepkilerini araştırıp keşfetmek önemlidir, ancak bu tepkilerin Halkevi deneyimine ilişkin tarafları sınırlı kalmıştır. Cumhuriyet rejiminin ve ideallerinin hedef aldığı bu bireylerin Kayseri'nin erken cumhuriyet dönemi ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel politikalarına ve programlarına ilişkin deneyimleri ancak resmi metinlerde, halk hikâyelerinde ya da kişisel hafıza kaynaklarında 'kısmen' görülebilmektedir.

Tek bir kent araştırması mahiyetindeki erken cumhuriyet Kayseri taşrası örneği, özellikle toplumsal ilişkileri ve devlet ile vatandaşların, yerel seçkinler (yerel eşraf) ile halkın ve şehirli ile köylünün arasındaki gündelik diyalog ve etkileşimleri anlamak açısından önem arz etmektedir. Bugün bile Kayseri kentinin politik ve ekonomik yapısı araştırmaya değer görülebiliyorken, toplumsal yapısının dinamiği de ilgi çekmektedir. Profesyonel seçkin sınıfının veya kente egemen sınıfların sorgulanması ve kentsel gelişimin ekonomi politiğinin anlaşılması üzerine yapılan araştırmalar

göstermiştir ki, erken cumhuriyet döneminde gerçekleşen yerel politikalar ve gündelik pratikler bir biçimde bugüne etki etmektedir. Kayseri taşrasının görüntüsü, sanayileşmenin, modernleşmenin ve millileşmenin birbirine eklemeli olduğu, birbiriyle kesiştiği bir niteliktedir. G. Korat'ın (1997: 20) dile getirdiği gibi, "Kadı Burhaneddin zamanından beri herhangi bir siyasal tavır netliği göstermemiş olan kentin Cumhuriyet dönemi ile birlikte rengi pek değişmemiştir. Kayserililer "hep daha büyük ve daha gürleyerek akan" suyun yanında yer alırlar". Toplumsal yapının modernleşmesi ama daha çok millileşen bir modern hayat tarzının entegrasyonu için girilen mekân üretimi ya da yeni kamusal alanlar oluşturma biçimleri aracılığıyla kentte modernliğin yerel Anadolu kültürüne iliştilmesinden doğan milliyetçi-muhafazakâr bir yerellik pratiği gelişmektedir. Milliyetçiliğin Türk-İslam sentezi problemi ile birleştirilmesi, kentteki milliyetçi-muhafazakâr temelin erken cumhuriyet döneminde atıldığını önemli oranda göstermektedir (Cengiz, 2013; Doğan, 2007; Korat, 1997: 19-21). Bundan ötürü, bu tez çalışmasının önemi, temelde kapalı/tutucu (*conservative*) olarak adlandırılan kentin erken cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinin 1930'lar ve 1940'larını kapsayan döneminde Kemalist resmi ideolojiye uygunluğunun olup olmadığının değerlendirilmesi ve yorumlanmasında yatmaktadır.

1920'lerin sonunda başlayan ve 1940'ların ortasına kadar süregelen kültür ve kimlik politikalarının yerelde uygulanmasındaki girişimlerin Kayseri Halkevi nezdinde nasıl yer bulduğunun sorusu, Halkevi literatürü için birkaç saptamayı ve varsayımı akla getirmektedir. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisinin yerel örgütlenmesinin yarı-resmi kültür kurumları olarak görülen Halkevlerinin araştırılması (ya da tarihyazımı) devlet-merkezli ve tek parti rejimi odaklı perspektif ve yaklaşımlarla ortaya konmuştur. Bu yaklaşımların milliyetçi dilinde, Halkevleri, romantik sosyalleşme alanlarına, halk ve aydınlar arasında köprü oluşturabilen yetişkinleri ve gençleri cumhuriyetin kültürel devrimleriyle tanıştıran (halk terbiyesinin geliştiği) mekanlara indirgenmektedir. Halkevi deneyimi, hedeflenen kitleyi modernite, medenilik ve ilerleme düzeylerine yaklaştıran, Türk Devriminin toplumsal gerekliliğidir. Eleştirel dilinde ise, ortak hafıza mekanları olarak kültürel endoktrinasyon için, kitleleri laikleşmiş bir hayat tarzına zorlayan, yöneten partinin otoriter müdahaleleriyle üstten bir toplumsal mühendislik projeleridir. Cumhuriyetçi-devrimci seçkinlerin bir araya gelerek şehir

