

UNFOLDING REPUBLICAN PATRIARCHY:  
THE CASE OF YOUNG KURDISH WOMEN AT THE GIRLS' VOCATIONAL  
BOARDING SCHOOL IN ELAZIĞ

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **UNFOLDING REPUBLICAN PATRIARCHY: THE CASE OF YOUNG KURDISH WOMEN AT THE GIRLS' VOCATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL IN ELAZIĞ**

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The purpose of the thesis is to analyze the inclusion of the Kurdish women in the modernization and nation-building processes of Turkey, and to understand how they experienced these processes. Regarding the issue, although the literature reflects how the educated, urban, upper class, Turkish women experienced these processes, the experiences of women from different ethnic and religious groups and lower classes have not been studied yet. Therefore, this study aims to discuss the experiences of women from different ethnic-religious backgrounds with a feminist approach.

In this thesis, I analyzed the transformation of the pre-Republican modernization/Westernization process into a nation-building construction process in the Republican period, and also the integration of women in general into this new process. I executed a research on The Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School, founded under the Elazığ Girls' Institute in 1937, in order to explore how Kurdish people were affected by these modernization/Westernization and national-building construction processes and how Kurdish women were involved in these processes

through the mediation of education.

The thesis has the following three conclusions: First, the school had achieved its mission of the integration of these women into the Turkish culture by the adaptation of the Turkish language and culture by them. Second, the school had become successful in its objective of making these women adapt the ideal Republican woman identity and become the representatives of the Republican ideology. Third, these women experienced such an adaptation process generally not traumatically.

**Keywords:** Modernization, Nation Building, Nationalist Discourse and Women, Kurdish Women, Women's experiences Integration, Education, Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School, Centralization.



## **ÖZ**

### **CUMHURİYETÇİ ATAERKİ'NİN ÇÖZÜMLENMESİ: ELAZIĞ YATILI AKŞAM KIZ SANAT OKULU'NDAKİ KÜRT KADINLARI ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA**

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Bu tezin amacı Türkiye'nin modernizasyon ve ulus inşası süreçlerine Kürt kadınlarının eğitim yoluyla dahil edilmeleri ve bu süreçleri nasıl deneyimlediklerini araştırmaktır. Bu konuya ilişkin, literatürde eğitilmiş, üst sınıf, kentli Türk kadınlarının bu süreçleri nasıl deneyimledikleri aktarılırken, farklı etnik ve dinsel gruptan gelen, alt sınıf kadınların deneyimleri henüz araştırılmamıştır. Bu sebeple bu çalışma farklı etnik-dinsel topluluğa ait kadınların deneyimlerini feminist bakış açısından tartışmaktadır.

Bu tezde Cumhuriyetten önce başlayan modernleşme/Batılılaşma sürecinin Cumhuriyet döneminde ulus-devlet inşaa sürecine dönüşmesi ve genel olarak kadınların bu sürece entegrasyonlarını araştırdım. Bu modernleşme/Batılılaşma ve ulus-devlet inşaa süreçlerinden Kürtlerin nasıl etkilendikleri ve Kürt kadınlarının bu süreçlere eğitim yoluyla ne şekilde dahil edildiklerini Elazığ Kız Enstitüsü bünyesinde 1937 yılında kurulan Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School'u inceleyerek araştırdım.

Tezin üç temel sonucu vardır. İlk olarak, okul Türk dilini ve kültürünü bu kadınlara benimseterek, onları Türk kültürüne entegre etme hedefini başarmıştır. İkinci olarak, Okul, onların ideal Cumhuriyet kadını kimliğini benimsemeleri

ve Cumhuriyet ideolojisinin temsilcileri olmalarını sağlama hedefini de gerçekleştirmiştir. Üçüncü sonuç, bu kadınları yeni Türk kimliğini ve kültürünü benimseme sürecini travmatik yaşamadıklarıdır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Modernleşme, Uluslaşma, Kadınlar ve Milliyetçi Söylemler, Kürt Kadınları, Kadınların Deneyimleri, Eğitim, Elazığ Akşam Yatılı Kız Sanat Okulu, Merkezileşme.

To my Aunt and Grandmother

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this work.

Date:

Signature:

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ÖZ .....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xi

### CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. THE PROCESSES OF TURKISH MODERNIZATION AND NATION-BUILDING DURING THE KEMALIST PERIOD.....	9
2.1 The Republican Institutions to Construct the New National Identity..	19
3. WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE NATION-BUILDING AND MODERNIZATION PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC .....	23
3.1 Women and Nationalist Discourses .....	24
3.1.1 The Participation of Women in Ethnic And National Processess.....	31
3.1.2 Women, Modernization and Nationalism in Post-Colonial Societies .....	34
3.2 Women, Modernization and Nation-Building During the Republican Era in Turkey .....	38
3.2.1 Discussions in the Republican Era.....	46
3.2.2 The 'New Woman' of the Republic .....	51
3.3 The Importance of Education for Constructing Modernized Women During the Early Republican Period .....	55
3.3.1 Girls' Institutes .....	59
4. THE RELATION OF KURDS WITH MODERNIZATION-WESTERNIZATION AND NATION-BUILDING PROJECT OF THE	

REPUBLIC .....	63
4.1 The Dersim Rebellion .....	73
5. METHODOLOGY .....	77
6. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ELAZIĞ GIRLS' BOARDING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL .....	83
7. ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL .....	94
7.1 The Curriculum and the Roles of The School.....	95
8. STUDENTS' EVALUATIONS ABOUT THE SCHOOL, THE EDUCATION AND THEIR POST-GRADUATE LIVES .....	109
8.1 Their Initial Perception and Experiences .....	109
8.2 Sıdıka Avar's Influence on Students' Adaptation.....	127
8.3 The Lives of The Students After School.....	137
9. CONCLUSION .....	154
REFERENCES.....	160

## APPENDICES

A. THE NOTIFICATION AND CIRRICULUM OF ELAZIĞ GIRLS' BOARDING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL .....	167
B. THE CIRRICULUM OF ELAZIĞ AND SELÇUK GIRLS' INSTITUTE .....	175
C. THE CIRRICULUM OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS .....	177
D. A PHOTOGRAPH OF A BOARDER AND TEACHER ESER.....	180



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

There have been a few studies carried out on the relationship between nationalism in general and gender in Turkey. The common emphasis of those studies carried out in this area is that the inclusion of women in the concept of nation and their representation as citizens in modern nation-states followed a path different from that of men. Women, even though they have a common project of nationalism with men, serve nationalism by following a different path within the project (Kandiyoti, 1991; Walby, 1992). In this respect, Anthias and Yuval-Davis state that there are five main ways of inclusion of women in nationalist projects:

1. As biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities;
2. As reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups;
3. As participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture;
4. As signifiers of ethnic/national differences-as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories;
5. As participants in national, economic, political and military struggles (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1997:22-23).

During the building of national states, these roles attributed to women had central part in states' policies.

As in all other Third World countries, women in Turkey have constituted a genuine part of the modernization and nation-building processes as well as the nationalist discourse of these countries. However, both the positions and the roles of women during the nation-building projects of these countries varied and were emphasized in different forms. While women were related with modernization and progress in the nationalist projects of some countries, they were entirely related with cultural authenticity and religious orthodoxy. In any case, the purpose is to provide women with a new status different from that in the past and various rights in the new ideal society (Moghadam, 1994). As Abu-Lughod also puts, discussions that are done during these processes were basically about women's roles as mother, as the manager of the private sphere, as spouse and as citizen of the nation. In addition, women's appropriate place in the public sphere and the effects of education on their transformation were also discussed within these contexts (Abu-Lughod, 1998:8).

In Turkey, women's position in society was put on the political agenda with the *Tanzimat*, which was particularly oriented towards the Western modal of society, and it became a significant element of the reformism of the era. Yet, the reformers of the era considered the woman question with an Islamic approach, and they emphasized the necessity for education whereas they criticized the classical Ottoman patriarchic elements such as polygamy, matchmaking marriage and concubinage (Sirman, 1989; Kandiyoti, 1991; Arat, 1998; Gole, 1991). But the scope of the reformism of this era was limited due to the dominant ideology, religion, which was against any change in the status of woman (Tekeli, 1998:295). During the Young Turks era, modernization and Westernization were no more a matter of choice but survival. That is to say, modernization was not only an ideological process anymore. It was a period where it was indispensable to establish relations with the west in both economic and ideological respects (Jayawardena, 1986). And this meant a new status for women. The nationalism expressed by the Turkic ideology presented a new dimension to the discussions on the status and the liberation of women, and it ruled out Islam as the only legitimate basis of the women's liberation. Women started to

appear as both activists and writers in this period. The war economy of the era had impacts on the Committee of Union and Progress's (CUP) social-economic policies as well as women's rights and other issues concerning women. This was because both the Balkan Wars and the First World War necessitated the contribution of women's work force, which opened the doors of the public sphere to women. Patriotic activities legitimated the more appearance and movement of women in the public sphere (Unat, 1998; Tekeli, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1991). Moreover, for the first time pronatalist policies were implemented in this period, and women were granted significant rights with the Family Law in 1917 (Lewis, 1968). In a way, this law can be evaluated as the first intervention of the central state in the private sphere of the family controlled by religious authorities (Kandiyoti, 1995). For all these reasons, the Young Turks' era had impacts not only on the formation of the Republican era's Turkish nationalism, but also on the issues concerning women and the family. But still, Islam constitutes a significant portion of the era's nationalism, and women's roles and status were discussed within these two contexts and policies were produced accordingly.

Although there is continuity between the modernization/Westernization in the Republican era and before, what was understood from modernization was completely Westernization before the Republican era. Nationalization, in other words the idea of becoming a nation-state was not involved in the object of modernization. This is because, nationalization and formation of a nation-state, which were the core elements of the Western modernization, meant disintegration of a multi-nationalistic, multi-religious state. The main purpose of the reforms in this era was to rescue the state and preserve its integrity. For this reason, what characterises the Republican period is the idea of establishment of a territorial, monolingual, mono-cultural and mono-ethnic nation-state (Aydın, 1993; Ahmad, 1993, Lewis, 1968). Modernization/Westernization during the Republican era aimed at a radical transformation of all aspects of the society, and in order to preserve the continuity and the existence of the newly established nation-state, it aimed at the formation of a new culture and identity appropriate for the ideology of this nation-state. It completely denied its Ottoman past based on the Islamic identity, and broke off all its ties with it. And its genuine objective was to form a new national identity based on

Turkism. And this necessitated the exclusion of all sorts of ethnic and religious multiplicity (Mardin, 1991; Ahmad, 1993; Yıldız, 2001).

As it happened in many Middle Eastern and Asian societies, mobilization of women in the national struggle against imperialism and colonialism has been the most significant characteristics of the nation-state in Turkey (Jayawardena, 1986; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1997, Kandiyoti, 1991). For this reason, women were a critical element in the Turkish War of Liberation as well as the latter processes of Kemalist nation-building and modernization. Women's emancipation was an important part of this broader political project of nation-building and modernization during the early years of the Turkish Republic that aimed at the transformation of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic empire into a secular nation-state. The reforms that aimed at changing women's status in the society were not only the indicators of being a westernized country but also that of a break with the old regime mentioned above. Kemalists that aimed at breaking off all its ties with the old regime put emphasis on the pre-Islamic nomadic Turkish culture and claimed that the most important characteristic of that culture was the gender equality. So, gender equality was taken as a part of the national culture. In this respect, women played very important roles both as the representatives of modern, civilized image of the newly formed Republic and as the carriers of the traditional authentic culture of it. For this reason, construction of an 'ideal Turkish woman' has been an integral element of the Republican elites' nation-building and modernization/Westernization project because this 'new woman' was made an explicit symbol of the break off with the past. The cadres of the Republic wanted to use the 'new woman' to create and reproduce a uniform citizenship (Durakbasa, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1991).

During these processes of nation-building and modernization/Westernization, cadres of the new Republic attributed great importance to the education because of its transforming capacity. It was used as the cornerstone of the Kemalist nation-building and modernization/Westernization projects. They considered education important because it was the basic tool of instilling the newly established national identity and culture in people. Education was seen as the most effective way of transforming the Ottoman subjects into the nationalist citizens that have adapted the

secular, modern outlook of the new nation-state. For this reason, the most significant mission of the Republican era's educational system was to raise the new generations according to the basic principles of the Republic, which meant as a citizen who is republican, nationalist, populist, secular and etatist. For this purpose, nationalism was included in all stages of the educational system (Arat, 1998; Kaplan, 1999). Again, education was a significant tool for the formation of the new ideal Turkish woman. Therefore, special emphasis was put on the education of women during the Republican era. Regarding this issue, Jayawardena states,

Mustafa Kemal was a great supporter of a modern secularized education for women. He argued that society could not function efficiently if women remained uneducated. He claimed that if Turkey was to become a strong modern nation, the education of women was necessary since children receive their first lessons from their mothers (Jayawardena, 1994:36-37).

As it was in all other Asian countries, education had a double function in Turkey. On the one hand, it transformed women into the emancipated women of the West by making them appear at the public sphere through professional lives, and on the other hand, it had a conservative function by emphasizing the basic traditional roles such as motherhood and being wives (Arat, 1998; Kaplan, 1999). Actually, Girls' Institutes are the most significant samples of this double goal.

The Republican regime, having the target of creating a new culture and a new identity and trying to establish a homogenous identity rejecting all differences, considered women as a unitary category. However, there is not a unitary category of women who are actually divided by class, ethnicity, and life cycle lines. Consequently, the ideal Turkish woman identity that was aimed at by Kemalists excluded identities of women having different ethnic, religious and class backgrounds, and it was a sort of embracing identity for all women and it was originally represented by the upper class, urban Kemalist women. Moreover, the relationship of women in Turkey with processes of modernization/Westernization and nation-building were generally transferred by the experiences of this upper class, urban professional Turkish women. It is as if these women who were capable of benefiting most effectively from all opportunities of the Republic and who had wholly internalized the Republican ideals were representing all women in Turkey (Arat, 1997; Durakbasa, 2000). However, in this processes, the perceptions, experiences and different identity constructions of women with different ethnic,

religious and class backgrounds were not analyzed, and the experiences of these women became invisible in these processes. Therefore, the main purpose of this thesis is to explore how the Kurdish Alavites women of Dersim and Bingöl were involved in the Republican nation-building and modernization/Westernization projects by educational means, and how their identities were reconstructed in this process. For the Republic, which saw women as the primary educators of the future generations and took gender equality as a part of the national identity, the main purpose was to transform the women's subordinated status in society; provide them with the homogenous Turkish identity and to make them the representatives and the elements of the nationalist project. It was not a problem for the Republic's nationalist project to include women coming from upper classes, because they had already voluntarily adopted this identity and all the Republican ideals. However, the diffusion of the state into different ethnic and religious communities at the periphery was not an easy process, and it encountered great resistance. Inclusion in this project of women in provinces having different ethnic, religious and class backgrounds was a difficult task for the state. Therefore, education was the most effective and fundamental tool for the integration of these women into the Turkish culture and identity.

That's why, through a case study, I investigated Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School, which was founded as a part of Elazığ Girls' Institute in 1937 during the Dersim Rebellion of 1937-1938. The school had a tailor-made curriculum that was the combination of the curriculums of both the village schools and the girls' institutes, and one of its fundamental purposes was to instill the Turkish culture and identity in these girls and to raise them as ideal Turkish mothers. Another purpose of sending these girls back to their own communities as modern, secular girls of the Republic with various professions, especially teaching, and obtaining their service in the transformation of their own communities. What were the experiences and perceptions of these young women, nearly all of who were Kurdish Alaouites that were recruited primarily from Tunceli until 1945 and later from Bingöl. What effects did this school have on the formation of their self-identities? How did their education in this school shape their self-perception, and their perception of their own community and the state? Further to these questions, I discuss, in general, how we

can understand the relationship between women, ethnicity and the nation-building process by looking at this specific case and practice? How women were involved in nationalist projects? What were the roles and status of women in the Turkish nation-building and modernization/Westernization projects? What were the similarities and differences in the experiences of women coming from different ethnic and religious groups? How was education utilized in these projects, and how did it function in the formation of a new culture and identity?

The design of this study is as follows: following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 explores, in general, the dimensions that the Republican nation-building project added to the Turkish modernization/Westernization process that had started before the Republic, and its points of departure from the past. This chapter emphasizes how the Republic, with all its institutions, tried to instill a new identity and culture in people.

Chapter 3 focuses on the relationship between women, nationalism and the Turkish modernization. Here, firstly, a short discussion of some theoretical approaches, which try to analyze the relationship between gender and nationalism from a feminist perspective, is executed. Then, again considering the pre-Republican period, I am going to discuss, the contributions of the Republican nation-building and modernization/Westernization processes to the debates and policies regarding the roles and the status of women in society. Finally, functions of the Girls' Institutes in the formation of the new Turkish woman identity will be analyzed.

In Chapter 4, effects of the Turkish modernization/Westernization and nation-building processes on the Kurdish will be discussed. The policies that were pursued against the Kurdish ethno-political identity and how the Kurdish people resisted to these policies will be focused on.

Later, Chapter 5, in which the method followed is explained, will clarify the purpose as well as the sampling and methods of this study, and it will also put the reasons why this study is done with a feminist perspective.

In Chapter 6, I am going to examine the story of the foundation of the Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School. In chapter 7, I will focus on the curriculum and

the basic rules and regulations of Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School. As my main objective is to try to figure out the social and ideological functions of the school, the curriculum and the objectives of the courses would be good indicators of these functions. In Chapter 8, I am going to investigate the processes of the adaptation of the students to the school and their first perception about the school and the education. Furthermore, I will also examine their relationships with each other and the students of the Institute as well as their teachers and the personal of the school during these processes.

Overall, Chapters 6, 7 and 8 will include a discussion on how the Kurdish Alaouite women were involved in the Republican modernization/Westernization and nation-building processes by means of education, how they experienced these processes, how they perceived the identity offered to them, and how they reconstructed it.

In Conclusion, I will discuss how the school succeeded in its aim of integrating its graduates into the Turkish culture. This will include the methods of the school to make its graduates adapt the Turkish language and culture, the ideal Republican woman identity and the representatives of the Republican ideology. I will also try to show how women experienced these processes.



## CHAPTER 2

### **THE PROCESSES OF TURKISH MODERNIZATION AND NATION-BUILDING DURING THE KEMALIST PERIOD**

In order to evaluate the character and identity of the Kemalist Revolution, we have to understand the processes that affected the architects of the revolution and the paths they followed. How did the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ottoman Empire turn into a secular nation-state based on a unique language, religion, culture and race? What kind of apparatus did the republican cadres use for creating new common culture and identity among the people coming from different ethnic backgrounds? What kind of challenges did they confront during the modernization process and by what kind of apparatus did they try to deal with these challenges? In addition to this, I will focus on the question of how the Kurdish people had been affected by the modernization and nation-building processes of the Turkish Republic and how they had been integrated to this process.

In this part, the transformation process of modernization and the construction of new Turkish identity during the Kemalist era will be examined as well as the institutions that were used as the instruments of imposing to the people the ideology and culture of the newly founded Republic. Until now it has been emphasized that there is continuity between the modernization/Westernization process taking place before and after Kemalist era. However, the main difference of the modernization that took place in the Kemalist period from other periods was the idea of forming a nation state. From Selim III era to Young Turk period till 1911, there had been no idea of being a nation or nation-state, since the Ottoman Empire was a multi-ethnic and multi-religious Empire. As Lewis also argues, "it was this new idea- of a

territorial nation-state based on the Turkish nation in Turkey-that makes its first appearance in the early days of the Kemalist Revolution" (Lewis, 1968:352). Likewise Ahmad claims that "the notion of an Islamic state was the anathema to Mustafa Kemal and its supporters. They wanted to see Turkey transformed into a modern nation state" (Ahmad, 1993:53). Although the principle element of modernization and Westernization was the formation of a secular nation-state, this important aspect of the modernization had to be ignored by the modernizing elites of the Ottoman Empire. Since principle target of the modernizing elites was to preserve the integrity of the state breaking the state into pieces of nations could not be in favor of the Ottoman governors who aimed the integrity of the state composed of various ethnic and religious communities (Aydın, 1993 and Lewis, 1968, Shaw and Shaw, Ahmad, 1993, Zürcher, 1996).