kulüplerinin yanında dönüştürücü bir modernizm anlayışı sergiledikleri yerler olan Halkevleri, halk için halka rağmen politikasıyla toplum ile aydınların arasındaki uçurumunu daha da genişletmiştir. Bu noktada, bu milliyetçi ve eleştirel yaklaşımların, taşrayı dönüştürme ideolojisi çerçevesinde yeni rejimin (devletin) ve ideallerinin üstün bir kültür aşılama sürecinin parçaları haline getirdikleri ve yerel bağlamda bireylerin deneyimlerini veya öznellik biçimlerini göz ardı ettiği söylenebilir.

Öte yandan, Halkevlerinin birer parti propaganda merkezlerine dönüştüklerine dair eleştirilerin doğru olmadığı dile getirilmektedir (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968: 157-8). Halkevlerinin otoriter politikalarının ve parti merkezinin açık etkisinin olduğu kabul edilse de, yeni bir kamusal alan olarak da bireylere kendilerini ifade etme fırsatı sağladığı vurgulanmaktadır. E. B. Fındıklı'ya (2014: 56-7) göre,

Erken cumhuriyet döneminin en önemli kamusal alanlarından biri olan Halkevlerine devam eden bireylerin, tanıklık ettikleri çağ, siyaseti görme/görmezden gelme, değerlendirme, deneyimleme biçimleri; duygusal yatırımları; yaşadıkları idealist coşku, çelişki, çatışma ve mücadeleleri, CHP'nin sürekli dönüşmekte olan ideolojisine bağlılıkları veya eleştirel, muhalif tavırları, yorumlanmayı beklemektedir.

Bu yorumlamayı öteye götüren A. Lamprou'nun (2009) çalışması dikkate değerdir. Lamprou, Halkevini bir arena, mekan, sahne ya da bir araç olarak görerek, buradaki toplumsal kategorilerin, ilgili söylemlerin ve toplumsal pratiklerin uygulanışını, reddedilişini, yeniden üretilişini ya da manipüle edilişlerini incelemekte ve yorumlamaktadır. Taşradaki Halkevlerinde toplumsal aktörlerin bu deneyimi kullanma ve tüketme biçimlerini devlet arşivindeki şikâyet ve dilek mektupları üzerinden araştırarak, gündelik hayat pratiklerinin boyutunu açığa çıkarmaktadır. Ayrıca, Lamprou, Balıkesir ve Kayseri Halkevlerini de yerel toplumsal aktörlerin haritasını çizmek ve yerel siyasetteki çekişme ve uyuşmazlıkları sorgulamak için örnek olarak almakta ve özellikle Kayseri Halkevi açısından faydalı bilgiler sunmaktadır. Kayseri Halkevine üye olan altı bireyi ele alarak, onların Halkevindeki bireysel pozisyonlarını ve rollerini incelemektedir. Bunun dışında, Kayseri taşrasını o dönem gezmiş N. S. Örik'in gezi notlarını ve C. Kudret'in *Havada Bulut Yok* romanını

da referans olarak Kayseri Halkevi hakkında bazı tespitlerde ve tartışmalarda bulunur. Buradan hareketle, bu tez çalışmasıyla Lamprou'nun çalışması birbirinden ayrı durmaktadır. Öyle ki, bu tez çalışması sadece Kayseri Halkevi mekanındaki üyelerin/aktörlerin pozisyonlarına odaklanmamakta, aynı zamanda 1930'lar ve 1940'ların Kayserisinin de toplumsal tarihsel resmini çizmektedir. Gündelik hayat pratiklerini yerel basını ve yerel figürlerin resmi olmayan kaynaklarını da içine alan bir araştırmayla yeniden değerlendirmiştir. 1930'lar ve 1940'lardaki millileştiren ve modernleştiren kültür ve kimlik politikalarının Kayseri halkı tarafından alımlanma biçimlerini ve varsa, sıradan halkın (kadın, yoksul ya da köylünün) deneyimlerini ve düşüncelerini açığa çıkarmak niyetinde olmuştur. Böylelikle, Kayseri taşrasının milli kimlik ve kültür inşası ve kurgusundaki yerel özelliklerini çıkarmaya çalışmıştır.

Kayseri Halkevi üzerine yapılan çalışmalara bakarsak, bu çalışmaların genelinde de aynı eğilim ve yaklaşımlar sergilenmekte ve Halkevinin örgütsel yapısı, kültürel etkinlerinin anlatan bir çeşit el kitaplarına dönüşmektedirler. Kayseri Halkevi resmi milliyetçi söylemin dile getirdiği şekliyle devlet ve halk arasındaki uçurumu ortadan kaldırmak, halkla aydınları bir araya getirmek ve toplumsal dayanışma ve işbirliğini güçlendirmek için kurulmuş yerler olarak anlatılmıştır (Şanal, 2004; 2007). Bu çalışmalar da, ne yerel bağlamı ne de Halkevi üyelerin bireysel deneyimlerini içermektedir.

Bu tez çalışmasının yerel bağlamda, taşra odaklı araştırmasında ortaya attığı bazı savlar ve önermeler mevcuttur. Öncelikle, bu tez kapsamında kullanılan metinlerin merkez-taşra arasındaki sınırı bulanıklaştırdığı ve yeniden tanımladığı söz konusudur. Metinlerden, yorumlardan, kullanılan dilden anlaşılan taşranın merkeze ve kendi içine bakışının (bakanın kimliğinin) boyutudur. Bu 'çarpık' bakış, modern ile geri kalmışın, medeni olan ile olmayanın veya ahlaki ile ayıp (utanç verici) olanın arasındaki diyolojik bağlantıları ortaya çıkarır. Bu bağlantılarla taşra merkezle iletişime geçer ve bir bakıma yerel olan milli olana entegre olur, ama bu entegre pratiği beraberince sancıları da getirmektedir. Kayseri Halkevi aktörleri ve metinlerinin yazarları da bir yandan halka doğru politikasının romantiğiyle Türklüğün özünü keşfetmeye, saf Türk köylüsünü, Kayseri yerel kültürel pratiklerinin değerini öne çıkarmaya çalışırken,

diğer yandan medeniyeti halka götürme arzusunu da içlerinde taşıdıklarını göstermişlerdir. Yerel durumlar, olaylar karşısında, otantizm ile modernleşme zıtlığını veya ikiliğini muğlak hale getiren bazı sapmalar sergilemiş ve Kayseri'deki yerel toplum ve yeni burjuvazi arabulucu rolünü icra ediyormuş gibi davranmaya çalışmıştır.

Taşra seçkinlerinin ve Halkevi üyelerinin devlet ile vatandaşları arasındaki arabulucu rolüne yönelik başa çıkma eylemleri merkezin, diğer bir deyişle parti merkezinin kısmen esnek yaklaşımlarının ürünüdür. Öyle ki, yerelde eşrafın merkezle olan bağı koparmamak ve muhalif gibi görünen ancak esasen organik bağların olduğu bireylerle iletişimin kesilmemesi için bazı Kemalist kültürel politikaların uygulanışında ve Halkevi üyelik seçimlerinde değışliklere gidilmiştir. Örneğin, Halkevinin amaçsız bir şekilde dönüşmesinden dem vuranlar da olmuş, halkevi kütüphanesinin amacı dışında kullanılmasını eleştirenlerde olmuştur. Parti başkanlığı, valilik görevi ya da Halkevi başkanlığı üzerindeki yerel güç ilişkileri ve mücadeleler, 'gönüllü' katılımçılık ya da aktif üyelik mitleri/anlatılarını ortaya çıkarmış ve bunlar da Halkevi deneyimin temelini oluşturmuştur.

Yerel olan ile yerel olmayan üyeler/aktörler arasındaki ayrışmalar göze çarpmaktadır. Yerel üyeler özellikle Kayserinin varlıklı ailelerinden gelen bireylerden, ağalardan veya Kayserili gençlerden oluşabilmektedir. Bu üyeler, kültürel reformların anlatımında, milliyetçi -Anadolucu- söylemleri geliştirirken, yerel geleneklere zarar verme ve eleştiride bulunmaktan kaçınmış ve Kayseri halkı arasında oluşabilecek herhangi aşağılanmışlık ya da utanç hissini yaratmamaya çalışmıştır. Türk dilinin saflaştırılması konusundaki düşünceleri ve yerel ağızdaki 'külhanbeylik' (kabalık) halinin izahına kalkışma eğilimleri yerel üyelerin temkinli yaklaşımları ve yorumlarını yansıtmaktadır. Buradan hareketle, yerel yazarların ve üyelerin kullandığı dilin retoriğinin, taşralı olarak algılanma, bir ilkel taşralılık endişesini öne çıkardığı söylenebilir.