The reason that forced the Ottoman Empire to enter the modernization process was the military and political superiority of the West. According to Karpas, there was another forcing reason in the Republican period. This was the need to seek a new culture and politics which would be in line with the needs of the ideology of the new state and that would protect the existence and continuity of the new regime as a nation state (Karpas, 1959:325). Similarly Mardin states that "the difference between the Turkish Republic and the Ottoman Empire was not the radicalization of the attitudes of the founders of the Republic, but the conceptualization of the Republic as a nation-state" (Mardin, 1991:65).

Aydın argues that the first steps of forming a nation and executing the program of Turkism has been realized by the Turkish elites during the First World War after the separation of ethnic groups from the state one by one. The leaders of the Emancipation War gave the priority to nationalism and made the first attempts of forming the nation in their modernization ideology. At this point, the process of modernization starting in Selim III era was transformed into an integrative effort because of systematic nationalism and secularism brought into force by Mustafa Kemal. By this way, the process of adaptation of Western social and political institutions to Turkey had been completed except for the multi-party political system. The main idea of nationalist and secularist reforms made between the end of the

Emancipation War and end of the 1930s constitutes the ideology of Republican Turkey. Moreover, Aydın also argues that there are three striking elements within the Republican ideology. The first one is its republican essence, that is the inheritor of Constitutionalists' rejecting the absolutist regimes. The second one is being an ideology of a nation-state based on a nation sharing a common culture and language which emerged after the dissolution of the old political formation. The third one is being secularist that rejects all of religious dogmas on the contrary to Ottoman state (Aydın, 1993:15-16).

A resistance coming from the nationalist leaders of the Ottoman army who were supported by some militia forces confronted the occupation of Anatolia by Greeks and Armenians with the consent of victorious powers. This resistance resulted in the victory of nationalists over both the Greek and the Sultan and the establishment of Turkey as a nation state. However the declarations of the leaders who organized the Emancipation War between 1919 and 1922 emphasized the need to emancipate the Caliphate and Sultanate as well as the securing national independence rather than forming a national state in Anatolia, which of course turned out differently after 1923 (Zürcher, 1996; Karpas, 1959; Lewis, 1968). For Ahmad, Mustafa Kemal who was the leader of the struggle against the Greek forces could handle the question of the Sultan-Caliph by discussing that the war had to have priority over anything else. He wanted to solve this question of regime after the victory because, despite its anti-imperialist character, the national movement that was united around the aim of preventing the partition of Anatolia was essentially conservative. There was a loose political alliance between its supporters who were notables, landlords, military-civilian bureaucracy, and the rising bourgeoisie, which was given an impetus by the Unionist. The majority of them considered the national struggle as a means of restoring the power of Sultan and they supposed that there was no alternative to constitutional monarchy under the Ottoman dynasty. Even when the Sultan was unfaithful to his people by collaborating with the British, they assumed that Caliph, having spiritual power, could keep on to rule as head of state. Thus they did not refuse the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922. Since they supposed that as the spiritual leader and president of the assembly Caliph would approve all legislation passed by the Assembly and make sure that the principles of the sharia were not

violated in an Islamic constitutional regime (Ahmad, 1993:52). As a result, the nationalists had to postpone to deciding on the character of the new regime until the first years of the Republic. According to Zürcher the essential character of the new born Turkish state was not clear even during the declaration of the Republic. Because there was a division between the famous figures who participated in the Emancipation War and the Kemalists. These figures not only reacted to the declaration of the republic but they were also worried about the future of the Caliphate who was thought to be the main figure balancing Kemal's power in the political area. Besides, many people living in Istanbul were still devoted to the Caliph emotionally (Zürcher, 1996:242-243). Therefore, one of the main target of the Republic was to cut the links between Turkish people and their Islamic and Imperial past. However the existence of Caliph was a danger for this aim since the traditional elements could support the person of the Caliph, who was seen as the living symbol of their attachment to the Islamic and Imperial past (Lewis, 1968:263). Yeğen argues that in the first years of Republic with its acceptance of the new constitution, abolition of the Sultanate following that of the Caliphate, abolition and rearrangement of some religious institutions indicated that they had given up pointing out the notion of 'millet' as a religious community. There was no Muslim millet any more but there was the Turkish millet (nation). He continues that after the abolition of Sultanate and Caliphate, the goals of the founder of the new state became clear. The new political unity was going to be formed as a nation-state. It was not so hard to construct such a state since the institutional bases of it had been laid a long time ago. Yet it was hard to construct the nationality as a common collective identity for people who had accepted the religion as their common collective identity for hundred years (Yeğen, 1999:91).

Lewis thinks,

The basic change in Turkey-from an Islamic Empire to a national Turkish state, from a medieval theocracy to a constitutional Republic, from a bureaucratic feudalism to a modern capitalist economy-was accomplished over a long period by successive waves of reformers and radicals. In the Turkish revolution as in other modern revolutions, nationalism has been a tremendous force. In the Turkish transformation, the replacement of old, Islamic conceptions of identity, authority and loyalty by new conceptions of European origin was of fundamental importance (Lewis, 1968:481).

By what means and apparatuses were they going to force this new common identity to people who had no sense of nationality? How did they handle the difficulties arisen from limitation of religion that has been the main collective idea for hundred years? And what kind of resistance, and challenges did they confront during the process of nation-building and construction of the new common collective identity, and culture? I will elaborate on these points in the following part.

Nation and Western civilization were two important terms that made the base of Mustafa Kemal's project. However, the new regime of the Kemalist Turkey brought about a significant problem: this new regime tried to force the people to integrate into the society where there was not any notion of a Turkish identity. Because until the beginning of the 19th century, people had identified themselves by their religious identity. (Ahmad, 1993:77) . There was no Turkish nation as a source for the national identity. How were they going to construct the Turkish nation? In order to evaluate why it was so hard to construct a new common collective identity and culture based on a territorial secular nation-state among the people living of Anatolia, we have to examine the structure of the Ottoman Empire briefly.

The Ottoman Empire was a heterogeneous state composed of various peoples who differed in language, race and religion. It was based on Millet system which was applied on the organized and legally recognized religious communities, such as Armenians, Christians, Greek Christians and Jews. Therefore there was a Muslim millet, not Kurdish or Turkish or Greek millets. All of them existed as autonomous religious communities not as ethnic nations in the Empire (Lewis, 1968:335). On the other hand, Lewis argues that the Millet system, unintentionally, caused the development of nationalism among the non-Muslims by letting subdivision of them along ethnic and religious lines such as Greek and Armenian millets. However such possibility did not exist for the Muslims subjects since they were considered as the equal members of the Ummet. That is why the Turkish and Arab nationalism emerged later than other non-Muslim ethnic groups (Lewis, 1968:344). Until the 19th century this system was used for keeping the peace and preserving the integrity of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic Empire. Yet these various millets were affected by nationalism and they started to claim their independence despite the

different integrative strategies mentioned above -Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism- used by the state for preserving this integrity (Shaw, 1977; Lewis, 1968; Kushner, 1977).

For Lewis, (1968) nationalism and patriotism had been alien and not understandable in the Ottoman Empire because loyalty was generally based on faith or kinship in the Empire. He also claims that "It was only slowly and under foreign influence that the Turks at last began to recover a sense of separate national identity as a Turkish nation though included in the Ottoman state and the Islamic religion" (Lewis, 1968:345). In addition to that, the new idea of territorial Turkish state constructed by Kemalists could not be easily imposed on a people who used to believe in religious and dynastic loyalties. Therefore the ordinary Turks did not think that they belonged to a ruling ethnic group because of the Millet system. The term 'Turk' was never used for differentiating a national group. It was used for describing the Muslim nomads and peasants who spoke Turkish. Because of this, when this term was applied to an Ottoman gentleman, he would feel degraded (Lewis, 1968:1-2; Kushner, 1979:3). Kushner underlines that the terms of Turk and Turkey which were commonly used by the Europeans for describing the Ottomans and their provinces have were never been with this meaning in the Ottoman documents until 19th century. At this point it can be said that there was no sense of national identity among the ordinary persons of the Anatolia in 1920s. How did people of the new founded Republic get the sense of national identity and ideology? The leaders of the Republican Turkey had to create a national culture and identity and a sense of national consciousness in order to consolidate solidarity and coherence among people. Therefore the main goal of the Republican Revolutionist was the new national identity (Mardin, 1991:166). Likewise, Karpas thinks that to seek a national and cultural identity was one of the chief ideas in the modernization of Turkey (Karpas, 1959:327). Ahmad also points:

The first step was expected to lead to the creation of a totally new society, for such a society they knew that they had to create 'a new type of Turk' very different from the 'Ottoman' just as the revolutionaries in France had had to create the Frenchman and Bolsheviks were in the process of creating the new Soviet or socialist man (Ahmad, 1993:77). In the Kemalist era, Turkishness necessitated new emphasizes and it included pride in the history and traditions of Anatolia (the cradle of civilization). However Turkishness was also defined in contrast to the rest of the Islamic world, hence the emphasis was on secularism, or at the very least a Turkish Islam ( Ahmad, 1993:78).

Ahmad continues that the Kemalists perceived European history, especially French, in a linear way. They thought that Turkey also could experience the similar process. They compared themselves with the Unionists who, according to Kemalists, tried to found class rule within a constitutional monarchy and this attempt became partially successful. However they believed that there was no class whose economic interests they represented and they saw themselves as the architects of the bourgeoisie revolution, though independent of any class interests. In a society that did not have a developed class structure, they considered themselves as the leaders of the people, a social category close to the Third Estate of revolutionary France. Moreover, they felt themselves close to Narodniks in Tsarist Russia and they were affected by practices of the Narodniks.

If we investigate the Anatolia in 1920's, we see that it was not unsuitable for the emerging Kemalist ideology to practice itself. Zürcher underlines that in 1923, 2.5 million Anatolian Muslims, 600.000 or 800.000 Armenian and 300.000 Greek lost their lives because of the wars and epidemic diseases. The population of Anatolia decreased by twenty percent. Moreover, the Lausanne Peace Treaty concluded the demographic restructuring of Anatolia and 900.000 Greeks in Anatolia were exchanged with the Muslim community. This rate also meant the loss of ten percent of Anatolian population. The demographic changes made the Anatolia of 1923 culturally different from the Anatolia of 1913. Nearly all of the Christian population had left. Thus, while the eighty percent of Anatolian were Muslim before the wars, ninety eight of Anatolia were Muslim after the wars. Two big communities in terms of spoken languages remained. These were Turks and Kurds as well as some small groups such as Lazes, Arabs and Circassians and Armenians, Greeks and Süryanis (Zürcher, 1996:239-240).

After the elimination and separation of the non-muslim population, suppressing the Kurds was the main step for the Turkification and homogenization of the country (Karpat, 1959:49; Zürcher, 1996:252). In this respect, Smith says that the Kemalists tried to cut their relations with the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate by means of a series of cultural and social reforms. They aimed to establish a homogenous territorial political state based on the nation that was formed by Turks

(Smith, 1991:164). Artun Ünsal claims that the ideology of the Turkish nation-state aimed to unify all citizens under a unique national identity. So they wanted to Turkify and homogenize the country. Another aim of the Republican was Westernization and secularization of the country in order to reach the level of contemporary civilization (Ünsal, 1998:187). In this regard, Bora claims that even when the historical conditions could leave only Turks as a single ethnic group on the given official territory, the concept of Turkish national identity still remains problematic in itself. Because this de facto situation, as the essence of the process of constitution of nation and national identity, cannot naturalize the Turkish identity and that of the Turkish nationalism (Bora, 1999:14). Because in 1923 Turkey was not culturally and ethnically homogenous despite the fact that the population was generally Muslim. Nevertheless this Muslim population included two different large ethnic groups: Turkish and Kurdish. However that there was no place for neither ethnic nor religious differences nor social and political differences due to totalitarian aspect of the new regime.

In the Kemalist period the direction of modernization/Westernization project was different from that of the Ottoman period because of the idea of secular territorial nation-state based on the Turks. For realizing this aim the Republican tried to create a new type of Turk who was different from Ottoman by means of a series of reforms. According to the Turkish scholars, the new Turkish identity was created by state elites ( Kadıoğlu, 1998:201). The Kemalists reformers tried to transform the life styles, behaviors and daily habits of the people (Göle, 1999:72). This new Turkish identity was completely identified with Westernization. Therefore the new regime tried to exclude the characteristics of Eastern identity from its newly constructed identity. Hence, they identified their past as their 'other' (Bora, 1999:41). One of the main aims of the new regime was to deny its Ottoman past, where religion and tradition had been emphasized to a larger extent. The new identity of the new Republic was to be defined in a Western style, in a secular and modern way. Hence, the reforms/revolutions carried out by the new Republican elites were directed towards this aim. This began with the abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate. Following steps after these abolishments aimed secularization and nation-building (Kadıoğlu, 1996:186). But, these reforms were not pursued in silence. Naturally,



there was resistance to the emerging nation-state. Kadioğlu summarized the various kinds of resistance as follows: “Kurdish rebellion-Şeyh Sait-, the Progressive Republican Party incident and the Menemen incident.” The Republicans thought the Islam and diversity of the population as the primary obstacles in front of their modernist-nationalist aims. They thought that the existence of them prevented the development of a common national identity and culture. Ahmad argues that the Republican elites were against the notion of an Islamic state. They saw such a state as the carrier of backwardness. Therefore they believed that the way to reach to the level contemporary civilization just would be possible through science, modern education, rationality and secularization (Ahmad, 1993:53). Hence, the first reforms of the Republic were made towards secularizing the state. Kadioğlu underlines that the first steps of reforms were the declaration of the Republic in 1923 and the abolishment of Caliphate in 1924. In this respect, Lewis points out that "the abolishment of the Caliphate was a first open 'attack' on Islamic orthodoxy" (Lewis, 1968:264). Likewise, Karpas claims that the abolition of the Caliphate "was a victory of the secular- modernists over the conservative-religious in a struggle which had started as early as the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the abolishment of it removed the major obstacle to Turkey's secularization, and hence modernization"(Karpas, 1959:44). At this point, the Kemalists ideas differed from Ziya Gökalp, the best known of the new nationalist ideologues and theorist of nationalism, who supported the idea of synthesizing materiality of the West with the spirituality of the East in order to achieve a balance between the Turkish culture and the universal level of civilization. Contrary to his views, the Kemalists elites aimed to achieve cutting their relations with the Ottoman Empire which was a theocratic state. According to Berkes, the victory of idea of a secular state over the that of an Islamic state needed the reforms which secularized legal, educational and cultural institutions (Berkes, 1964:461). Zürcher claims that the first phase of the Kemalist reforms completed a process of secularization, which had started in the reign of Sultan Mahmud and was nearly completed in the government of the CUP between 1913-1918. In 1922 and 1924, the abolition of the Sultanate and the Caliphate, the proclamation of the Republic and the new constitution became the last phases of secularizing the state (Zürcher, 1996:272). For Stocks, "Turkish nationalism had emerged in relation to the ideas of modernity which were vigorously secular. This

secularism had been sharpened by the need that was perceived by the Republican elite to develop a national culture which was diametrically opposed to the Islamic multi-culturalism of the Ottoman state. In this context, every aspect of reforms, which touched people's day to day lives in powerful and intimate ways, became areas of struggle in which the state's power continues to be contested" (Stocks, 1994). Therefore the following reforms taking place in the 1920s and 1930s were made for mainly achieving the secularization of the state and constitution of a common national identity and culture among the people. These reforms were including the abolition of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations, abolition of religious courts, proscription of male religious head gear, namely fez, dissolution of the dervish orders, reforms of the calendar, and adaptation of the Swiss Civil Code. By the end of the 1920s, radical reforms were passed such as disestablishment of the state religion (1928), adaptation of the Latin alphabet (in 1928), and the usage of the Turkish language in the Islamic call to prayer (1932) (Lewis, 1968:271-272-273; Kadioğlu, 1996:186; Jayawerdana, 1988:33). One of the goals of these reforms was to increase the percentage of the literacy and level of education as well as the having an impact on the structure of Turkish society. The Kemalists were aware of the importance of education as an primary means of inculcating in people's mind the ideology of the new regime. Ahmad also claims that the adaptation of the Latin alphabet in place of the Arabic aimed to cut off people's tie from their past even the literate ones. In one night the hole nation was made illiterate (Ahmad, 1993:81-82).

Nationalism, secularism and populism emerged between 1923 and 1925 as the fundamental principles of the Republic. Karpat and Zürcher state that nationalism was the main structure of the regime and secularism aimed to fulfill the objectives of a modern, national Turkish Republic, based on the sovereignty of the nation (Karpat, 1959; Zürcher, 2001). In order to make a successssful modernization they chose secular Turkish nationalism which was included in the Six Arrows, estatism, secularism, nationalism, populism, revolutionism, republicanism, constituting the fundamental principles of the People's Party, in the Congres of 1931 (Zürcher, 2001:210).

How did all of these radical changes affect people's lives? What kinds of

resistance and responds came from people? Bisbee points out that "1920s and 1930s were crucial years in the making of the new Republican Turkey and the emergence of the 'new Turks' " (Cited in Kadioğlu, 1996:186). According to Kadioğlu, " in the course of this transformation, there were certain critical turning points that portrayed the gradually increasing conflict between the state and the civil society. The first opposition party was founded in 1924, the Progressive Republican Party which declared its commitment to liberalism and promised to respect religious opinions and beliefs. The Kurdish rebellion broke out in Eastern Anatolia in 1925" (Kadioğlu, 1996:186-187).

## **2.1 The Republican Institutions to Construct the New National Identity**

After the establishment of the territorial secular nation-state in Anatolia, the main target of the Republican elite was to construct and consolidate a new collective identity and culture in line with the modernist secular ideology of the nation-state among the people of the Anatolia whose collective identity was based on religion for centuries. They emphasized the common national culture based on nomadic Turkish roots not Islamic Ottoman culture. However realizing this aim was not easy among the Muslim Turkish peasant who had not any sense of belonging to Turkish nation. Therefore, some special institutions were founded in order to construct and disseminate new collective Turkish identity and culture in Anatolia. These institutions had crucial functions for introducing the ideals and reforms of the Republic that were essential part of construction of Turkish identity and culture. The Village Institutes, People's Houses, Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Language Society, Girls' Institutes functioned as the special institutions of the Republic.

The People's Houses were also established to disseminate the nationalist-modernist principles of the new nation-state to the people who did not have any close relationship with modernizing reforms of the state. There was a tension between the Westernist elites of the Republic and traditional Anatolian masses who did not eagerly adopt reforms of the new secular nation-state. However this tension did not prevent those who were making reforms. On the contrary, the Republican elites

rejected traditional life style of the Anatolian masses. Therefore, it was necessary to make a cultural attack for introducing the reforms of the state to the masses (Yeğen, 1999:180-181). The People's Houses, established in 1932, were functioning representatives of the state in Anatolia. The Houses were placed under the Republican Party's Secretary-General Bureau (Çeçen, 1990:122).

They had nine sections: I. Language and Literature; II. History and Museum; III. Library and Publications; IV. Village and Development; V. Social Assistance; VI. Drama; VII. Classes and Courses; VIII. Fine Arts; IX. Sports. All of the sections of the Houses planned their activities to introduce the new reforms of the state as well as contributing and disseminating the national culture and identity.