Yerel olmayan taşraya merkezden atanan bürokratların ve memurların, öğretmenlerin dili ise, daha eleştirel ve acı gerçeklere ilişkin söylem ve ifadeler içermektedir. Bu yerel olmayanın söylemi, taşranın dönüşüme muhtaç olduğunu ve kirli sokaklarından,

utanç verici medeni olmayan koşullarından arındırılması gerektiğini vurgularken, aynı zamanda yerel folklorik unsurların da çağdaşlaşmasını önemseyen bir izlenim vermiştir. Ayrıca, yerel olmayan üyelerin ya da aktörlerin ‘dışarıdan gelenler’ (*outsiders*) olarak Kayseri taşrasına ve Kayseri halkına ‘yukardan baktığı’ yollu anlatılar da, onların yerel eşraf veya çıkar grupları tarafından hoş karşılanmadıklarının göstergeleridir.

Resmi metinlerdeki milliyetçi söyleminin, Türklük ve muhafazakarlık anlatılarını bütünlük içinde kapsadığı söylenebilir. Makul vatandaş tarifinin sporda, sağlıkta veya milli kimliğin estetik beden iddialarında vurgulanması; Türklüğün yüceliğinin Erciyes dağına iliştilmesi; yerelde İslami çevreleri rahatsız etmeyen dinin milliliğinin tanımlanması bütünlüğün basit göstergeleridir. Gürbüz ve disipline medeni Türk vatandaşı imajı ile Anadolu’nun barından kopmuş Türk evlatları imajının bağdaşımı da bunu yansıtmaktadır. Bir çeşit taşra muhafazakarlığı, Halkevi yerel üyelerinin/aktörlerin dilindeki muğlaklığı açıkça ifade etmektedir. Bir yanda, geleneksel ve yerel kültürün milliyetçi, patriyotik imgelemlerle yüceltilmesi, Türklüğün yerel tarih ve kimlikte kutsanması; diğer tarafta, dejenerasyondan, fena alışkanlıklardan, ayıp hadiselerden, uygunsuz davranışlardan dem vurmak, ahlaksızlığı eleştirmek söz konusudur. Bu batılı olmayan yazarlar, medeni olmayan davranışları geri kalmışlık ve cahillikle bağdaştırırken, milli ve ahlaki hassasiyetle yerel toplumsal normlara tamamıyla sırt dönmemiştir. Esasen, 1940’ların ortasındaki çok partili döneme geçişteki politik atmosferden kaynaklı gibi görünen bu tür bir milliyetçi-muhafazakar söyleminin varlığı, Kayseri’deki yerel eşrafın ve yerel egemen bloğun yerel siyasete ve gündelik hayat pratiklerine milli aidiyet noktasında etki etmesinden ileri gelmektedir. Süalp’in (2010) belirttiği gibi, cumhuriyetçi seçkinlerin Kemalist resmi söylemleri, egemen ideolojinin ve modernize olmuş bir muhafazakarlığın kapsamını genişletmek için yerel (muhafazakar) çevrelerin anlatılarına ihtiyaç duymaktadır.

Türk gençliği anlatılarındaki mistifikasyonu Kayseri Halkevi yazarları ileri düzeylere taşıdığı ortadadır. Rejimin geleceğinin teminatı olacak gençlere ‘bölük’ olarak tasarlanan mekanda karanlıktan aydınlığa geçmenin yollarının öğretilmesi amaçlanır.

Bu sadece gençleri kapsamamakta ancak milli ideallerinin sürdürülebilirliği bu mistifikasyona bağlanmaktadır. “*Boşuna uğraşılmasın ve hatta endişe de edilmesin. Türk gençliğinin vicdanında, en kutsal mefkure olan Türk milliyetçiliğinden başka bir ideolojiye yer yoktur*” benzeri uyarılar, ruh ve beden üzerine gelişen mitlerin gençlerde vuku bulduğu ifadeyi ve yorumu yansıtmaktadır. Dejenere olmamış ya da Türk milliyetçiliği dışındaki ideolojileri umursamayan Anadolu Türk gençliği vurgusu, bazı yazarların milliyetçi-muhafazakar ve hatta Türkçü söylemlerinde açıkça yer bulmuştur. Bobstil şiir yazmak yerine halk şiiri yazmak ancak milliyetçi ideallerde beklenmekte ve milli terbiye ve ahlakın karşısı kötü alışkanlıklardan uzak durma, bu yazarların metinlerinde altı çizilen bir meseledir.