The Republican elite had realized the power of the religion, which was the chief social category of societal resistance that was directed against to the modernist project of the state. The establishment of the People's Houses was connected with the decision of the initiation of the cultural attack for completing the process of being a nation. Since the RPP noticed that official national education was not enough to provide a national unity alone, they needed to initiate a common people's education. Hence the Houses served as popular organization of education contributing national unity (Yeğen, 1999:183). Karpat argues that the primary target of the Houses was to "bridge the gap between the intelligentsia and people by teaching national culture of the Anatolian masses and the rudiments of civilization firstly, and then to indoctrinate nationalist secular ideas of the Republican regime" (Karpat, 1963:55). For spreading the People's Houses to Villages, which had resisted to not only modernization project but also constitution of cultural level of national unity, the Halkodaları was opened as the village branches of the Houses in 1939 (Yeğen, 1999:183). The People's Houses aimed to spread the ideas, reforms and images of the new regime as well as defining a new sense of attachment of the motherland and to the culture of it (Öztürkmen, 1994:161).

Another crucial institution of the Republican regime were Village Institutes- which aimed at not only bringing up teachers but also training people to make them contribute to the conditions of the village life- were opened in 1940 with a law passed the parliament. Besides, the economic crisis of the time which was seen

mostly in agriculture had an important role in the construction purpose of the village institutes. At that time the farm machinery was necessary to solve the problems, but the capital was not enough to do this.

All of these were the only ways to increase productivity in the villages. Besides, the idea of improving villages which came out upon these needs was expected to have the fundamental role in the transformation of villages, teaching the principles of Kemalism to the villagers and providing an economic and cultural revival. After a three-year-study held in 1937, the village institutes were opened in 1940 officially.

The education system of the village institutes depended on teaching in practice rather than in theory and the educators of these institutes were the village children who graduated from the primary school and who knew the village life well. On the other hand, the school buildings were mainly constructed by the students and lands of the villagers were taken over. Students were attending farming, animal breeding, construction, horseshoeing and carpentry courses to meet the needs of the villagers as well as participating in the the general teacher's training courses. Also Higher Village Institutes were established like the one in Hasanoğulları district and institute teachers were educated there. In the higher village institutes more scientific studies were held than other institutes.

The village institutes were closed in 1950 by the same party which was the founder of the institutes.

This process started with the criticisms of 'conservative people' after 1946 saying that communist activities were held in the institutes. In fact the land owners had a great influence on conservative politicians. Probably, the great land owners regarded this as a potential danger. The anti-communist struggle which was seen all around the world was directed to the institutes, later.

In addition to these, the political regimes with single parties in the world were losing their popularity with the defeat of fascism after 1946. Moreover, it was difficult to make the village institutes-which were founded as a result of the single-party regime-continue to exist since they became identical with the Republican

People's Party like People's Houses. İsmet İnönü also told that village institutes could be established in the single-party regime later. The changes in political and economic terms destroyed the village institutes and they were closed officially in 1950 (Karaomerlioglu, 2001:286-287-288).

## CHAPTER 3

### **WOMEN'S PLACE IN THE NATION-BUILDING AND MODERNIZATION PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC**

In this chapter, I am going to examine the integration of women into the nation-building and modernization project of the Republic. The reforms made at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries assigned important roles to women who were seen as the carriers and symbols of modernization and Westernization. From the Tanzimat period the Turkish elites turned their direction to the West and woman's question became an essential element of creating a modern ideal society. Therefore woman's question continued to be important in the nationalist project of the Republican elites who can be seen as the successors of the Young Turks. As it is indicated in the previous chapter, modernization-Westernization was the main goal of the Republican elites who tried to transform a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society into a modern nation state based on unique language, culture and identity. They wanted to construct 'ideal people' who were unified around the fundamental principles of the newly founded nation state. In order to realize this aim, they have to construct a new national culture and politics in line with the ideology of the new state as well as a new common collective identity that would be suitable to replace the old one based on religion. Women had important functions in the nation-building and the modernization project of the Republic both as the representatives of modernized face of the new state and as carriers of authentic Turkish culture and identity. For Göle, the Turkish modernization project did not only aim to modernize the state apparatus and to transform a multi-ethnic Empire into a secular-republican nation-state via reforms, it also aimed to Westernize

cultural rules, life styles, daily lives, and sexual identities of the people. Turkish modernization history thus can be seen as a radical example of cultural transformation (Göle, 1998:26-27).

What were the women's roles that were attributed to them by the state, for creating a new national culture and identity? By what means of apparatus were women integrated into these projects? What was the importance of women's education in the Kemalist modernization and nation-building project?

Historically, there is not a unitary category of women who are divided by class, ethnicity, and life cycle lines. At this regard, I want to examine the relations and experiences of Kurdish Alevi women from Tunceli and Bingol with the modernization and nation-building project of the Republic. How were they integrated into these projects? How were their identities constructed during these processes?

Before examining these questions, I want to investigate briefly the place of women in the nationalistic discourses and narratives throughout the world. Women's question had an important place in the agenda of the newly-founded nation states of the Third World countries. After studying the reasons of these claims, then I will investigate women's – specifically Kurdish women's – integration into nation-building and modernization project of the early Republican era by emphasizing the importance of education as an instrument of constructing the 'new identity' for women coming from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

### **3.1 Women and Nationalist Discourses**

There is a distinctive yet non-multitudinal literature on the integration of women into nationalist movements and projects. There are mainly two points of views about this issue. According to the first, there is a connection between the acceleration of feminist movements and anti-colonial, national liberation movements which aimed at accomplishing political independence, making social reforms and moving towards secularism. The nationalists invoked discussions on the extension of citizenship rights that were simultaneously favorable for women because the appearances of women as citizens of the modern nation-state entailed the



transformation of traditional institutions and customs of ethnic and religious communities which confined women. In this regard, the modern nation-state is seen as an effective interventionist resource which transforms women's place in the society (Kandiyoti, 1997:148).

For instance, Jayawardena, one of the main supporters of this idea, relates the emergence of feminist movement to the anti-imperialist national struggles of the Third world which aimed at accomplishing political independence, claiming a national identity and modernizing their societies. She argues that there have been important feminist components of nationalists movements in the Third World countries in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. She claims that the nationalists had to face a new question. If they wanted to force and built a new state, they would have to reorganize their old society by reforming its important features such as administration, culture and religion (Jayawardena, 1988:5). As a result of the need to modernize their countries, many reformers of Asia perceived the apparent freedom of women in Western societies as the key to the advancement of the West, hence they argued that 'oriental backwardness' was partly because of women's low status. Since the status of women in society was the popular barometer of 'civilization' many reformers agitated for social legislation that would improve their situation. They were convinced that the characteristics of a modern, civilized society were monogamy, the freedom and education of women. This new ideology requires a 'new woman' who should be a congenial partner to the (new) post feudal man. No longer hidden in the house and veiled she should share his 'Western' life style supporting by her knowledge of European language and philosophy, fashion (Jayawardena, 1986:11-12). However, as she states,

In their search for a national identity, the emergent bourgeoisies also harked back to a national culture: the new woman could not be a total negation of traditional culture. Although certain obviously unjust practices should be abolished, and women involved in activities outside the home, they still had to act as the guardiand of national culture, indigenous religion and family tradition- in other words, to be both 'modern' and 'traditional' (Jayawardena, 1988:13-14).

The second point of view emphasizes the instrumental agenda of nationalist policies. Kandiyoti points out those researchers, who support this idea, claim that women could get only the opportunity of being mobilized in the case of their being

needed in the field of labour or even at the front. When this national need is fulfilled, they should go back to their traditional roles in the society (Kandiyoti, 1997:148). Maria Mies, who examines the socialist countries such as China, Vietnam questions the idea of connection of women's liberation with the issue of national liberation in which women were/are the symbols. She points out that "the woman with the gun in one hand and a baby on her back is the standard image by which the unity between national liberation and women's liberation is symbolized" (Mies, 1986:175). She points out that the fight for freedom from an oppressive power in both military and economical respect demands the participation of all groups in society. Especially the women's role seems to be of major importance here. We can see two reasons for it: First, as they give birth to the children they can be considered the 'guarantors' for the next generation and future of the nation. Second, since all men leave their families to join either the army or the guerrilla force, women have to handle life on their own. Not only do they keep agriculture and industrial production going, they also associate themselves with the armed forces of both sides. Many judged this participation and the fact of having access to weapons as milestone on the way to women's liberation because they claimed that an 'armed' woman wouldn't accept oppression, discrimination and exploitation by males no longer (Mies, 1986:194-195). She stresses that it is seen the changes in sexual division of labour during the wars. For example women performed men's work in farms and factories or men did women's work such as cooking, cleaning, and nursing. Yet, this situation should not be interpreted as a profound subjective and objective transformation in gender relations (Mies, 1986:195-196). Although women had reached more legal equality between the sexes and despite the extremely important role women played in the war and during the post-war phase of rebuilding society, they could not help being sent to their seclusion. Instead of gaining more independence, they had to accept unpaid housework and subsidiary economy. Using this strategy men were allowed to have a direct and exclusive access to the state power (Mies, 1986:198). She argues that "this process is also reflected in the shift that is taking place from emphasis on the nation to the state. In this phase, the female image of the nation is replaced by the images of the founding fathers: Marx, Engels, Lenin. As in other patriarchies, the role of women in the whole process of nation-building is obscured by idealizing the founding fathers of the socialist state" (Mies, 1986:199). McKinnon

links the interests of men with definition of the priorities of the national interests and claims,

The state is a male in the feminist sense. The law sees and treats women the way men see and treat women. The liberal state coercively and authoritatively constitutes the social order in the interest of men as a gender, through its legitimizing norms, relation to society, and substantive policies. It achieves this through embodying and ensuring male control over women's sexuality at every level. The state, in part through law, institutionalizes male power. If male power is systemic, it is the regime (McKinnon, 1983:644-645).

Although women have fundamental roles in nation-building processes, they are excluded from the centre of the administrative apparatuses of the state. They are not adequately represented in the political decision-making bodies.

For Kandiyoti, despite differences among these views, there is a common point between these ideas. It is about the integration of women into the concept of modern nationhood and representations of them as the citizens have pursued a different way from that of men (Kandiyoti, 1997:149).

Yuval-Davis and Anthias emphasize on how women participate into nationalist projects 'equal' but different from that of men. They claim that women participate in these projects as loyal as men. However the way of women's participation in these projects are different from that of men: in most cases they are forced to carry on these national projects symbolically and they are also forced to be the biological reproducers of the race or they are considered to be transmitters of the national culture (Yuval-Davis and Anthias, 1997). Similarly, Walby also emphasizes on the differential integration of women and men into the national projects. However she does not agree with Yuval-Davis and Anthias' opinion totally. Although she accepts that women engage in nationalist projects differently, she does not accept the idea that women participate in ethnic/national projects as committed as men. She emphasizes women's differential commitment to ethnic/national projects. She thinks that women sometimes may support a different national project from that of men. For instance when the nationalist project includes women's interests, then women more likely to support it (Walby, 2000:44). She raises questions about women's adaptation of ethnic/national projects as much as men and women's differential interests with sharing the same national projects with men. While Yuval-Davis and Anthias point out the impact of nation on gender, she points out that there is a mutual influence

(Walby, 2000:45). Moreover, according to her, "women's differential commitment to the ethnic/national projects affects the projects itself and its relationships with other ethnic/national groups" (Walby, 2000:45).

In the feminist theory, it is widely accepted that nationalism is a gendered phenomenon (West, 1997; Enloe, 1989; Nagel, 1998). Related to this, Nagel, argues that masculinity and nationalism integrated into each other. Therefore, according to her, "the ideology and culture of hegemonic nationalism go hand in hand with the culture and ideology of hegemonic masculinity" (Nagel, 1998:248-249). Further, she underlines that other ideologies of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, such as colonialism, imperialism and militarism, also construct their ideologies with masculinity and also argues that the culture of nationalism reflects masculine cultural themes such as honour, patriotism, cowardice, bravery and duty which are not easy to recognize as either nationalistic or masculinist. All of these terms are linked to both the nation and to manliness (Nagel, 1998:249-251-252). In this respect, she claims that the symbols of masculinity that we face in everyday life are integrated very well with the demands of nationalism, particularly its militaristic side. Women have a distinct, symbolic role in nationalist culture, discourse and collective action. This role reflects a masculinist definition of femininity and of women's proper place in the nation. Although women participate in ethnic/national projects and struggles actively, their roles have been seen supportive, symbolic, often suppressed and traditional. That's why women sometimes try to play their traditional roles attributed to them by male nationalists, such as supporting their husbands, raising their (the nation's) children, serving as symbols of national honour. (Nagel, 1998:252-253). According to McClintock, all nationalisms, made up of gendered identities, have case masculine representations have been important in order to give the priority to that gender difference in the nation-state. She underlines that women have only symbolic and traditional roles that are attributed to them by the nation. They are not all regarded as direct contributors to the social contract (McClintock, 1993:62). "As Elleke Boehmer notes the motherland of male nationalism may thus not signify 'home' and 'source' to women. Boehmer notes that the male role in the nationalist scenario is typically 'metonymic', that is, men are contiguous with each other and with the national whole. Women by contrast, appear 'in a metaphoric or symbolic role' "(cited in McClintock,

1993:62). McClintock points out that "nations are often figured through the iconography of familial and domestic space. We speak of nations as 'motherlands' and 'fatherlands'. She continues that the significance of the family is like this: the family can be seen as unity of common aims and interests and that at the same time offers the model for social hierarchy. In other words, it was widely acknowledged that women are subordinate to men, children to parents as a natural fact. Because of that it was easy to explain social difference as a fact created by nature. Within the historical process the family image was necessary to justify the hierarchy in non-familial constructions such as nationalism and imperialism. She argues "the family offered an indispensable trope for figuring what was often violent, historical change as natural, organic time. Since children naturally progress into adults, projecting the family image on national and imperial 'Progress' enabled what was often murderously violent change to be legitimized as the progressive unfolding of natural decree" (McClintock, 1993:63-64). In addition, Nagel argues that nation is regarded as sort of familial space where men have dominant roles with respect to women. Although women also participate in political movements, they always remain only as bearers of symbolic roles of the nation. For instance, the purity of their sexuality is said to be protected in the name of national honour. In the context of nationalism women's sexuality is significant because of two main reasons: at first, they symbolize not only home but also nation. Second, the sexuality of women is only expression of masculine honour (Nagel, 1998:254-255-256). Similarly, Yuval-Davis and Anthias claim that the control of women and their sexuality have been at the center of national and ethnic processes. Women have the fundamental roles for reproducing differences between the ethnic and national groups, they are the carriers of culture and the main markers of national difference (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1997).

For Najmabadi, modern nations have frequently been imagined through familial metaphors. Especially, the construction of the national community as a brotherhood (a fraternity) has reflected both the male centrality in the construction of nationalist sentiment and the exclusion of women from the social contract. Although female body has been used in order to construct a national identity which indeed based on male bonding among a nation of brothers (Najmabadi, 1997:442).

Catherine Hall emphasizes the symbolic place of gender in the construction of national identities. According to her if we look at the formations of the gendering in nation, it is evident that women's participation in national movements does not help them preserve political power. Because they are not considered further than just as 'mothers of the nation', who must be in the service of their nation with their so-called symbolic roles (Hall, 1992:100). Further, Joanne P. Sharp claims that the nation is expressed as female in many states, for instance, in the re-developing (re-emerging) nation-states of Eastern Europe and Post Soviet Union, it is the common case that the protection of female body is directly connected with the security of national honour (Sharp, 1996:100). She also points out that regarding the present gender relation we have to realize that male person is in the dominant position. Yet in this construction one idea of masculinity seems to be especially privileged. We observe that the national discourse is heterosexual fostering the concept of the nuclear family. She continues that today in many cases of the gendering in the nation-state we see that the masculinity is privileged. Therefore, not only in familial space but also national one, nationalist rhetoric can be described as being dominantly heterosexual /heterosexist.(Sharp, 1996:105). For West, not only the construction of nationalism gendered, but also state-building is gendered. Especially the public-private dichotomy and limitation of women to the cultural sphere is institutionalized into states and regulated by them (West, 1997:xxi). Similarly Connell examines how gender comes to structure state apparatuses. According to her account, "each empirical state has a definable 'gender regime' that is the precipitate of social struggles and linked to-though not a simple reflection of-wider gender order of the society" (Connell, 1990:523). Although Kandiyoti supports the idea of women's differential integration into nationalist projects, she does not want to describe differences of their experiences by referring neither to public/private dichotomies nor to types of patriarchy. Kandiyoti agrees with Connell's idea that gender relations are reflected by the state and that each state embodies a definable 'gender regime'. Further, she argues that the nature and transformation of gender regimes can best be understood by studying the nationalist histories or states and their view of national identity (Kandiyoti, 1991:378). She emphasizes the

contradictions of the gender agenda of some nationalist projects and investigates how women can, at the same time, participate actively in them and become hostages to these projects (Kandiyoti, 1997:151).

### **3.1.1 The Participation of Women in Ethnic And National Processes**

Anthias and Yuval-Davis emphasize that there are five ways of women's participation in the ethnic and national projects. They argue that women sometimes voluntarily, sometimes eagerly, sometimes coercely, participated in ethnic/nationalist projects (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1994:312) I will summarise these roles which are attributed to women during ethnic and national processes.

#### *a. Women as biological reproducers of ethnic collectivities:*

The policies forcing women into birth-giving consider women as mothers and wives above all and neglect them as individuals. Different national projects show that young women are persuaded, sometimes even forced, into motherhood or, on the contrary, are forced to have fewer children according to statal requirements. In this discussion three different arguments can be identified. The first one claims that the states depend on a larger population. In other words, an increasing population supplies the state with new vitality and strength. The second one (Malthusian discourse) fears a national disaster in the future and thus demands birth control. The last one, the eugenist argumentation, favours the selection of the 'best' who should be the only ones to procreate whereas those who are considered not worthwhile should not, as in Nazi Germany. Thus, the nationalist states seem to be highly interested in the control of marriage, procreation and therefore sexuality. According to Sharp, women's fertility and reproduction has become an issue of national survival and nationalism is concerned consciously and openly with women's bodies. For instance, the nationalist party of Croatia banned abortion in 1992 and, during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnian minority women getting raped by Serbian soldiers showed the connection between individual female bodies and the nation (Sharp, 1996:101). Peterson argues that the main duty attributed to women has been bearing sons to fight for the motherland and daughters to care for it. She also points out that the many ways of controlling women's fertility was shaped historically by socio-

religious norms, technological developments, economic pressures, and political priorities. She continues that pronatalist policies may involve restriction of contraceptive knowledge and techniques, restriction of abortions or provision of material rewards for bearing children. Population control has also aimed to limit the size of undesirable groups, as well as immigration controls, expelling, sterilization and even extermination (Peterson, 1995:178).

*b. Women as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups:*

Women are controlled in terms of the way in which they should have the symbolic identity of their group or that of their husbands. For example, women, in their 'proper' clothing, embody the line which signifies the collectivity's boundaries. Besides, women in many societies are tortured or murdered by their relatives because of adultery, running away from home, and cultural misconduct which are perceived as bringing dishonour and shame on their male relatives and the community. It is also important to ensure that children are bred in culturally appropriate ways. This may include the regulation of sexual relationship in order to maintain religious, ethnic, class and citizenship boundaries. Legal marriage is generally a must if the child is to be recognized as a member of the group and, very often, religious and social traditions dictate who can marry whom so that the character as well as the boundaries of the group can be maintained from one generation to the other. For instance, in Egypt a child born to a Muslim woman and a Copt Christian man will have no legal status. As can be seen, women are kept under control in different ways in order to keep the identities of national/ethnic collectivities intact. Anthias and Yuval-Davis point out that many states have regulations about who a woman can marry and also about the legal status of her children in order to "reproduce the boundaries of the symbolic identity of their group" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1994:314). To illustrate, until recently, white South African women were not allowed to have sex with men of other ethnic groups, nor were women of higher castes in India (Kandiyoti, 1997:158).

*c. Women as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture:*



Since women are considered to act according to the norms of their culture and tradition and since they are also regarded as the transmitters of culture to the next generation, they are required to lead a life isolated from the society. Thus, women's living in ethnic minorities allows them to be less assimilated both linguistically and socially than men. In this respect, they are considered to be the main socializers of children. In this context, women's role is often referred to as the 'cultural carrier' and this transfer of values includes the learning of the mother tongue as well as the dominant rituals, symbols and ideas of a particular society.

*d. Women as signifiers of ethnic/national differences:*

Women do not only serve as biological and social reproducers, they also serve as symbolic markers of the nation and of the group's cultural identity. Women are expected to be the symbols of the collectivity's identity and honour, both personally and collectively. For example, in peasant societies, the reason why people are dependent on the fertility of the 'Mother Earth' is that there is a close link between collective identity, collective territory and womanhood. However, there are other ways in which women symbolize collectivity. For instance, since women are associated in the collective imagination with children, they are also associated with both familial and collective future. Additionally, there is also the burden of having to represent the collectivity's honour, as has been mentioned before.

*e. Women as participants in national, economic, political and military struggles:*

Women also play a role in national and ethnic struggles by having a supportive and nurturing relation to men. Although this is the case, once the national crisis has been overcome, women are expected to go back to the position they held earlier. This shows that participating in male action does not automatically imply gender equality. Similarly, Nagel points out that in spite of their active participation in nationalist struggles, feminist nationalists always meet the patriarchal pressure of the nation that is totally unwilling to agree on gender equality (Nagel, 1998:253).

### **3.1.2 Women, Modernization and Nationalism in Post-Colonial Societies**

How did nationalism and modernization affect women in post-colonial countries? How did women experience these processes in those countries? What was women's place in the nationalist discourse of post-colonial countries? In this part, I will examine these questions first. However, I will also mention Asian countries which did not experience colonialism such as Iran and Turkey. There are common characteristics between these countries and the ones that experienced colonialism. In the postcolonial world, women have become indispensable symbols of identity and visions of society and the nation (Abu-Lughod, 1998:3).

Although women were the indispensable part of the modernization, nation-building processes and nationalist discourses of these countries, their place and roles might take different shapes in different countries. For example, women were considered as victims of societal backwardness, representers of modernity or carriers of authentic culture and identity. What were the results of these changing emphases on women's conditions? While in some political projects of nationalism women were connected to modernization and progress, in others, they were considered as central to cultural authenticity and religious orthodoxy. Here the discussions concerned about veiling and unveiling are related to different conceptions of ideal society and strategies of state-building. In some historical phases, the process of modernity required an unveiled, educated and self-confident woman while the veiled woman represented economical stagnation and cultural backwardness. In other cases, the search for cultural identity was basically connected to the image of women as mothers who have their traditional female roles. This phenomenon can be explained by examining the different ideologies of the national movements. It is obvious that there are great differences between left-wing or religious-oriented and secular projects regarding their concepts of femininity (Moghadam, 1994:2-3). Likewise, Kandiyoti asserts that, women's rights are important in the debates of cultural authenticity and integrity which exist in the ideological field. At the same time, women's pre-determined place and manners discussed in the ideological field make them serve as boundary makers. Even if in some circumstances identities are given some privileges and dominance, in the other circumstances the identities are

suppressed and they appear as subordinated. Thereby, the term 'modern' is defined in a political context where these identities are mentioned in relation to these circumstances. In this process, some ethnic religious, linguistic and spatial items can lose their values and stand as marginal. Due to the definition of 'modern' in a political field, it is likely that women's citizenship rights will be endangered (Kandiyoti, 1994:382).

The modernist movements of the Middle East, Asia and Africa gave an important role to women in their nationalist discourse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For Abu-Lughod, the discussions aimed at remaking women were mainly about their roles as mothers, as managers of the domestic sphere, as wives of men and as citizens of the nation. Women's proper place in the public sphere and the effects of education on women were also discussed in these contexts. In addition, nationalism took women's greater participation in the society through education and political activity and their enormous responsibility at home as its central arguments (Abu-Lughod, 1998:8).

According to Kandiyoti, Western colonizers perceived the bad conditions of Eastern women as signs of backwardness and barbarism of colonized societies, and they used women's conditions for legitimizing their dominance in those countries on behalf of 'civilization' which was considered to be the emancipator of women. Likewise, modernist reformers of those countries also considered women's conditions as the explicit signifier of backwardness of their countries. She continues that although they were against European domination politically, they had no conflict with the European culture. At this stage, women's emancipation was presented as a component of a national revival project which was expressed as moral renewal. She claims that despite the fact that this kind of feminism indeed represented a radical break with the past, it did not present itself like this because they were dependent on their own distant and authentic origins. For example, those that emphasized ethnic rather than Islamic sources of national identity stressed their pre-Islamic pasts such as Central Asia for Turks and pre-Islamic dynasties for Iran.

Therefore, the main dilemma of cultural nationalism aimed to achieve the progress without any erosion in national identity (Kandiyoti, 1994:379). While

creating modern nation states, cultural nationalisms “have achieved a spectrum of distinct and shifting syntheses with Islam” (Kandiyoti, 1991:4). At this regard, Chatterjee argues that nationalist thought, during its struggle against colonialism, separates the domain of culture into two spheres: a material one and a spiritual one. Technology, rational forms of economic organization, science, modern methods of statecraft was realized in the material domain which enabled colonialists to dominate the colonized peoples. In order to overcome the domination of colonialists, colonized peoples had to learn these superior techniques of organizing material life and incorporating them within their own cultures. Through these nationalist projects they aimed to rationalize and reform the traditional culture of their own people. However, they did not want to adopt every aspect of the Western world because they had to protect their self-identity and national culture and they believed that the spiritual aspect of the East was superior to the West. Hence the distinctive spiritual essence of the national culture should be strengthened (Chatterjee, 1990:237). Further, he argues that the distinction of material (outer) and spiritual (inner) sphere corresponds to a distinction in social space in daily life. This separation of social space also corresponds to the identification of gender roles. The world, which we can be identified as public, is represented by men. The home, which can be identified by private, is represented by women. The world is the domain of the pursuit of material interests, where the colonizers had subjugated the colonized due to its superior material culture but the colonizer had failed to affect the home where the inner core of national culture and its spiritual essence are preserved from effects of the material world. The responsibility of preserving the home is given to women who represent this domain (Chatterjee, 1990: 238-239). Hence, women's domesticity was redefined and being a wife and mother for the modernizers of these countries was to be a very different kind of subject from the wife and mother of before. As Shakry argues, the discourses on mothering were integral to the formation of national identity in Egypt. Women's functions as proper mothers of citizens of the modern nation were questioned (Shakry, 1998:156-157). Similarly according to Najmabadi, the modern wife and mother held the responsibility of “the scientific management of the orderly household of the modern nation”, as well as bringing up children to be good citizens (Najmabadi, 1998: 136-137). She continues that family itself was reconstructed and positioned with national community rather than other kin groups. The family was

considered as the foundation of a country and within the family, woman as mother was the foundation too. Therefore, her intellectual development or underdevelopment was equated with the development and underdevelopment of the country. This reconstruction attributed new meanings to motherhood. A mother was no longer just responsible for the growth of fetus but her nurturing and educating roles were more important. In reality, she was now regarded as the mother of the country. Thus women's education was essential for upbringing an educated (male) citizen (Najmabadi, 1998:102-103).

Thapar, who examines Indian nationalist movement, points out that women were used as the powerful symbols of a unified nation by the Indian nationalist project. Therefore the concepts of motherhood and femininity changed in accordance with the prevailing political ideology. In this respect, the construction of the 'new woman' was one of the main issues of nationalist discourse. In the Indian nationalist discourse, Western values were perceived as part of the material domain which was dominated by Western science, technology and methods of statecraft. On the other hand, the spiritual domain, which was protected by women, was seen as the representative of the 'true identity' of the Indian people and it had to be preserved from the bad effects of the material domain. Despite this dichotomy, nationalist leaders also knew that the spiritual domain had to get closer to the material domain and this could be done by reaching a consistency between the household and the outside world and its new ideas of equality and liberalism. This view shaped the construct of the new woman (Thapar, 1993:82). According to him, education was the vital element for the success of the construction of the new woman, since it could make the new woman more responsible towards her familial duties such as virtues of cleanliness, companionship, discipline and self-control,. All of these qualities were added to her traditional roles in the family without transforming the basic social relationship formed by male dominance (Thapar, 1993:83). For Chatterjee,

The 'new woman' defined in this way was subjected to a new patriarchy. In fact, the social order connecting the home and the world in which nationalism placed the new woman was contrasted not only with that of modern western society, it was explicitly distinguished from the patriarchy of indigenous tradition. The new patriarchy was also sharply distinguished from the immediate social and cultural condition in which the majority of the people lived, for the new woman was quite the reverse of the common woman who was coarse, vulgar, loud, quarrelsome and subjected to brutal physical oppression by males (Chatterjee, 1990:244).

### **3.2 Women, Modernization and Nation-Building During the Republican Era in Turkey**

The processes of modernization and nation-building had important effects on women's conditions in the society during the Republican era. As we've seen in the chapter 2, since the turn of 19th century the Ottoman Empire entered the process of disintegration and the administrators of the Ottoman state tried to formulate various projects for reversing this inevitable process. One of these projects was that of modernization and it had been the dominant discourse of the state since the Tanzimat period and it continued to be dominant in the Republican era which aimed to construct a secular nation-state. However for Kandiyoti this continuation does not mean that the Westernization project of the Republic and its reforms were not just the culmination of earlier attempts at Westernization. Rather, the project of modernization/Westernization the Republic broke away from the Ottoman past in terms of its new sense of nationhood and citizenship (Kandiyoti, 1991:40). Similarly Tunçay argues that the project of modernisation/Westernisation of the Republic was similar to that of the Tanzimat and the Second Constitutional Monarchy in terms of its belief of rationalisation and positivism. However, the main difference of the Kemalist modernization project was its radical break from the Islam. M. Kemal went further than any Young Turk, many of whom supported Ottoman Empire. He deconstructed the central institutions of the Ottoman Islam (Tunçay, 2001) Meanwhile, the conditions of women changed from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was a transformation in women's roles and status in society during the transition from a multi-ethnic empire to the territorial secular nation-state For Sirman, the position of women in Turkish society was an important item on the political agenda of the Ottoman and Turkish states during three important periods in history. The first of these important periods was the era of Ottoman reforms brought about by the activities of the Young Turks in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. These reformist men, who were striving to revive a falling empire, were also concerned about the position of women in the society. The second important period was the early years of the Turkish Republic and, as a result, Turkish women were given the vote in 1934. The final period during which women have occupied the agenda has been after the military coup of 1980 (Sirman, 1989:3-4). Likewise, Jayawardena links women's

emancipation in Turkey with modernization, and secularization attempts of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries which were led by intellectuals and reformists of those eras. She argues that the changes taking place in both centuries have affected women's rights in different ways. She points out that Turkey had gone several periods which were determined by different ideologies. In the 19th century a great part of the intellectuals was strongly influenced by liberal, reformist, international and masonic thinking mostly of French origin. In the 20th century it was also France with its positivistic schools that inspired the reformers (Young Turks) in Turkey. But also Islamic and Turkish nationalism played dominant role among 'Young Turks'. Yet, when Mustafa Kemal finally became the Turkish leader, central importance was attached to secular modernization (Jayawardena, 1986:25).

From 1839 to 1876, far reaching reforms were made by the Ottoman elites in the areas of legislation, administration and education. The new ideas that were freedom, equality, and citizenship spread from the French Revolution were debated by bureaucrats and young thinkers. However as Sirman and Kandiyoti point out that the debates and reforms of Tanzimat created deep cleavages between the Western-looking bureaucratic elites and relatively illiterate popular classes whose life style was under pressure of the new form of societal regulation (Sirman, 1989:4; Kandiyoti, 1991:25). Kandiyoti points out that woman question was firstly dissussed and ideologised in the Ottoman politics during the Tanzimat period in which the Empire was intensively affected by the Western powers, and then woman question continued to be one of the main elements of modernization/Westernization politics during the rebuplican period (Kandiyoti, 1991:23). The status of women gradually began to to be questioned since the Tanzimat. As we seen before, the modernization of Turkey started in Tanzimat period which created a bureaucracy adopted the requirements of modernization and the expectations of Western powers. In this respect, the condition and position of women in the Ottoman politics became an important issue of modernization debates of the Tanzimat period. However according to Kandiyoti, not the Tanzimat Westernists but the Young Ottomans who believed in modernist Islamism were the first “outspoken would-be reformers of women's condition” (Kandiyoti, 1991:43).

In order to understand women's position in Turkish society today, we need to examine modernization/Westernization attempts starting in 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire and continuing during the early Republican period.

The movement of the Young Ottomans who were Şinasi, Ziya Paşa, Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi emerged this time as a reaction to the authoritarianism, extreme Westernism of the Tanzimat and tried to synthesis Western notion of progress with Islamic culture and state. Women's condition was discussed by the Young Ottomans during this era. These men of letters not only developed the ideas of human's rights, patriotism, they also criticized concubinage, matchmaking marriage, and polygamy that led to women's oppression (Göle, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1991). When the place of Ottoman family life was evaluated, they advocated educational rights of women for the entire progress of society and rise of their status (Durakbaşa, 2000:97). According to Kandiyoti,

. . . the male reformers of the time found the plight of women a powerful vehicle for the expression of their own restiveness with social conventions they found particularly stultifying and archaic. Modern men often felt alienated from Ottoman patriarchal structures which curtailed their own freedom considerably, even though women were the more obvious victims of the system. They, thus made a case for the emancipation of women in moralistic, sentimental, and 'civilizational' terms, whilst at the same time condemning and bemoaning the moral decay occasioned by Western influences in Ottoman society (Kandiyoti, 1991:26).

She continues that the early reformers adopted a modernist Islamic approach arguing that their demands were compatible with Islam on the one hand, and, on the other, they demanded an instrumentalist framework suggesting that changes in women's status would benefit the well-being of society. She argues that, as opposed to the feminist-nationalist approach of later periods, Islam was the only “legitimate terrain” in which women's issues could be discussed (Kandiyoti, 1991:26).

The process of Westernization in Tanzimat era caused the changes that also affected the status of women. For example, the 1858 Land Reform gave equal inheritance rights to girls and boys, and secondary schooling for girls (Kız Rüştüyeri) and a women's teacher-training college (Dar-ul Muallimat) and midwifery school for girls and girl's vocational school (Kız Sanayi Mektebi) were opened (Tekeli, 199:182; Arat, 1998:7). In addition to education, reformist



intellectuals of the period began to criticize other issues about women such as the lower status of them in the family, the immorality of polygamy, the propriety of women's concealing (Tekeli, 1991:182; Tekeli, 1998:295; Arat, 1998:7). The issue of women's education was a main subject of that period. However it was mainly religious in orientation and it aimed to educate women as good Muslim wives and mothers. For Durakbaşı, women's education seen particularly important by the male reformists of the Tanzimat in terms of bringing up children, they also believed that education of women was important for a healthy marital relationship based on love and for progress of the society. (Durakbaşı, 2000:97). Jayawardena points out that the education of wives became an important issue for the Western-educated Turkish aristocracy and bourgeoisie of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Jayawardena, 1986:29). However, as Tekeli argues, the scope of the reform made during this era was limited due to the dominant ideology, which was the religion opposed to any change in women's status (Tekeli, 1998:295).

After the absolutist reign of Abdulhamid II, the Young Turks, members of the Committee of Union and Progress, came to power. During their reign the need for modernization and Westernization was a matter of survival and not choice. They believed that there is one civilization, the European civilization, which also meant a new status for women ((Jayawardena, 1986:30)<sup>1</sup>. Under the reign of the Young Turks, the ideologies regarding women and family took a decisive and original turn and also affected the republican reform (Göle, 1998:57; Kandiyoti, 1995:311). Kandiyoti underlines that Turkish nationalism, which was expressed by the Turkist ideology, brought in new elements into the debate that was made around the Westernism and Islam (Kandiyoti, 1995:311).

During the period of Young Turks, women emerged as activists and writers. Some women's associations were established between 1908 and 1916. For example, the Society for the Elevation of Women (Teali-i Nisvan Cemiyeti) founded by Halide Edib, the Society for the Defence of Women's Rights (Müdafaa-i Hukuk Nisvan

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<sup>1</sup> For Jayawardena, "Europeanization" was not only an ideological process, it also meant forming economic ties with the capitalist countries of Europe (Jayawardena, 1986:30). Moghadam argues that modernization and Westernization necessitated the liberation of women (Moghadam, 1993:80)

Cemiyeti) were established as well as some new journals such as Mahasin, Kadın and Kadınlar Dünyası. As Kandiyoti stresses, women started to stand for their rights “under the banner of patriotism, as participants in the war effort and the broader goals of national mobilization” (Kandiyoti, 1991:43).

In this period, more high schools and teachers' colleges for women were opened as well as the first university for women. According to Jayawardena, as more and more women started to get an education and the state underwent a democratic reorganization, the issue of women's liberation was extended beyond just education. Journals, literature and drama took a deep interest in their status in both the domestic and political spheres during this era (Jayawardena, 1986:31).

Kandiyoti points out the rise of Turkism, as a dominant ideology of the CUP, the necessities of a war economy from the Balkan War to the end of World War I and effects of both development on the social and economic policies of the CUP also affected on women's rights and issues (Kandiyoti, 1991:29). Kandiyoti stresses, "the Turkism as a legitimizing ideology of women's emancipation created a discursive space in which nationhood could be invoked alongside Islam" (1991:43). Kandiyoti, Tekeli and Unat underline the effects of the wars on women's emancipation. They argue that the recognition of the necessity of female labor-force by the state opened the door of public life to women who participated in war effort actively (Kandiyoti, 1991; Tekeli, 1998; Unat, 1998). The requirements of general mobilization for the wars opened a new space for women. In this respect, Kandiyoti claims that patriotic activities legitimized both greater mobility and visibility. In contrast to the Republican period in which women were called to fulfill the ranks of trained professional cadres, in the Second Constitutional period, the necessities of war entailed women to replenish the workforce. She adds that there was a massive loss of male workforce as the men were called on duty, and this created a demand for women's labour which was not only limited to white-collar jobs in post offices, banks, municipal services and hospitals but involved other jobs that required mobilization throughout Anatolia (Kandiyoti, 1991:30). Moreover, the first pro-natalist policies of the empire were applied during this era. To illustrate, marriage became mandatory for women by the age of 21 and for men by the age of 25, and the

state started to offer financial aid for weddings and childbirth (Kandiyoti, 1991:31). Unat writes that large numbers of “veiled and secluded” women were integrated into public life as a result of the war. Jobs were now available for them in ammunition and food factories, which increased the number of working class women (Unat, 1981:8). Additionally, the war not only introduced women into Turkey's urban public life, but also contributed to “the challenge of the supremacy of the Sharia” (Unat, 1981:9).