Bu tez çalışmasında ayrıca, kadına ve kadınlığa yönelik düşük ahlak yollu uyarıların ve bedeni *de-feminize* (kadınsızlaştırma) eden düzenleyici söylemlere de yer verilmektedir. Kadınların Kayseri Halkevindeki üyelik ve katılımlarını ele alan toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri sorgulanmaktadır. Kadınların katılımı ve ilgisi ancak yerel taşra seçkinlerinin üyeleri veya atanmış devlet memurlarının kızı veya eşi olmalarına bağlanmaktadır. Tez çalışmasında kullanılan resmi metinlerde kadının modern, medeni görünümü ve ev hayatından özgürleşmesi üzerine anlatılar gelişirken, milliyetçi iddiaları ve cumhuriyetin kadın ideallerini yeniden üreten muhafazakar bakıştan vazgeçilmemiştir. Kadın hem sağlam bir cumhuriyet annesidir (kürtaja merhamet etmeme), hem de yerel gelenek ve adetlere hürmet eden yüceltilmiş bir Anadolu kadınıdır. Ayrıca, Halkevi projesinde kadının rolünün gerekliliğinden ötürü, Kayseri Halkevi üyelerinin bazı çabaları olmuştur. Bunun sebebi, kadının esasen Halkevinde ‘yeterince’ mevcudiyet göstermesinden ileri gelmektedir. Örneğin, bir Halkevi üyesi kadın öğretmenin Halkevi sahnesinde kadınların ya da genç kızların neden yer almadığına ilişkin izahında sahnede müstehcen ve ayıp hadiselerin ve davranışların sergilendiği üzerine gelişen gündelik hayattaki dedikoduların varlığını açıkça göstermektedir. Müstehcenlik ve ayıbın kadının Halkevindeki mevcudiyetine etkisi, yerel eril tahakkümün milliyetçi söylemlere iliştilmesinde yatmaktadır. Bu demektir ki, Halkevi projesinde ve cumhuriyetin idealleştirmesinde kadınlık, modernliğin ve milliyetçiliğin parametrelerine ve kurgularına yaklaştırılırken,

gerçekte karar verme mekanizmalarında ve kadına yönelik reformları uygulamada dalgalanmalar, sapmalar söz konusudur.

Bu tezin özellikle sıradan Kayseri halkının Halkevi deneyimini gündelik hayat pratiği olarak nasıl alımladığı üzerine geliştirilen argümanlarına bakıldığında, resmi olmayan kaynakların eksikliği ve yetersizliği açıkça görülmektedir. Bu sorunun çözümü, resmi metinleri yeniden okumaktan geçmektedir. Resmi milliyetçi söylemin arkasında gizlenen görünmeyen tarihini araştırmanın olanaksızlığına rağmen, yerel Halkevi yayınlarının, Erciyes dergisinin ve Kayseri gazetesinin içinden çıkarılabilecek gündelik başa çıkma pratikleri de ortadadır. Kayseri Halkevi dışında, Kayseri taşrasındaki ‘halkın’ millileştiren ve modernleştiren kültür politikalarına ve reformlara verdiği tepkilerin ve cevapların hikayesi ancak bu resmi söylemin ve milliyetçi anlatıların içindeki hayaletimsi seslerin duyulmasıyla oluşmaktadır. Sıradan halkın bu yarı-görünümlü varlığı, taşraya bakanın kimliğinde, diğer bir deyişle, kullanılan metinleri yazanların bakışında belirlemektedir. Bu metinlerdeki ayrıcalıklı bakışın, köylerin ideal gelişimi, Türk köylüsünün saflığını koruması, kadınların özgürleşmesi ya da modern çalışan insanın yaratılması gibi mitleri bir cumhuriyet aydınının arzularına benzer şekilde dile getirişi, sıradan halkın “egemen toplumsal düzeni terk etmeden” (Highmore, 2002) girişimlerde bulunduğunu göstermektedir.