In addition, during the era of the CUP, discussions about issues of women and family were debated by different ideological positions such as Islamist, westernist and Turkist who advocated various solutions for stopping the decline of the Empire (Kandiyoti, 1991:32, Göle, 1998:57-58). For the Islamist approach, adoption of Western technological and material progress was a necessity for strengthening the empire but Western culture was a danger for the Islamic values and culture. Since they perceived the position of women as the matter of Islamic values and culture, they advocated that veiling, polygyny and divorce were the part of Islamic values and violators of Islamic rules had to be punished. For the Westernist approach, technological and material progresses were not enough to be modernized, superior state. In order to realize this aim, Western positivism, rationalistic outlook, humanitarian ideals had to be adopted. Therefore they believed that Islamic traditions were obstacle in front of being a 'civilized' and they are responsible for women's lower conditions which was also one of the main reasons of Ottoman backwardness. However their opinion about Islam in terms of its responsibility both for obscurantism and women's bad conditions was varying. While the moderate ones believed that Islam in essence provided the equality of women with men, the radicals advocated that Islam was directly responsible for the degeneration of Turkish womanhood. The Turkist, who aimed to create a national identity based on not only Islam, but also pre-Islamic nomadic Turkish culture, gave great importance to women and family. They aimed to construct the future ideal society, whose roots were in ancient Turkish life (Kandiyoti, 1991:32-33-34; Göle, 1998:57-58). Ziya Gökalp, who was referred as the leading ideologue of the Turkist, and theoretician of Turkish nationalism, was strongly affected by the Comtean and Durkheimian tradition in French sociology (Moghadam, 1993; Kandiyoti, 1995). According to

Fleming, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk claimed Gökbalp as his intellectual mentor and father and he founded his Kemalist ideology on Gökbalp's theory of Turkish nationalism (Fleming, 1998:127). She also points out that Gökbalp was concerned with the question of how Turkey could adopt Western civilization by synthesizing it with Islam and Turkishness (Fleming, 1998:128). She claims that Gökbalp's concern with women was based on the idea that they were “repositories and guarantors of the past”. This viewpoint explains Gökbalp's combination and use of the two themes: the centrality of women and the return to an ideal past (Fleming, 1998:128). Kandiyoti underlines that Gökbalp emphasized the pre-Islamic Turkish cultural values and advocated equality in marriage, divorce and succession rights for women. Kandiyoti points out that Gökbalp's views about 'moral Turkism', especially about family and sexual morality, mark a significant departure from earlier approaches to the woman issue (Kandiyoti, 1991:34). He emphasized ancient Turkish cultural values such as communal ownership of land, the equality of men and women and monogamous marriage, democracy of 'parental' family that was different from autocratic patriarchal family. He advocated that pre-Islamic Turkish era was a golden age of women who were accepted as the equal of men in every aspect of life such as in political domain, in religious rituals (Kandiyoti, 1991:335). He points out that women's emancipation was a part of ancient Turkish nomadic culture (Jayawardena, 1986:32).

Besides, Gökbalp perceived women as the guarantors of the lost Turkish past. He advocated gender equality and the liberation of women because he perceived these concepts as essential to “the revival of authentic Turkish civilization and the development of the 'Turk' as opposed to the Ottoman” (Fleming, 1998:132). He also claimed that Turkish nationalists were both popular and feminist, not only because these two values were important during that period, but also because democracy and feminism had been the two pillars of the Turkish past (Cited in Fleming, 1998:133). Zehra Arat underlines that while Gökbalp's influence can be detected in Republican government policies, the feminist aspirations of his teachings have not been completely fulfilled. Moreover, Gökbalp tried to separate 'modern civilization' from 'Western civilization' whereas treating the latter as common among Kemalists. The West was the 'civilized', and the adoption of the Western model was a national goal,

one articulated as 'ascending Turkey to the level of civilized societies'. Women were an integral part of this modernization process, and their progress was seen as an important indicator of achieving modernity (Arat, 1998:15). Likewise Kandiyoti argues that while Gökbalp advocated the mutual compability of Islam, Turkish culture and contemporary civilization, Mustafa Kemal adopted a model that demanded the complete privatization of religion and full secularization of social life (Kandiyoti, 1991:38).

Similar to the Kemalists, the CUP also tried to incorporate Gökbalp's vision into their family policies. One of the important attempts of the CUP was the 1917 Family Law. As Kandiyoti underlines the 1917 Family Law can be evaluated as a first attempt of the central state to extend its control and intervention into the private domain of the family that had been under the total control of religious authorities of the various Ottoman millets who rejected such intervention and control of the central state (Kandiyoti, 1995: 311, Kandiyoti, 1991:27). She points out that the Unionists advocated a new family model called Milli Aile (National Family) which was monogamous and nuclear and in sharp contrast to the traditional Ottoman patriarchal family (Kandiyoti, 1991:36). Further, for Lewis, the Family Law was an important development in the achievement of women's rights. He points out that despite the fact that it was very difficult to remove the two main disabilities of women, which were polygamy and repudiation, in an Islamic state, the new Family Law made a number of revisions in favor of women, giving them the right to insert and enforce some stipulations in marriage contracts, including the right of divorce and monogamy (Lewis, 1968:229-230).

For Jayawardena, women's liberation was debated within the confines of Islam and Turkish nationalism. Thus, women's rights necessitated by the needs of a modernizing society and its demands for women's participation were made legitimate by religious and nationalist traditions (Jayawardena, 1986:33). Similarly for Kandiyoti, there was a transformation of the woman question between at end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries. While Islam was the only form of legitimate discourse on woman's liberation at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the debate about women's rights were shaped by the historically specific conditions of the rise

of Turkish nationalism, starting with the Second Constitutional period (1908-19) and giving way to the Kemalist republican regime (Kandiyoti, 1991:23).

### **3.2.1 Discussions in the Republican Era**

Women's emancipation was an important part of a broader political project of nation-building and secularization during the early years of Turkish Republic that aimed to transform a multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire into a secular nation state. Most of the Middle Eastern societies composed of a mainly Muslim population made Islam the only ideological source for the definition of authenticity and authentic national identity. In this respect, women's emancipation was regarded as an indispensable part of the nationalist resistance movements against colonialism and the economic and cultural dominance of the West (Jayawardena, 1986). As Chatterjee points out, in post-colonial nation-states, a national community is constructed to be different from traditional community, as well as unique from Western community. (Chatterjee, 2002:201). Y.Arak underlines that for the nationalist elites of those societies "the traditional is selectively adapted and transformed to be modern, but not Western" (Arak, 2000:108). They aimed to construct a new national identity and culture for which the image of the 'new woman' was a marker not only of cultural authenticity but also of being 'civilized' as a nation. However, unlike most of these societies, the cultural reference for authentic Turkish national identity changed its direction from Islamic culture to the original culture of the Turks before they adopted Islam. Therefore, Atatürk and other leaders of the Turkish nationalist struggle and Turkish Republic sought to break away from Islamic law and tradition radically that had direct effect on the field of legislation related to women's position in the society. Hence they aimed to make radical reforms that would change the status of women in the society (Durakbaşı, 1998:139). Similarly according to Y. Arak, the founders of the Republic strived to become Western as well as modern. They rejected Islam, the traditional religion of the majority of the public, and tried to legitimize this by emphasizing the pre-Islamic Turkish past (Arak, 200:109). Following the ideas of Ziya Gökalp who claimed that there was equality between men and women among the pre-Islamic Turkish societies, the republican leaders identified modernization with Westernization and claimed that improving women's status means to defend

Turkish Tradition. In this respect, Y. Arat argues that improving women's status was a means to improve Turkish nationalism and adopt the Western notions of equality and secularism (Arat, 2000:109). At this regard, Keyder argues that the modernized Turkish elites equated modernization with Westernization and European civilization in which the new Turkey had to find a place. For them modernization was a total project that internalize all cultural dimensions which make Europe modern. Therefore, the founders of the Republic did not only want to adopt the rationalization, bureaucratization of the state apparatus, but also wanted to transform the society radically for providing secularization, gender equality relationship and individual autonomy. Hence, they gave the local culture just a limited place as the folklore and rejected Islamic culture for preserving the concept of modernity without deformation (Keyder, 1998:29). Furthermore, for Göle the Kemalist civilisation project did not only aim to transform the structure of the state, but also aimed to penetrate into the life-stles, mode of behaviors and daily life circles (Göle, 1998:83).

As it is mentioned above, women were the integral part of the Kemalist Westernisation/modernisation project both as symbols of the civilized face of Turkey and carriers of national authenticity. In this respect, Kandiyoti argues that the Kemalist struggle used the woman issue to get rid of the "theocratic remnants of the Ottoman state" (Kandiyoti, 1991:38). At this regard, Sayarı points out that the main aim of the Kemalist movement was to establish a modern nation-state as defined by the West. Most Kemalist reforms aimed at transforming Turkish society from an Islamic into a Western setting. Therefore, the liberation of women was necessary for the Westernization effort (Sayarı, 1981:289). Similarly, Tekeli underlines that women's emancipation was closely intertwined with the process of 'secularisation' and 'westernization' (Tekeli, 1981:293). According to Kandiyoti the determination of Kemalism to liberate women was in fact the evacuation of Islam from legislation, and inclusion of women into a new idea of 'citizenship' necessitated by the transition from a monarchy to a populist republic (Kandiyoti, 1991:39). She continues that despite the fact that the main legitimizing discourse for women's emancipation in newly founded Republic was a nationalism that has its roots in the Turkism of the CUP era, it was the Kemalism that represented the ideological break from the Ottoman Empire. Mustafa Kemal went further breaking from the Islam than any of

the Turkist and Gökalt (Kandiyoti, 1991:39). In this respect, Sirman claims that the founders of the Republic aimed to construct a Turkish as opposed to an Ottoman identity based on the power of Islam. Influenced by the different waves of Turkism since the turn of the century, Mustafa Kemal and his friends gradually shaped Turkish nationalism. The pre-Islamic Turkish past helped them develop a Turkish identity. In a way, the Islamic identity of the Turkish citizens had to be subordinated to other more powerful identities. The Turkish identity developed during this period emphasized an essentially egalitarian and democratic Turkish past that also stressed the image of an equal and powerful woman. However, ideas of progress, modernization, and technological improvements were also integral parts of the new nationalism (Sirman, 1989:9-10).

The modernizer elites of the Republic assumed that the adoption of the model of Western progress would culminate in modernization, which would also affect women and provide a simultaneous progress and transformation in their lives. Therefore Westernization linked with women's emancipation (Kadioğlu, 1998:89). According to Papanek, the adoption of a kind of 'state feminism' by the modernist elites of the post-colonial states was related to women's roles. Being symbols of transition from the traditional society to the modern one, unveiled women, who were professional participants of the public realm, were the major supporters of the young nation-states (Papanek, 1994). Correspondingly, in Turkey, within the project of nation-building, women were too used as symbols by the pioneers of modernism, where they conceived women's emancipation to be a precondition for a more extensive societal revolution. For this reason, all those reforms that were necessary for the secularization and Westernization of the Republic provided women, especially those belonging to the upper class, rights within the newly established Turkish state. That is, the right to vote and to be elected, to be professionals in the public realm, and so forth. Thus, this generation of women, that is, those living in the early Republican period supported the newly founded Turkish state. However, these Kemalist reforms did not aim to liberate women or to help develop women's identity; rather they aimed to make women good wives and mothers. Hence, the goal of these reforms was to make women contribute to the patriarchal order of the Republic (Y.Arak, 1998; Berkay, 1998). In this respect, it is claimed that there is a sort of state



feminism also in Turkey and, in order to create a modern Western society, certain rights were granted to women. However, no independent women's movement was let develop (Kandiyoti, 1997; Z. Arat, 1998). Jayawardena points out that the Turkish process of Europeanization did not only involve economic development, but also an effort to secularize and modernize the state by "separating politics from religion, attacking tradition, Latinizing the alphabet, promoting European dress, adopting the Western calendar, introducing civil marriage and divorce, and banning polygamy" (Jayawardena, 1986:33). Karpas stresses that the first crucial reforms of the Republic were linked with secularism that gradually came to existence in the Ottoman Empire as a practical necessity and a condition for modernization. Hence, secularism continued to be a major component of the new regime and it was accepted as a principle in the Constitution in 1937. Karpas adds that secularism in Turkey had multiple aims: establishing a modern national state without the bias of religion, liberating the society from the limitations of Islam, and creating a new type of free individual. It was a "rationalistic, scientific, anti-traditionalist, and anti-clericalist secularism" (Karpas, 1959:271). Therefore, the reforms initiated by the modernist Republican elites, aimed to undermine the basis of the Islamic way of life. The abolition of Caliphate in 1924, the office of Şeyh-ül-Islam and the Ministry of Şariat, and closing the separate religious schools and colleges were followed by the imposition of dress reform in 1925, which was labelled by Lewis as 'great symbolic revolution'<sup>2</sup>. For example, according to the dress law, the wearing of the fez<sup>3</sup>, which was seen as the symbol of Islamic tradition, was abolished. Since the hat was seen as the symbol of Western civilisation and of progress, wearing of the hat by all men became a legal requirement (Lewis, 1968:297-269). Adopting the Gregorian calendar (1925), the Swiss civil code (1926), and the Latin script (1928) were among other reforms that made it difficult to follow the old standards and regulations (Sirman, 1989:10).

After the declaration of the Republic, the process of Westernization, which included a broader political, social and economic reform, started. While the reforms

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<sup>2</sup> The dress reform was labeled as the 'great symbolic revolution' by Lewis (1968).

<sup>3</sup> A kind of hat worn during the recent centuries of the Ottoman Empire.

attempts of the 1920s and 1930s were initiated to westernize the society, they were initiated to enhance women's status in the society at the same time. Yeşim Arat argues that "for the Republican modernist elite, improving women's status meant formalizing gender equality irrespective of religious tradition" (Arat, 2000:110). Z. Arat claims that development and modernisation in Turkey essentially meant Westernization and, the Kemalist reforms strived to reorganize life by replacing the Islamic patriarchy with that of a secular Western one (Arat, 1994:58). Under the Kemalist regime, educational, professional and legal opportunities of women were expanded. These radical reforms that provided new rights to women carried a symbolic meaning for the secular republicans in their fight against religious authority, which had been the main legal basis and identity of the Ottoman state. The new regime replaced the Islamic civil code, which included legal inequalities between men and women in marriage, divorce, inheritance and custody over children, with a secular code in 1926 adopted from Swiss. This new Civil Code gave women almost equal status to men. Civil Law abolished polygamy, prevented child marriages by imposing minimum ages for marriage, and recognized women as legal equals of men in certain areas such as witnesses in courts, in inheriting and maintaining property. It also granted women the right to choose their spouses, initiate divorce, and maintain their maternal rights, even after divorce. Despite the fact that the Civil Code provided many important rights for women, it failed to establish full equality between the sexes and included some clauses, which placed men first among equals. For example, the husband remained by law the head of the family and the wife still needed his permission to seek a job outside the home (Arat, 1994; Tekeli, 1981; Arat, 2000; Sirman, 1989). On the other hand, Zehra Arat claims that the main achievement of civil law was the construction of state control over the institution of family, which was under the control of the Islamic tradition before the adoption of civil law (Arat, 1994:63). In this respect, Kandiyoti argues the target of state intervention to family is to expand the control of the state over the socialization of its citizens and free them from the limitations of social rules and practices which inevitably hinder social development (Kandiyoti, 1991). Moreover she adds that the new discourse on women and family was extremely influential in the Middle East. Women's illiteracy, seclusion and the practice of polygyny were not abandoned because they obviously and intentionally violated the rights of half of the population,

but because they created “ignorant mothers, shallow and scheming partners, unstable marital unions, and lazy and unproductive members of society” (Kandiyoti, 1991:10). Another important change was the granting of suffrage to women for the municipal governments in 1930 and for parliament in 1934. However, Zehra Arat underlines that the contradiction deepens if one considers that Turkish women were given the vote at a time when they were not viable figures on the political arena (Arat, 1994:63). Active women's organizations and movements such as the Turkish Women's Federation, which raised political demands, were manipulated into sacrificing their interests for the sake of national unity. Likewise, women's demands for membership to the political party were rejected in the 1930s. Despite the fact that all women's demands were suppressed, why did the Republican cadres give women the right of suffrage? Tekeli claims that after the attempt of transition to multi-party system had failed with the Free Party episode in 1930, the enfranchisement of women became a crucial symbol again for the Republican leaders. Because of that the main critics of the Republican regime were accusing Mustafa Kemal of becoming a dictator. Therefore, women's enfranchisement would be used for proving the democratic nature of the Turkish Republic, which was governed by the single party (Tekeli, 1998:299). Mustafa Kemal wanted to emphasize the difference of Turkey from other fascist dictatorships of Europe, such as Italy and Germany. In addition to this, for Tekeli, the secularization of the family code and enfranchisement of women were a part of a broader struggle to liquidate the theocratic remnants of the Ottoman state and create a new legitimizing ideology (Tekeli, 1981).

Z. Arat argues that Kemalists reforms were not really aimed at liberating women or “promoting the development of female consciousness and feminine identity”. Instead, they aimed at equipping Turkish women with the education and skills that they needed to be better wives and mothers, thus increasing their contributions to the Republican patriarchy (Arat, 1994:58).

### **3.2.2 The 'New Woman' of the Republic**

The modernist states gave importance to transformation of the individuals composed of their citizens while they were transforming their societies. It can be seen in the policies, which they pursue that women were perceived as the symbols of

the societal transformation. Therefore the control of women and their sexuality as well as their emancipation had a crucial place in their modernist nationalist politics and ideologies. For these ideologies image of the 'new woman' was not only the symbol of the cultural authenticity but also a symbol of being a modernized nation. Therefore, the male reformers of bourgeoisie men advocated the emancipation of women in order to create the image of 'civilized' country and women. They demanded for civilized housewives (Jayawardena, 1986). Jayawardena also points out that the “enlightened modern man” was now demanding an equal counterpart, the “new woman” (Jayawardena, 1986:8). Similarly, during the transition from empire to nation-state, the leaders of the Republic emphasized the 'new women' as the symbol of new Turkey as a civilized nation. What kind of femininity and identity did the newly founded Turkish Republic aimed to construct for women?

Sirman argues that while in the debates concerning women before the Republic, women were regarded as wives and mothers in need of education, in the Republican era women were regarded as patriotic citizens who were still wives and mothers, but also they were regarded as educators of the new nation. Therefore, professional women became an important symbol for the Turkish Republic, and teaching was exalted above anything else. Within this discourse, women were associated with democracy and not civilization (Sirman, 1989:9). At this regard, Durakbaşa argues that in the modern late Ottoman period, the 'new woman' was basically defined as the 'social woman'; that is, their contribution to the community and the society was important. However, the Kemalists were of the idea that women should participate in social and professional life, in addition to carrying on with their traditional roles of mother and wife (Durakbaşa, 1998:143). As it is mentioned before, gender equality was presented as a part of national identity. Hence, as Durakbaşa points out, the Kemalist-nationalist approach viewed the equality of men and women as the equality of the male and female members of the new-born Turkish nation, who shared the same ideals and responsibilities during nation-building (Durakbaşa, 1998:141). The young Turkish men and women were presented as the guardians of the reforms, progress, modernization and enlightenment (Durakbaşa, 1998:142). Kandiyoti underlines that the 'new woman' of the Kemalist era became a symbol of the break with the past (Kandiyoti, 1991:41) and for Sirman, the 'new

woman' was to take her place in the public life of the Republic as an "educated social woman" (Sirman, 1989:11).

For Durakbaşı, the cultural model advocated by the Kemalists was different from the earlier approaches. The Kemalists considered the women's public and social responsibilities as superior to their traditional roles and domestic responsibilities (Durakbaşı, 1998:143). She continues that although women's recognition in the public domain did not make a significant impact on the direct male/female relations in the private domain, women's domestic duties assumed a new character with the 'rationalization' of housework and the introduction of a notion called home-economics (1998:144). Motherhood was still a woman's traditional role, albeit accompanied by her new role as a professional woman (1998:144). She argues that the Kemalist woman reflected the pragmatism of the Kemalist ideology and also a combination of images: 'an educated-professional woman' at work, 'a socially active organizing woman' at social clubs and associations, 'a biologically functioning woman' at home, 'a feminine woman' at balls and parties (Durakbaşı, 1998:147). For Kandiyoti, the 'new woman' of the Turkish Republic was an influential figure at a number of different occasions: parading in shorts and carrying the flag in school or military uniform, or in Western evening dress in ballrooms (Kandiyoti, 1995:311). Despite the greater participation of women in public life, they had to present an appropriate body image, namely "a new femininity that was somehow connected to the image of male body". This means that they needed to present a modest and respectable picture that would not be perceived as a threat to the patriarchal morality (Durakbaşı, 1998:147). Kandiyoti argues that women's entry into public life in Turkey was dependent on presenting an 'asexual' or even slightly masculinized image. As members of a strictly segregated society, women could only appear in the public arena by being respectable and avoiding to be perceived as sexual objects (Kandiyoti, 1995:315). Durakbaşı continues that the biggest challenge to women's sex status caused by Kemalism was women's participation in professional life (Durakbaşı, 1998:143). However, it was a modernist ideology and Kemalism was not going to be able to change the traditional norms of morality that limited women to a biologically defined and socially limiting femininity. The notion of female modesty; namely, virginity before marriage, loyalty of the wife, appropriate public

conduct and dress - was handed over to future generations of Kemalist women and became the basic theme of the 'new morality' for the Kemalist elite (1998:148). Similarly, Sirman claims that although gender equality was given to women in the public domain, patriarchal norms still continued to be practiced and replicated in the private domain. The Kemalists were mainly concerned with mobilizing women 'for the good of the country' (Sirman, 2000:11-112). Likewise, Kandiyoti writes that while "the Turkish state has moved to curtail the legitimacy of domestic patriarchy: directly, through family legislation, and indirectly, through the inclusion of women in the definition of full 'citizenship'", it has nevertheless continued to endorse discrimination in employment and education (Kandiyoti, 1995:308). Göle points out that women were going to participate in the public life as teachers or as nurses which were seen as the part of their motherhood roles but they did not perform these professions for the benefit of themselves yet for the benefit of their nation. The proximity and distance of women to the civilization and people and their place would determine the success of the Kemalist reforms. In other words, Kemalism was searching for the synthesis between representation of civilization and nationalistic ideology in the image of the new woman (Göle, 1998:97). Likewise for Zehra Arat, corporatist nationalism had tolerance for no special interests or any conflicts of interests. The whole population is to be united around a 'national goal', and should readily sacrifice everything else for the 'nation' and 'country'. Thus, the education and participation of women were seen as "tools for national development" rather than as "means that would enable them to create an individual consciousness to exist 'for themselves' or develop a collective consciousness to form a gender class" (Arat, 1994:59). According to N. Arat, Mustafa Kemal and other leaders of the newly founded Turkish Republic aimed at creating equal citizens without making gender discrimination. In the process of the construction of the new citizen, who would contribute the construction of the new society, girls and women were seen as crucial components who constituted the half of the population. Therefore, they advocated that with ignoring the half of the population the aim of creating new society could not be successful. In the 1930s and 1940s women were (Arat, 1998:24). However Zehra Arat claims that:

With secularization of marriage, education of women, and the inclusion of women into the electoral process, the Republican regime distanced itself from the Islamic heritage of the

Ottoman Empire and reinforced the development of a secular ideology that would legitimize the new state. In spite of these reforms, the Kemalist state continued to employ a traditional definition of female roles and emphasized reproduction and childcare as the primary functions of women. Treating women as symbols and tools of modernization and Westernization, rather than as the equal and full partners of men, the Kemalist reforms intended to achieve little in changing women's lot (Arat, 1994:72).

Toska emphasizes that the 'ideal woman' which was constructed by the Republic based on the pre-Islamic Turkish woman who was equal to men and shared equal responsibility with man in society and administration of the state. The Anatolian woman who was hard working and productive was seen the successor of pre-Islamic woman (Toska, 1998:78). Kadioğlu underlines that the new woman of the Republic was heroine who had a dual burden of the work and family. She criticizes the evident sexuality of Western woman. She was a honorable, asexual friend-in-arms and she was self-sacrificing and modest and compassionate wife and mother (Kadioğlu, 1998:96). Köksal examines the views of İsmail Hakkı Baltacıoğlu who was an educator and philosopher of the Republican Period and who established and managed the journal of *Yeni Adam*. She underlines that Baltacıoğlu considered women's participation in national life not an issue of training, but an issue of socio-economic development. Baltacıoğlu defined the new woman as a productive, realistic and positivist person who could give secular training to her children and be a good companion to her husband. Baltacıoğlu advocated that the new woman was not a housewife but a producer. The new woman was not the opposite of men; rather she was a complementary companion and a friend of them. The new woman brought with it the idea of new body, which was identified with health, strength, and success (Köksal, 1998:32). Z. Arat stresses that the ideal Turkish woman was expected to be asexual, just like the 'comrade-woman' she was during the national struggle against the Europeans, and additionally she was now expected to be 'sexually neutral' in professional life to protect her honor and chastity (Arat, 1994:62).

### **3.3 The Importance of Education for Constructing Modernized Women During the Early Republican Period**

Education was a crucial tool for constructing a new nation and culture as well

as citizens in line with the ideology of the secular nation state. Therefore, the founders of the Republic gave priority to education during the process of establishment of the nation-state and modernization. It was very important to construct a new citizen who adopted the ideology of the Republic and new national identity. It was also an important apparatus for transmitting the Kemalist reforms, which made for transforming a multi-religious and multi-ethnic Empire into modern Westernized, secular nation-state, to the people. For this reason, it was a main goal to transmit the education to masses for constituting cultural and national unity among the people of the Republic. Family was used as an important institution and metaphor in order to legitimize the nationalists' values and revolutions in the Kemalist modernization project. Using the family as an institution and metaphor provided a base for principle of national unity that was necessary for continuity and reproduction of unity of community. The importance of family as an institution for the state lies on its functions as biological reproduction of population and basic socialization of children who will be good citizens for the state. The school and the family would work together in order to consolidate raising good citizens and children. While for women being a good citizens means to be good mothers, for men that of means to be a breadwinner of the family (Şerifsoy, 2000:155, 157-158). As it was mentioned before, women were mainly seen the primary educators of the future generations who would constitute the citizens of the new Turkish Republic. Jayawardena points out that, similar to Europe, the growth of local bourgeoisies and the rise of nationalism in non-European countries entailed women's liberation and education (Jayawardena, 1986:15). The first modern girls' schools were established in India in 1820, in Sri Lanka in 1824, in China in 1844, in Turkey in 1863, in Japan, in 1870, in Iran in 1874, in Korea in 1886 and in Indonesia in 1904 (Jayawardena, 1986:16). She adds that:

The content and nature of women's education reflected the ambiguities inherent in the new concept of 'woman'. The missionaries had been primarily concerned with producing Christian wives and mothers for the new male converts in order to prevent the latter from lapsing into their former beliefs, which was thought to be more likely if the women remained 'heaven'. This kind of education was unable to satisfy the nationalists for long. Reformist stressed the democratic right to education for all, irrespective of sex, so as to achieve a strong, monogamous (and preferably nuclear) family system which would be the foundation of a stable society (Jayawardena, 1986:16).



In addition to these, she also points out that modernity entails education for women, but only to support the nuclear patriarchal family (1986:16). In this respect, Najmabadi argues that the status of women was linked with the status of a nation. Hence the improvement of the society was dependent on the progress of women. And if the country's backwardness could be overcome by indulging in sciences and a new kind of education, then the status of women could also be altered in a similar way. Women's education was now considered the most fundamental step in the search for civilization, and was given higher priority than men's because "from educated women would arise a whole educated nation" (Najmabadi, 1998:102). According to Jayawardena, education for Asian women had a dual and conflicting function. On the one hand, it brought bourgeois women out of their homes and into various professions, social work, and politics and, on the other hand, as nationalist reformers took over, education also became a conservative influence on women and emphasized their role as wives and mothers" (Jayawardena, 1986:19).

Z. Arat underlines that owing to its transformative nature, education was made "the cornerstone of the Kemalist modernization/Westernization project". Therefore, free education was adopted as a national principle at all levels, and primary school education was made mandatory for both sexes in 1923. In 1924, this principle was incorporated into the first Constitution of the Republic. In addition, measures were taken to improve the quality of education, as a result of which the number of schools, teachers, and students increased (Arat, 1998:15-157).

She also points out that education was given so much importance by the Republican leaders because it was the most effective way of "transforming the Ottoman subjects into 'nationalist' citizens with modern secular minds". Thus, the objectives of the Turkish educational system were to raise "Republican, nationalist, populist, secularist, statist, reformist citizens" (Arat, 1998:158). She adds that the Law of Unification of Instruction, which was enacted in 1924, brought about secularization, centralization, and standardization of school curricula and established state control over all schools (Arat, 1998:158). According to Woodsmall being regarded as a necessity for building a strong nation has been very beneficial for Turkish women's education. Secularization of schools, co-education, and equality

opportunity for both sexes, emphasis on vocational courses for girls, equality of salaries for male and female teachers, a new language, and education of large numbers of people were all crucial steps in the educational process which has increased the intellectual level of Turkish women (Woodsmall, 1975:235).

Z. Arat also underlines that nationalism was reflected in the curricula at all levels. The aims of the Turkish girls in middle schools included 'infringing students with noble ideals and national patriotic and heroic sensibilities' as part of the national, social and moral goals. (1994:159). Unat argues that Atatürk and his followers based the women's reforms on law and education and also points out that the founders of modern Turkey regarded education as the most influential peaceful means to alter individuals from being passive subjects to being active citizens (Unat, 1991:177-183).

Atatürk takes motherhood to be the most important virtue of women. However, he also defends education for women, not as a means to liberate them, but as a means of improving the quality of motherly care so that the next generation of men will be better citizens (Arat, 1994:60). In this respect Atatürk says:

The most important duty of woman is motherhood. The importance of this duty is better understood, if one considers that the earliest education takes place on one's mother's lap. Our nation had decided to be a strong nation. Circumstances today require the advancement of our women in all respects. Therefore, our women, too, will be enlightened and learned and, like men, will go through all educational stages. Then, women and men, walking side by side, will be each other's help and support in social life (Cited in, Arat, 1994:60).

Similar to other modernist nationalist leaders, Atatürk emphasized education due to its transformative capacity, he considered education as the most effective apparatus in order to transform the traditional mentality into a modern, secular one (Arat, 1994:60). On the other hand, she claims that education for women was promoted mainly so that women would have a better influence over their male children. Hence, a "feminized curriculum" was developed to transform 'backward females' into efficient mothers and practical wives (Arat, 1994:72).

We can see this if we look at the curricula of the vocational schools especially those designed as girl's schools, such as Girls' Institutes in which student were trained to be good housewives and mothers.

### 3.3.1 Girls' Institutes

The first girls' school was established in the period of Mithat Pasa in 1865. This school was known as Girls' Reformatory that aimed to give vocational education to orphans as well as providing the needs of the army. After this school, in 1869 Yedikule Industrial Girls' School was founded. It was similar to reformatories and it aimed preparing clothes and bandages for the military. Then in 1878 Üsküdar Girls' Industrial School was opened. Its aim was to help women not being dependent on others by teaching them sewing and give chance to women to get education and earn their living. In 1869, Çapa and Aksaray Girls' Industrial Schools were established. In 1923 the Girls' Industrial schools were transformed to the Girls' Institutes. In 1927 İsmet Paşa Girls' Institute was founded in Ankara. Its goal was to train 'good citizens', 'skillful housewives' and 'good mothers'. In 1928 Girls' Institutes were reorganized according to the regulative rule of three years Junior High Schools with the addition of new courses. Evening Girls' Art Schools (Akşam Kız Sanat) were opened. These also had the aim of training good mothers and good housewives. In 1933 Department of Girls' Technical Education was established under the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education. This was also the year of the foundation of Girls' Institutes with five years of education. The specialization fields were fashion, decorative flower and sewing. A Girls' Teacher Training School was founded in Ankara in the academic year 1934-1935. In 1937 the total number girls' vocational schools reached 26. In 1938 the Village Women Mobile Education Courses were opened. Their goal was to contribute social and cultural development of women who did not have change to get elementary education. In 1941 Directorate of Girls' Vocational and technical Education was founded. In 1947 the total number of girls' vocational school was 121 and 43 of them were Girls' Institutes. In 1959 there were 372 girls vocational schools and 98 of them were Girls' Institutes, 182 of them were Evening Girls' Art Schools, 58 of them were Girls' Art Schools (day time education) and 4 Apprenticeship Institutes (Başgöz, 1968; Gök, 1999; Sakaoğlu, 1992; Kurnaz, 1996).

Başgöz and Wilson compare the development of vocational education of girls with that of boys and they point out that there was a difference between both sexes in

terms of the rate of development and social class. For them, while the percentage of boys getting vocational education was continuously declining from 1924 to 1935, the percentage of girls was increasing. Both Başgöz and Wilson demonstrate the percentage of girls in the general population in vocational education as 0.028 in 1924, 0.036 in 1930 and 0.037 in 1936 (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968:181). In addition to that, according to Başgöz and Wilson, the social background of the male and female students in these vocational schools was different from each other. While, girls coming from upper middle classes were attending to these institutions, boys coming from lower classes mostly preferred attending to those vocational schools.

The basic reason why their families sent those girls was that those families were mostly conservative and religious. Therefore they did not prefer sending their girls to schools and colleges giving co-education. Moreover those families were quite satisfied with a curricula concerning homemaking (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968:181). Likewise, Toktaş points out that Girls' Institutes were the result of the policy of compromise between the state and the society. By means of Girls' Institutes the state tried to find a middle way in order to ensure education of the girls belonged to local middle classes not preferring co-educational programs. Since Girls' Institutes were single sex educational institutions and these institutions gave priority to feminine roles, they did not deconstruct values of those families who were persuaded that girl children could be educated together with their feminine roles (Toktaş, 1998:400).

Başgöz and Wilson also states that all vocational schools both for girls and boys, were established in the cities hence just children who were brought up in urban areas were sent them in the early Republican era. In addition to that, the programs of those schools did not offer to meet the needs of the rural areas. Therefore vocational schools for non-urban areas were not established until the establishment of the Village Institutes. Likewise "the first extension (traveling) course to give village women home and vocational education was not created until 1939" (Başgöz and Wilson, 1968:181-182).

What were the main functions of Girls' Institutes? For Fatma Gök, the Girls' Institutes played a crucial role in the process of constituting identity of new woman and legitimizing and supporting the new society of Turkish state. The girls'

institutes had very important social and ideological functions in the institutionalization of a new Westernized state and in the transformation from a theocratic state to a secular one with the aim of modernization. The ultimate goal of the girls' institutes is to bring up cultured, well-educated and intellectual housewives who will form an ideal family atmosphere by keeping her house clean, tidy and healthy all the time and will contribute to the social development of her country by means of her children brought up in that happy house (Gok, 1999:242)

Similarly, according to Yeşim Arat, on the one hand, the Republican leaders wanted to increase the active participation of a group of elite women in public life, on the other hand they were aware of the fact that there was a large number of 'other' women who could not help the process of modernization as being elite women professionals but as being housewives by bringing Western 'order', 'rationality' and 'discipline' to their private area. Therefore, a different message was given to those women. Because of this reason, Girls' Institutes and Evening Girls' Art Schools were founded to serve this purpose (Arat, 1997:3).

Likewise, Toktaş points out that since the Girls' Institutes were the institutions where the traditional knowledge of womanhood was reproduced according to modernized requirements, those institutes were essential. With the Girls' Institutes the state guaranteed both women's education and spread of the modern and Western lifestyle to the society (Toktaş, 1998:400). At this regard she points out that with the aim of becoming a 'good housewife and mother', in the institutes, the girl students were taught the requirements of becoming middle class, urban, Westernized housewives as exemplified by the notion, that according to certain types of rules of proper etiquette they were taught how to bake pies not necessarily how to cook beans, how to use dinner sets, how to serve food at table in a culture where the families at the time used wooden spoons and ate on the floor and how to welcome guests. Girl students were to dress themselves and introduce the image of modern looking women to people especially to other women (Toktaş, 1998:400).

In addition to this Toktaş adds that as being good mothers, the knowledge of raising next generations was given to these students. They were taught how to bring up their children according to the values of the Republican ideology. However the

knowledge of raising children was not in line with traditional knowledge of motherhood, which was not scientific and medical. The students learnt how to feed babies systematically such as every three hours and how to use sterile bottles if they fed their babies not by mother's milk and how to cure their children by the help of medical doctors and nurses not by old wives' techniques when they were sick (Toktaş, 1998:401).

In this chapter, I tried to find out the general status of women in nationalist discourses. Then I discussed the status of the Turkish women in the modernization/Westernization discourse, which had started before the Republic, and how they were involved in the modernization/Westernization and nation-building processes during the Republican period. I stressed on the formation of the identity of the new woman, who was to be the carrier of the Republican ideals and the new Turkish culture. In this respect, I tried to understand how Kurdish women experienced these processes, but such an issue was invisible in the literature analyzing these processes on women's point of view. Consequently, in this literature, I could not find the answers of my questions regarding the issue. In the following chapter, I am going to explore how Kurdish people experienced the Republican modernization/Westernization and nation-building processes.

## CHAPTER 4

### **THE RELATION OF KURDS WITH MODERNIZATION- WESTERNIZATION AND NATION-BUILDING PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC**

In this chapter I will examine the relation of the Kurdish people with the modernization/Westernization and nation-building process of the Republic. How did the Republicans try to integrate the Kurds into these processes?