Köylerin ‘arzu edilen’ gelişimine dair anlatıların ve söylemlerin ve sonuçlarının Halkevi köy gezilerinde ve bazı resmi olmayan kaynaklarda dile geldiği görülmektedir. Köye dönüş ve halka doğru politikalarından beslenen köy kalkınması ideali, Halkevi kültürel etkinliklerin ve Halkevi kuruluş ilkelerinin temelini oluşturmaktadır. Kayseri Halkevi köy gezileri ve köy üzerine yazılan metinlerde bu idealinin gerçekleşmesine duyulan arzunun belirtileri açıktır. Öte yandan, bu arzunun sınırlarında modernlik-medenilik ile geri kalmışlık-geç kalmışlık ya da otantiklik ile barbarlık ve hatta köylü ile şehirli arasındaki çizgilerin yeniden belirlenmesi yatmaktadır. Bozulmamış Türk köylüsüne yücelik kazandıran milliyetçi dilin, köylü halk şairlerinin Halkevine gelmeleri için yeterli olmadığı söylenebilir ve belirtmek gerekirse, köylünün devletin politikaları ve Halkevi üyelerinin davranışlarıyla başa çıkma eylemleri sınırlı kalmaktadır.

Kemalist resmi kültür ve kimlik ideolojisine Kayseri taşrasında tam bir bağıllık olduğuna ve hatta bu ideolojinin uygulanışına ilişkin tartışmalar kendi içinde muğlaklıklar ve çelişkiler içermektedir. Kayseri Halkevi kendi yerel politikalarını ve kültürel pratiklerini üretirken, aynı zamanda cumhuriyetin ideallerini ve arzularını taşra düzeyinde yeniden oluşturmaktadır. Bu ideallerin kullanımında ve onlarla başa çıkmada her bir Halkevi üyesi ya da aktörü farklı Kemalist yorumlarda bulunmaktadır. Kurgulanan kültürel mekanla olgusal gerçekteki mekan arasındaki kesişme noktaları, milliyetçi söylem etrafında muhafazakar ve hatta resmi ideolojinin gündelik hayatı ahlaklaştıran eğilimler ve düşünceler ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Ayrıca, bir yanda kurgulanmış bir taşra imajının illüstrasyonu ve yanılısaması sergilenirken, diğer yanda, o taşranın gerçek görüntüsüne karşı geliştirilen şikayetler, eleştiriler ve endişeler de söz konusudur.

Kayseri Halkevi üyelerinin (aktörlerinin) Kemalist ilkelere ve ideallere yerellik bağlamında tam entegrasyon gösterdiğine dair iddiaların yeniden düşünülmesi ile esasen alternatif bir kent okumasını da beraberinde getirmektedir. Halkevi mekanı içinde kendine bir biçimde yer bulabilmiş kentli çıkar grupların, bireylerin ve genelde yerel toplumu oluşturan Kayseri kent burjuvazisinin kentin gündelik hayatını (pratiklerini) ve yerel siyaseti ‘dizayn’ etme iddiasına bakılmasına yönelik bir yeniden okuma. Öyle ki, kentin dindarlığı ve tutuculuğu nereden ileri gelmektedir sorusuna cevap, bu ideolojik çıkarımların özünde yatan toplumsal tarihsel gerçekliğin varlığını sorgulamaktan geçmektedir.

Son söz olarak söylenebilir ki, Kayseri Halkevinde yerel taşra eşrafının (seçkinlerinin), eğitimli-ayrıcılıklı Kayserili bireylerin, yerel olmayan atanmış devlet memurlarının çoğunluğu ve hakimiyeti görece belirsiz karar verme mekanizmalarında ve kültür ve kimlik politikalarının uygulanışında sapmaları gündeme getirmektedir. Kadının, köylünün ya da yoksulun yarı-görünürlüğü ya da mevcudiyetine ilişkin muğlaklar Halkevleri için geliştirilen idealleri ve arzuları (halka doğru) bulanıklaştırmakta ve olguyla kurgunun buluştuğu zeminde Halkevi deneyimindeki farklılıkları ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Kemalist kültür politikalarının milliyetçi ve muhafazakar yorumlarının yanında, milli olanla yerel olanın füzyonundaki sancılar açıkça ortadadır ve yerel

toplumun, Halkevi deneyimi ve Kayseri taşrasının erken cumhuriyet dönemi bağlamında, Kemalist milliyetçi anlatılara ve söyleme yeni anlamlar kattığı söylenebilir.

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