The Kurds, as a heterogeneous community composed of different sects and languages and religion such as Yezidis, Alvites and Zazas and sunnies, lived as tribal units until 10<sup>th</sup> century. Those socio-political entities were based on primordial relations. These tribal entities then also started to get organized under the confederation of these tribes, which were called as emirates. Before the annexation of the Ottoman Empire into the Kurdish territories, there had been many decentralized tribes and a few strong emirates that had been living independently in that region. However, since any Kurdish emirates or tribes could not gain effective militaristic and political power over these tribal units, they could not establish a Kurdish state (Özoglu, 1996; Bruinessen, 1995). The Kurds were divided between the two great empires of the Middle East, Persian and Ottoman, from 16<sup>th</sup> century to 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first relation of the Ottoman and the Kurds sprang up because of the struggle between the Persian and the Ottoman over the Kurdish region in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In this struggle the Sunni Kurdish tribes and emirates, which constituted the majority of the Kurdish people, supported the Ottoman Empire against the Shia Persian Empire. Therefore, the Kurdish territories were included to the Ottoman Empire. Due to the geographical conditions, it is being mountainous area, the

Kurdish lands appeared as a buffer zone between the two big empires. As a result of these difficulties, both the Persian and the Ottoman empires could not dominate over these territories directly. As a solution they gave the administration of the region to the local Kurdish governors in return for the submission, moderate taxes and the military support from the local Kurdish administrators. On the other hand, only the administrators sent from the center governed the places that had the geopolitics importance. With respect to the items mentioned above the majority of the Kurdish provinces were almost managed independently by the leading Kurdish families who were given the Ottoman titles, instead of those governors from the center. Evidently, the administration of the Kurdish region stood apart from the other administrative provinces of the Ottoman Empire (Bruinessen, 1995:125-177-178). In that connection, Yeğen puts forward the idea that “this resulted in the decentralization, (in politics, economy and administration) which became a constitutive aspect of the social space where in Kurds lived” (Yeğen, 1999:218). As mentioned in the first chapter, the Ottoman Empire was heterogeneous state composed of various peoples who differed in language, race and religion. In order to govern vast territories of the empire, the administrative center gave certain degree of autonomy to various ethnic, regional and religious elements of the peripheries. With respect to this Yeğen points out that “the constitutive logic of the Ottoman Empire was the articulation of the sub-systems within a broader system, without eliminating the autonomous existence of the former” (Yeğen, 1999:218). Thereby it can be told that the administrative structure of the Ottoman Empire was based on both centralized and de-centralized administrative arrangements. However, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Ottoman Empire went under a process of dispersal whereas the West asserted its military and political superiority (Lewis, 1965). This process of dispersal and loss of power also continued in the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the loss of power over Western countries, the economical and fiscal crisis, the separatist movements of non-Muslims and international pressure. All of these developments forced the Empire to transform its classical administrative structure. The Ottoman modernizer elites started to make reforms in the administrative structure of the empire. The reformist elites of the empire took the structure of the Western nation-states as the model for their modernization/Westernization attempts. Since the precondition of the modern nation-states was the centralization process, they started to cause the periphery to perceive



state's authority in their daily lives and integrate those areas with the central administration (Mardin, 1992). In this respect, for Yeğen the most distinctive characteristics of the first systematic reformative attempts of the Ottoman were the re-centralization of the administrative and political structure of the empire. By means of centralization in the economy, politics, and administration, the Ottoman state's main target was to put an end to the existence of the autonomy of the periphery (Yeğen, 1999:65). As the founders of the Turkish reformation system and the Tanzimat reformers (1839-1876) had already laid the foundation for centralization by making the reforms in administrative and fiscal structure, the Ottoman state increasingly stepped in the life of the periphery during the third quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century (Mardin, 1992:48-49). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when separatist claims of the ethnic communities threatened the political and geographical integration of the Empire, the modernization-Westernization process initiated at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century required intensive centralization. Yet this centralization policy of the empire deepened and accelerated ongoing gap and conflict between the center and the periphery. The periphery was seen as the places of disorder and uprisings by the center. Consequently the center was suspicious of the periphery (Mardin, 1992:38-39). On the other hand, the ethnic elements in the periphery were eager to maintain the former classical Ottoman administrative system, which resulted in the resistance for their non-centralize status. In this respect, Ottomanism came up as an integrative strategy. However the strategy of Ottomanism could not co-exist with the modernization and the centralization politics of the Empire necessitating the exclusion of the cultural and ethnic plurality (Yeğen, 1999:70). In what ways did this centralization policy affect the Kurdish territories? The administrative reform attempts of the Ottoman Empire during 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries caused the Kurdish Emirates to lose power and led to the penetration of the centralized bureaucracy into the Kurdish territories. In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the military force demolished the last Kurdish emirates. Finally the government established contact directly with the Kurdish community. The destruction of the Kurdish emirates primarily resulted in chaos and anarchy. The new governors sent by the center could not succeed in managing the tribes when compared with the former Kurdish leaders (Bruinessen, 1995:179-180). This situation prepared a ground to the rise of the Syheiks' political influence over the Kurdish tribes. These Shaykhs fulfilled the tasks of the former

emirates and played the role of mediator between the religion of Islam and Kurdish nationalism (Bruinessen, 1995:127; Yeğen, 1999:220).

The earlier modernization and centralization process also continued to be implemented effectively during the era of CUP. Besides, the CUP era brought forward the idea of Turkish nationalism and eventually prepared a ground to a Turkish national identity, which will appear as the most essential target of the Republican Turkey. As mentioned in the first chapter, the Unionist didn't advocate the notion of Turkism explicitly until the time when the non-Muslims completely separated from the Ottoman Empire (Zurcher, 1996; Karpat, 1959; Yeğen, 1999). With the Congress of 1913, the centralization and Turkism became the dominant policy of the CUP and they started to take serious steps regarding 'Turkification' politics. They made the Turkish language compulsory as well as compulsory Settlement Law that aimed to resettlement of tribes mostly Kurdish (Lewis, 1968; Arai, 1994; Yeğen, 1999). The Turkification policy of the CUP was directed towards two main points regarding the non-Turkish Muslims, and non-Turkish and non-Muslims. The former one included the implementation of the compulsory education of Turkish language, Settlement Law (zorunlu iskan), the renamed of the local names and consequently this integration policy ended with assimilation. Settlement Law that was one of the most distinct items of the Turkification policy included the Kurdish people. Although both Abdulhamid II and the CUP shared the same assimilation policy towards Kurds, the later adopted to apply pressure on Kurdish community during this process (Yıldız, 2001:83-84). The Turkification and centralization policy of the Unionist worsened the relation between the Kurdish community and the CUP government. Their privileged situation gained during Abdulhamid II era was consciously destroyed by the steps taken by the CUP's centralization and Turkification policies (Jawaideh, 1999:205). Likewise, this Ottoman policy applied in the same way in the course of the Republican period.

Under misleading image of preserving the Caliphate and Sultanate, the nationalist leaders of the War of Independence succeeded in gaining time to get the support of Kurdish people. They fought side by side against the Allied Powers during the War of Independence. The primary concern of the national leaders was to

emancipate the Anatolia from the foreign partition during the War of Independence. For Kirisci “at the time the National Pact was being adopted in 1920, advocates of the Turkish nationalism still emphasized the importance of Turkish nationalism and the multi-ethnic nature of the country” (Kirisci, 1998:233). However, after the victory of Anatolian people against foreigners, the intensions of the Kemalists took clearer shape, they started to act in the way that would destruct the traditional notion of nation related to the Islam and the Ottoman Empire but create a new secular, territorial nation-state. In order to realize these aims, they abolished Sultanate in 1922, then proclaimed the Republic in 1923 and gave an end to the Caliphate in 1924. The abolishment of the Caliphate and other steps taken such as demolition of some religious institutions named the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations, religious courts, dervish orders, headgear (fez) so on were remarks the destruction of the old order that included Kurdish community as the autonomous community as well (McDowall, 1992; Kirisci and Winrow, 1997).

The years between 1920s and 1930s were highly important in the process of nation-building of the Republic. During these years the Republican elites tried to establish a homogenous Turkish identity and culture in Anatolia (Kadioglu, 1996:186). In this respect Kirisci points out that the priority of the Republican elites was to create a strong sense of national identity by means of some institutions, which were mentioned in the first chapter, and policies. According to the Republican elites, developing a Turkish language and a modern political culture would be enough for molding the diverse ethnic and religious identities into a monolithic Turkish identity. For him, “changes introduced to the education system and the emphasis put on the Turkish language were clear manifestations of the growing importance of Turkish nationalism” (Kirisci, 1998:234-235; Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:96).

What kinds of strategies and policies did the Republican government implement to construct a strong national identity and in which ways did these policies and strategies affect the Kurds? After removal of the Caliphate that had hold strictly both the Kurds and the Turks together for hundred years, the new terms of the Republic began to disturb the Kurdish people. As regard with, Yeğen puts forwards the idea that “the Caliphate was an institution, which guaranteed that the bond

between the Ottoman elements of the Ottoman political center and the Muslim elements of the ‘periphery’ was to be a loose one, so as to tolerate the ethnic plurality of the periphery. This was particularly important for the Kurds who had for centuries enjoyed an autonomous administration” (Yeğen, 1996:221). However, the abolishment of the Caliphate was a mortal blow to Kurds’ aforementioned bond and to their autonomous status. The new government began to undertake the suppression of the Kurdish identity by assimilation policy.

After the Kurdish rebellion, Seyh Sait, the Republican government intensified its repressive policies and strategies towards Kurdish people. It decided to solve the Eastern question by means of radical policies. The Law for the Maintenance of Order passed after Seyh Sait rebellion. Giving absolute power to government until 1929 can be regarded as the beginning of a new phase as the single party period also started after this law. During this time the government suppressed all kinds of reactions and opposition. The Kemalist elites accepted all kinds of differences as a source of conflict and they attempted to cover various identities with a single uniform named Turkishness. The provision of the unity of origin, language, culture and ideal determined Turkishness (Zurcher, 2001:217; Yıldız, 2002:231). During the single party period, a strong centralized state structure was consolidated. The emphasis on the Turkishness was placed in a central position in the party program of the RPP in 1930s. While the condition for being member of the RPP was to adopt Turkish culture according to the party program of 1927, the 1931 programme required the Turkish language, the Turkish culture and all the principles of the Party to be compulsory in order to be the member of the party (Tuncay, 1981:430). According to Yeğen, this situation closed the doors to the people whose mother tongue was not Turkish and who were not still assimilated into Turkish identity unfortunately as a legal bond, the citizenship was not adequate for the membership of the party (Yeğen, 1999:95). They wanted to homogenize the country in terms of culture, language and race; therefore, they started to implement a nationalist program. In this respect, the policy of creating a new national identity meant to assimilate non-Turkish elements such as Kurds. In McDowall’s view, the strong central government established by the Kemalists created “a kind of ‘Turkishness’ that must be embraced by all citizens of the Republic” (McDowall,

1996:189). In relation with this, Kirisci and Winrow claim that “the republican government was determined to encourage nation-building with a heavy emphasis on Turkish ethnicity, history and language. Ethnic nationalism rather than civic integration was clearly the order of the day” (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:103). In order to create this kind of Turkishness, Kemalists extended the Turkification policies that had been initiated during the period of Unionists. Yıldız (2001) states that the policies of Turkification were the reflections of the assimilationist and ethnicist characteristics of the Kemalist nationalism. Both non-Muslims and non-Turkish Muslims in Turkey were included into the target of these Turkification policies that aimed to turn all non-Turkish people into the imagined Turks.

Seyh Sait rebellion made the Turkification a crucial issue for the government. The instruction of the Turkish language became very important for the Republicans to integrate minorities into Turkish society. The efforts made for the instruction of Turkish as a mother tongue constituted one of the essential parts of compulsory Turkification. Being a real Turk not only required the adoption of Turkish culture but also the Turkish language as a mother tongue. The ethnic Turkification programme spread over the public personnel regime, private law and population settlement including daily language, education, industrial and commercial life (Yıldız, 2001:272-273). The emphasis on Turkish ethnicity and language increased gradually since 1924. The Constitution of 1924 declared that “the people of Turkey regardless of their religion and race were, in terms of their citizenship, to be Turkish, however within a short period the Turks, who had been in effect only an ethnic category, came to form the dominant ethnic core of a Turkish nation” (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:97). Although the definition of a nation was made as a socio-political unity of citizens who shared a common culture, language and objective in the 1931 programme of the Republican Party, the actions of the government turned away from the civic understanding of Turkish nationalism in two ways: Firstly, even if the religion was not regarded as defining characteristic of the Turkish nationalism officially, non-Muslims were discriminated. Secondly, the Turkish ethnicity and language were continually stressed and formed the core of Turkification policies (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:98).

What were the reflections and effects of these Turkification policies on Kurdish people? The policies and strategies of the Kemalists toward Kurdish were based on compulsory Turkishness, which meant to assimilate them (Yıldız, 2001:246). According to Yeğen, “the Republican Turkish state was engaged in the exclusion of Kurdish national identity by means of assimilation, compulsory settlements and so on. While the Turkish state was engaged in the practice of excluding Kurdish national identity, the Turkish state discourse maintained that state was actually engaged in repressing political reactionaries, smuggling or tribal resistance” (Yeğen, 1996:217). Similarly, Yıldız says that the reformation of Eastern provinces was the name of Kurdish question in the Kemalist discourse. The reformation of East took shape around progress and civilization which were the main parts of Kemalist ideology. The backward and reactionary characteristics of Eastern province were put an end to through the benefits of Republic, which would destroy the tribal and reactionary structure (Yıldız, 2001:243). The first reflections of exclusion of Kurdish identity were seen removal of all references of Kurdistan from official materials and replacement of names of Kurdish settlement with Turkish ones, only usage of Turkish in the law courts and the prohibition of Kurdish officially (McDowall, 1996:191).

As we seen above the ethnicist and racist discourse of the Kemalist nationalism became dominant during 1930. This approach of the Kemalists was also evident in the policies and strategies towards the Kurdish question. In order to solve the Kurdish question radically, the government began to prepare the reports about the Eastern provinces after Seyh Sait rebellion in 1925. A committee was constituted to write these various official reports as a common one. This committee prepared the Eastern Reformation Plan which would determine the priorities of the state towards the Kurdish question. This plan would cover the settlement of immigrants, the Turkification of the courts, the elimination of bureaucracy from the Kurdish origin, the prohibition of other languages except for Turkish language, the assimilation (integration) into Turkishness by means of education, the prohibition of speaking Kurdish in Western provinces. The two of these items that are assimilation into Turkishness by means of education and prohibition of Kurdish language in Western provinces will be discussed now since they play important role in my case study. The

former would include Eastern provinces whose inhabitants were regarded as Turkish and who would almost get assimilated into Kurdish. In addition to these areas, in other regions such as Siirt, Mardin, Savur where people speak Arabic, the Turkish Hearths and schools especially the girl's schools would be opened. The Latter mentioned above would be about the prohibition of Kurdish among Kurdish people who live dispersedly in the areas that are located in the West of Euphrates. Moreover, giving importance to the girl's schools and encouraging women to speak Turkish language took place among its aims. Besides, all of the policies mentioned in the Eastern Reformation Plan were put into application during 1930s and 1940s (Yıldız, 2001:246-247-248).

As mentioned above, the Turkish nationalism that was almost turned into racism concerning the Kurdish question became effective during 1930s and 1940s. The Settlement Law of 1934 (No.2510) is a good example for this kind of nationalism in terms of its aims. Even if this Law generally indicates the political administrative efforts made for settling nomadic (Kurdish) tribes, its main aim was to reorganize the population of Anatolia by taking ethnic measures into the consideration. With this Law, the non-Turkish elements (mostly Kurdish) would be rearranged in two stages. This action would be realized either by settling non-Turkish people in Turkish provinces or by settling Turkish people in those non-Turkish provinces. The aim was to integrate non-Turkish people into the Turkish culture in those both circumstances (Yeğen, 1999:93). In the light of all these claims the Law divided the country into three zones:

One was inhabited by those who spoke Turkish and were of Turkish culture and ethnicity. This zone could receive immigrants from any part of the country and from abroad. A second zone included people whose Turkishness needed to be enhanced by resettlement policies in terms of culture and language. A third zone was designated as areas closed for security reasons to any from civilian settlement (Cited in Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:99).

The Settlement Law of 1934 indicated the period when the three main basis of the Kemalist nationalism which were 'language, culture and ideal' were replaced by 'language, culture and blood' (Yıldız, 2001:248). Moreover, Kirisci and Winrow

point out that the target of this Law was to help the nation-building process initiated by the Kemalists (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:99). As the one deputy expressed “the Law aimed at creating a country which would speak one single language, think and feel alike” (Cited in Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:99). In addition to this, the compulsory immigration was put into action as a crucial component of the Settlement policy. Seyh Sait rebellion not only caused to the military and administrative measurements but also to the reorganization of the Eastern region. Therefore, the groups or the individuals who were supposed to participate in the rebellion or to be inclined to arouse were forced to migrate to Western region. Turkish immigrants were replaced by those people. However, the Kurds’ compulsory immigration occurred by the Settlement Law of 1934 and by Tunceli Province Law of 1935 (Tunceli Vilayeti Hakkında Kanun) (Yıldız, 2001:253; Tuncay, 1981:173). Yıldız puts forwards the idea that the compulsory settlement was not only applied to non-Turkish Muslims but also the non-Muslim elements especially the Armenians and the Jews (Yıldız, 2001:253).

The other application strategy against the Kurds was the establishment of a private regional administration (Özel Bölgesel Yönetim). For instance, the Law of Tunceli Province can be given as a reflection of such a strategy. With this Law, the structure of tribes in Dersim was determined to be dissolved and civilize and assimilate the region no matter how would it break the Constitution. As a justification of the Law of Tunceli, the government the government declared that the poor and defenseless people of Dersim would be taken under the protection of the government by dissolving the structure and order of tribes (Yıldız, 2001:257-258). In order to revive this aim, a province named Tunceli was established. A person was assigned to this place as both corps commander and governor. This governor stood at the same time as a general inspector of the newly founded Fourth inspector-generalship including Tunceli, Bingöl, and Elazığ. The governor had also the power of changing the borders and centers of those districts if he needed (Akgül, 1992:62). According to Kalman, the Law which was implemented in Dersim was in parallel with the Law of Maintenance of Order executed during Seyh Sait rebellion, but in a more extended way (Kalman, 1995:222). During the discussions occurred in the Assembly, the Minister of Interior, Şükrü Kaya, talked about the history and the



Turkishness of Dersim and added that civil procedures were to be applied in Tunceli and that there was not any abnormal situation in the country (Cited in Akgül, 1992:62).

The Kurdish people opposed these republican policies of modernization and nation-building violently. The great efforts of the republican government for denying and integrating the Kurdish identity and existence resulted in Kurdish resistance and rebellions. A comment can be made concerning “Kurdish nationalism was largely a reaction to the rise of a Turkish nationalism with its growing emphasis on Turkish ethnicity and language” (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:104). The measurements that aimed to destruct Kurdish ethnic and national identity by means of all official methods of ethnic homogenization led to break the tie of the Kurds with newly-founded Turkish nation-state. Because of this reason, the newly founded Republic faced series Kurdish rebellions that broke out between 1925-1938. The major rebellions among them were Seyh Sait rebellion led by the religious leader in 1925, Agri Dag (Mount Ararat) led by Ihsan Nuri Pasa in 1930, and Dersim led by Seyyid Riza in 1937-1938 (Yıldız, 2001:242). For Kirisci and Winrow, all of these rebellions broke out against the attempts of the government for assimilating Kurdish population (Kirisci and Winrow, 1997:104-105). I will focus on the Dersim Rebellion since it is related to my case study, which will be examined in the last chapter.

#### **4.1 The Dersim Rebellion**

Dersim was the name of the region that was renamed as the province of Tunceli in 1935. It is a mountainous area where the Kurdish Alevi tribes have inhabited. These Alevi tribes have been divided into two groups in terms of their language. The first group is Zaza-speaker tribes of Western Dersim (Ovacık and Hozat, with parts of Çemişgezek and Pertek). The second group is both Zaza and Kurmanci-speaker tribes of Eastern Dersim (Pülümür, Nazimiye, Mazgirt) (Bruinessen, 1995:2). The inhabitants of Dersim used to live isolatedly until 1938. The Ottoman Empire could not succeed in establishing its authority in Dersim. They arranged at least thirteen military expeditions in order to suppress the inhabitants of

Dersim since 1876. Dersim did not join Hamidieh and rejected to participate in the Russian-Turkish war. Besides, they did not participate in the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence despite they were represented by the deputies in the Assembly (Kendal, 1993:58). As being Kurdish Alevis they did not support the Sunni Kurdish rebellions such as Seyh Sait and likewise they had not been interested in the removal of the Caliphate that was a very important institution for the Sunni Kurds (Jawaideh, 1999:416). Because of these reasons, Dersim remained as a crucial problem for the Republican government. Two uprisings broke out namely Kutch-Ushagh (Koçuşağı) in 1925-1926 and Pülümür in 1930, before the Dersim Rebellion of 1937-1938 (McDowall, 1996:207). According to Kendal, "Dersim, during the thirties, was the last fortress of a Kurdistan which had been constantly at war since 1925". He adds that since Dersim was included to the Settlement Law of 1934 as a dangerous place, it was inevitable that people would be moved from this place, which brought the central government and people of Dersim face to face (Kendal, 1993:57). For Bruinessen, "Dersim had never been completely brought under control by the central government, and it was major target of the Kemalist government's effort to pacify Eastern provinces and assimilate the non-Turkish population (Bruinessen, 1995:14). Kendal claims that "the confrontation was quite inevitable, since Dersim was part of Zone No.4, the one which was have to be completely evacuated "(Kendal, 1993:57). The Republican government started to initiate a policy of deportation, disarmament, and compulsory settlement of nomadic tribes in order to establish dominance of the central government over Dersim since 1930s (McDowall, 1996:208). As mentioned before, in the Law of 1935, the government decided to take action in order to deal radically with the issue of Dersim. They tried to apply a dual plan composed of administrative reorganization and military repression. The first attempts of the new military governor, General Alpdogan, in that region were to build military roads and police stations in order to prepare a ground for the military action in Dersim in 1936. The inhabitants of Dersim felt under pressure since they heard about the pacification policies of the government which included "massive deportations, crushing taxes, summary executions, conscriptions into labour corps to build military roads " (Kendal'1993:58).

In January 1937, a major rebellion broke out in Dersim against the pacification program of the State that included compulsory settlement and the Law of Emergency administration (Tunceli Kanunu). Elphinston claims that there are three main reasons of the rebellion. Firstly, the policies of the central government faced with the hostility of the patriarchal feudal Kurdish leaders who enjoyed living autonomously. Secondly, these policies led to opposition of religious leaders. Finally, Dersim people felt a threat to lose their ethnic identity. However, according to Elphinston, the rebellion did not break out just because of these three reasons. The main reason that lied under the rebellions was the Kurds' strong desire for nationalism (Cited in, Jwaideh, 1999:417). According to the Turkish government's point of view, people who were responsible for this uprising were the religious and reactionary elements living among Dersim people (Jwaideh, 1999:419). Similarly, the local Journals published between the years 1937-1938 made various comments about the war against backwardness and for aspiration for progress. They claimed that Dersim represented the backwardness and reaction, so this military action was a necessary vehicle to destroy this backward and reactionary structure (Altınay, 2000:258). According to Yalman who was the editor of the *Tan*, Dersim was an 'illness' for the Turkish country and this 'illness' was going to be cured by the military action of the State which had been dealing with this issue at least for a hundred year (Yalman, 1937). Dersim was written as an illness or the last remnant of the feudalism in most of the writings published during that time and they gave the support to the military action of the government (Altınay, 2002:258).

There were not any official recordings about the number of people forced to migrate or killed during the rebellion. However, Izady puts forwards the idea that "the severity of the Turkish military actions created a tense atmosphere, which culminated in the massacres and destruction of the inaccessible mountainous district of Dersim" (Izady, 1992:62). Similarly, Bruinessen claims that the government suppressed the rebellion violently and this suppression turned into a massacre which resulted in extermination of at least ten percent of the population as well as deportations. He claims that those deportees returning to Dersim after a decade helped the assimilation and integration of the Dersim inhabitants into the Turkish public life. Furthermore, "as Alevis with a libertarian streak of mind, many educated

Dersimis no doubt felt closer the secular Kemalist reformers than to the, in their eyes, bigoted Sunni Kurds- in spite of the memory of 1937-1938” (Bruinessen, 1995:14). After the suppression of the rebellion Dersim was declared as the prohibited zone (*memnu mintika*) until 1947 (Jawaideh, 1999). Altinay asserts that Dersim rebellion did not mean just a simple uprising and a suppression of it in a short time; rather it symbolized the struggle between the central authority of the modern nation-state, which tried to tackle Dersim for integrating it into the state by means of military actions and extraordinary administration system, and an autonomous people who resisted assimilationist policies and militarist actions of the nation-state (Altinay, 2000:259).

According to the official Turkish point of view, the Kurds were coming from Turkish origin, since they were mixed with various races; they moved away from Turkishness and began speaking a language mixture of Persian, Arabic and Turkish, which was not able to express any kind of ideas. The instruction of Turkish to them was the initial and important step to raise them to the level of humane. The issue of civilizing people was seen as the main mission by the founders of the Turkish Republic since its establishment. When the majority of Kurdish people resisted against this mission of the state, they faced with the oppression of the state. Every kind of efforts of the Kurdish people made for preserving their culture and language was considered as reactionary. This approach was justified by bringing forward the religious status of the leaders of Kurdish rebellions as a proof of this idea (Bruinessen, 1995:337-338). Likewise, the Turkish state discourse mentioned about Dersim issue as the problem of reactionary and backwardness similar to other Kurdish events. The ethnic identity of Dersimis was excluded by labeling them as purely Turkish or mountain Turks. Together with this, the use of Kurdish language was forbidden and any words about the Kurds or Kurdistan were systematically erased from the dictionaries and history books.

## CHAPTER 5

### METHODOLOGY

My research question is the integration of Kurdish women into the modernization and nation building projects of the Republic of Turkey at the early stages of the republican period. I aimed to investigate and understand this process in the context of Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School founded in 1937 in Elazığ. The school was financially supported by the Turkish Government and had a tailor-made curriculum which combined the curricula from the girls' institutes and the village schools. The school was unique in its aim to integrate Kurdish women in their early ages into the Turkish community. Up until 1945, all students were from Tunceli, and after 1945 students from Bingöl were also enrolled. My decision to study this school has also been affected by the fact that my grandaunt was one of those recruited by force of the gendarmerie in 1938. She became missing later while still in school. Although the school administration declared that she had died, either my family or her friends have never been able to find any clue whatsoever relating to her death. Therefore, my personal questions and curiosity in regards to what happened to my aunt has driven me to research the women who come from similar background and has experienced similar destiny.

Anatolian women's relationship with nation building and modernization processes has so far been examined by studying the higher class, elite, urban, Turkish women's experiences (Arat, 1994; Tekeli, 1995; Berktaş, 1998). Such research is important in providing a gender's perspective to the literature on modernization in Turkey. Nevertheless, I believe that in order to depict this picture clearly, we need to explore women experiences from lower classes, different ethnicities, and rural

Turkey to understand how these women too have taken their place in the state ideology and its applications. However, it is difficult to reflect the gender's perspective by using a quantitative positivist approach, since women can be ignored and also dominated by the researcher:

...the stripping away of context, the reduction of information to summary numbers, and the interchangeability of interviewees seems dehumanizing. If the dominant culture belittled women's roles, then the wording of the questions did too; there was no way for women to talk about their lives, no vocabulary that did not put them on the defensive or make them feel worthless. (Rubin and Rubin; 1995:36).

Feminist methodology criticizes the search of a single truth and values different points of view. The existing practices of knowledge production have been dominated by male points of view. In the name of neutrality the positivist researcher did not examine the cultural assumptions of the subject matter women but simply transmitted them within the questions. Most of the time, they ignored women and placed themselves in an intellectually dominant position over the interviewee. Moreover, sociologists from malestream background have helped to sustain an ideology that supports the constant subordination of women. Women and women's concerns are not considered as a major aspect of the research project. If they are included in the research, this is done so from a perspective of men and is seen as marginal. There is a tendency to present men as the makers of norms, and when women do not conform to the set rules of the norm they are presented as deviant. To date women who have been researched have been treated as objects to be worked on. Those who have been studied to serve have been use for the researchers' purposes rather than to meet the needs and aspirations of the researched. What the Feminist researcher wishes to do is to develop such research strategies as to incorporate women and not to treat them as objects to be used by the researcher (Wise and Stanley, 1990; Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

In this respect, the agent must be the subject of the research and not the object while being included in a research process. Moreover, the researcher should not be neutral and should have a capability to view the research process from a feminist perspective (Harding, 1987). Feminist researchers assert that the interviewers should not be dominant during the interview. They emphasize that an interview, should not be a scientific instrument applied to a passive object rather it should feel like a

normal conversation in which the interviewee affects dynamics of the conversation. Instead of being neutral the interviewer should be if not a friend of the interviewee, at least a partner or collaborator. By means of such collaborations interviewees feel included into the process of the research (Reinharz, 1992:37).

Reinharz claims that feminist methodology is the sum of feminist research methods. She describes the main characteristics of the feminist research methods as followings:

- a) Feminism is a perspective not a research method
- b) Feminists use a multiplicity of research methods
- c) Feminist research involves an ongoing criticism of non feminist scholarship
- d) Feminist research is guided by feminist theory.
- e) Feminist research may be transdisciplinary.
- f) Feminist research aims to create social change
- g) Feminist research strives to represent human diversity.
- h) Feminist research frequently includes the researcher as a person
- i) Feminist research frequently attempts to develop special relations with the people studied (in interactive research).
- j) Feminist research frequently defines a special relation with the reader (Reinharz 1992: 240).

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995) qualitative research provides for understanding the experiences; it is possible to extend the researcher's intellectual and emotional reach across time, class, race, sex, and geographical divisions. Qualitative research is an intentional way for learning about people's feelings, thoughts and experiences. It enables the researcher to present a limited number of questions and requests so that the agent can respond to these questions in depth and encourages the agent to reflect the events, which she has already experienced in the past, in a detailed manner.

Within the context of the feminist methodology, in-depth interviews have been made during this case study in order to analyze the aforementioned research

question from a gender perspective. For the above-mentioned reasons, a qualitative technique that eliminates the hierarchy between the researcher and the researched and, at the same time that provides for the researcher to identify with the agent has been applied. Therefore, it proved necessary to use a feminist perspective to analyze women's experiences of the subject school in that period. The analysis depended predominantly on in-depth interviewing as there exists no official institutional documentation of these experiences, at least within the access granted to us. A book that includes Sidika Avar's (a former school principal) memories and a written document of Nuriye Dünder Hekimoğlu's (the principal before Sidika Avar) speech about the school exist, but the students' words are not recorded. It should be emphasized that the information transmitted by these two persons reflects only the then current state ideology and obscures the personal backgrounds of their Kurdish students. In order to make these experiences visible and clear, I interviewed women who were graduates of this school. I aim to explore and understand the perspectives of participants in my study; but not to generalize from my findings to a larger population.

During the research, I reached these women by using the snowball method as most graduates, unfortunately, were not alive. It proved very difficult to reach those who were alive since none lived in Tunceli and all were scattered across Turkey. Using the snowball method, I had a chance to contact the interviewees. I used semi-structured questions in my interview. As Reinharz states that "to use semi-structured interviews has become the principal means by which feminists have sought to achieve the active involvement of their respondents in the construction of data about their lives" (Reinharz, 1992:18). Through semi-structured interviews I got the opportunity to ask open-ended questions to the interviewees and therefore develop themes during the interviews, which I could not think of beforehand. I also reviewed my questions for each interview and enrich my perspective. Thus, I was able to learn about the field more than I expected. I was not planning to conduct unlimited interviews, nor leave the interviewee to say whatever she wants, but I was planning to wander around my research question and lead to the main areas in which I am interested. As Babbie (1999:269) suggested I tried to "take what she has just said and branch that comment back in the direction appropriate" my purposes.



I conducted interviews face-to-face in Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir and Mersin at the homes of my interviewees. Therefore, I was being able to observe the living spaces of the interviewees. Being in their own environment made them feel more comfortable and easy in talking. Also as a woman from Tunceli and being Alavites, I was seen a kind of "insider" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:105). Having similar kinds of referents and being interviewed with a researcher from the same cultural background was likely to develop conversation easily and make the interviewees feel comfortable. I used tape-record and video camera during the interviews and transcribed them and then analyze them through close readings of the transcripts. I have both chosen to use tape-record and video camera during the interviews as it provides a more complete, concrete and completed record of the conversation and the non-verbal aspects and the features of the physical environment (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:162). Because I wanted to conduct my interviews face-to-face, my interviews did not be anonymous but be confidential. I ensured the confidentiality of my interviewees in order to receive candid answers and also to avoid harming them after the interview results are analyzed and publicized. I used pseudonyms for the interviewees in order to satisfy this aim.

Finally, all interviews were qualitatively analyzed and answers classified. I interviewed seventeen women, ages ranging between 60 and 77. Thirteen of them graduated from Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School between 1937 and 1959. Three others were from Elazığ Girls' Institute, which embodied Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School and one was a teacher at both of the schools. Nine of the interviewees represented the early Turkish Republic period, 1938-1947. In this period, it is possible to see that the state was investing highly in nationalization policies in order to provide the homogenization all over the country as soon as possible. Other eight women represented the late term, which was between 1947 and 1950. During this term, it is possible to see the fruits of the state's modernization and nationalization policies of the prior period along with increasing diffusion of the state in the subject region. All of the students of the boarding school were from rural areas in Tunceli and Bingöl: Twelve were from Tunceli, one was from Bingöl, and one from Karakocan (located between Tunceli and Elazığ) although the latter stated that her family was originally from Tunceli. In order to provide a ground for comparison

I also interviewed three women who attended Elazığ Girls'Institute. Two of the women from the institute were from Afyon but their families were residing in Elazığ because of their father's duties. The other was from Elazığ. Finally, the teacher was from Ankara. Almost all of the students were from lower class families except for two whose fathers owned land. Nine came from peasant families and fathers of the other two were the chiefs of their respective villages. The teacher on the other hand was from an upper middle class Republican family. All the students of the boarding school were Alevi-Kurds. One student from the institute was an Alevi-Turk, whereas the other two as well as the teacher were Sunni-Turks.

After graduation, three of the students from boarding school attended the Akcadag Village Institute and became village teachers. Two of the students attended the school to become mid-wives. Others did not continue their educations and became housewives. All of them, except one that married a tradesman, married government officials including a judge, a lawyer, a civil servant working for the municipality, a member of the health staff, and seven teachers. These women now live in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and Mersin.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ELAZIĞ GIRLS' BOARDING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

In this part, I will examine the history of the establishment of the Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School. I will first try to present how state documents explain the reasons why this school had been established and then will provide former students' expressions about the foundation of the school and enrollment of the students at the school. In this way, I will try to understand the process of foundation of the school and the enrollment of the student.

The date of foundation of the school is not clear. The only official document that I could find about the establishment of the school is the "Notification of the Elazığ Girls' Boarding School" dated on March 3, 1939. This document, which can be seen in the appendix, describes the regulations and the curriculum of the school. It is stated in the document that the school was founded under the Elazığ Girls' Institute established in the 1937-1938 school term. In this respect, the year 1939 in which this document is approved can be considered as the official establishment year of the school. Nevertheless, another document that which was published in 1938 in *The Journal of Altan*, the official journal of the Elazığ People's Houses, gives us another date. This document is the transcript of the speech given in 1938 by Nuriye Dünder Hekimoğlu who was the director of the Elazığ Girls' Institute. In her speech she mentions the existence of the Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School. Contrary to the official notification of the foundation of the school, her expressions let us consider the establishment year as before 1938. At this point we may turn to the information gathered from the interviewees three of whom expressed that

the school had been founded in the year 1937. Three of the interviewees who were enrolled to the school in 1938 also mentioned other girls who had been enrolled previously. As a consequence, we understand from the official document that documents the regulations and the curriculum of the school that the school was founded under the Elazığ Girls' Institute that started to operate in the 1937-1938 school term. However, this document does not inform us definitely if the Boarding School also existed in the school term that the Girls' Institute started to operate. On the other hand, according to the speech of Nuriye Hekimoğlu in 1938, and the explanations of the students gave us an idea that the school was active in the 1937-38 school term but had few students enrolled. Besides, we understand from Satı Erişen's statements in her article that the school was active in the 1937-38 school term<sup>4</sup>. In the light of these data, we can reach the conclusion that the Boarding School was active in the 1937-1938 school terms.

What was the aim of the school according to the official document and state officials?

The only official document that I could find describes the aim of the school in its 1<sup>st</sup> article:

The Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School is founded under the Elazığ Girls' Institute. The aim of this school is to bring up skillful village girls with strong national feelings. The school is free of charge and has boarding facilities.

In the journal mentioned above, Nuriye Dünder Hekimoğlu also expresses the aims of the School as follows:

The Republic, the ideal of which is to make the individual at the most remote corner of the country, overall the Turkish nation, reach happiness and prosperity, to raise it to the level of the European civilization, could not neglect the East, and it did not. It brought the railway, one of the most prominent means serving the diffusion of the civilization, to the East. ... Our seniors, who knew that national and social training starts in the family, and that the mother has the foremost role in this area, did not neglect the woman in the East. Our General, who believes that the careful education of the prospective mothers in this area would be very useful, had given a proposal to the Ministry of Culture for the urgent foundation of an organization under our institute for the education of girls only from Turnceli. The Ministry of Culture immediately accepted this very appropriate proposal of our esteemed General, and it did found a boarding

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<sup>4</sup> Satı Erişen says, "In the first years of the establishment of this school (1937-1938), students from villages were tried to be enrolled by force of gendarme. However, this wouldn't be productive"(1981:69). Satı Erişen, Egitim, Bilim ve Sanat Dergisi, 1981, No. 15

department in our school to raise girls from Tunceli. To the prospective mothers of the East, who, let aside reading and writing, did not even know to speak in the national language when they came to school, speaking in the national language will be taught, and they will be told that they are Turks in their feelings and in their lifestyles. After we raise them as conscious citizens and well-informed mothers committed to the revolution, the national ideal, the country, we are going to send them back to their villages. ... When they came, these brutal-mannered children's eyes reflected suspicion, treachery, and insecurity. ... Having become aware of their Turkishness in two years, having perceived that the Republic patronized them unlike the sultanic rule that neglected them, having learned their national language, nothing will be able to impede these girls from instilling these knowledge and affections to their children when they become mothers. ... They will indoctrinate their children to protect and maintain but not to destroy and ruin the works of civilization brought by the Republic to their region. Only in this manner, the civilization brought by the Republic will not remain as a veneer that disappears with the slightest friction, but will leave profound traces at the deepest corners of the public spirit that can be rubbed out by no power (Hekimoğlu, 1938: 32-33).

The interviewees, in similar lines, also express the official aim explained by Hekimoğlu and the document. However, one of the former students, Seher evaluates this aim from a more ideological standpoint.

Seher (76, 1938, 11)<sup>5</sup> explains the aim of the school as,

I don't know why they recruited these girls, maybe in order to assimilate them, in order to teach them Turkish, I guess. We did not know Turkish when we went there.

In the same way, Eser (69, 1946, 19) who was teacher in the school between 1946 and 1951 expresses the aim of the school by saying that “the most significant peculiarity of this boarding school is that it was founded in order to make the Kurdish children at the neighbourhood, most of who could not speak Turkish, Turks.

Nazlı explains the aim of the school (71, 1944, 8) as follows:

...They were educating us in order to make use of us in villages, in order to make us instruct children. Besides, they hoped that parents would develop a desire to send their daughters to the boarding school when they saw us returning back as teachers. Another point is the motherhood; they considered girls important for they would be mothers.

Likewise, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) tells that when the *Kaymakamlık* (administrative district within a province) called her father, the *kaymakam* (*the governor of an administrative district*) explained the aims of the school. She says,

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<sup>5</sup> All names are pseudo-names. The information collected from the interviewees stressed the significance of factors like present age, the year which they began to school and the age which they began to school. For this reason, I used these abbreviations to represent these factors in sequence.

The *kaymakam* said, ‘this is great, wonderful for you. You should certainly send these girls. They will be prominent personalities; they will return back and be teachers of their villages.’ Who said these words was the *kaymakam* of our town, Hozat, and I don’t know his name, of course...

The School was established after the formal application made by the corps commander Abdullah Alpdoğan who was the general inspector of the Fourth Inspector-generalship, which covered Tunceli, Bingöl and Elazığ provinces. Therefore, he supported the school and was interested in it very closely. In her memoirs, Sıdıka Avar, the director of the school between 1939-1959, mentions his special interest in the school. She writes that General Alpdoğan visited the school several times within a month and observed the developments in the school. When he came to the classes, the students rose respectfully to receive his salute. She also emphasizes his extraordinary authority in that region. She says, “That General had the competences of the Grand National Assembly. In that territory he had the power to hang people and to forgive those to be hung.” (Avar, 1999:53). Similarly Hekimoğlu mentions the role of General Alpdoğan in the establishment of the school:

As long as the General Alpdoğan thinks that it will be very advantageous to bring up the mothers of the future in this region under very special care, he offered establishment of an organization, which will serve to raise just the girls of Tunceli, as a part of the Girls’ Institute to the Ministry of Culture formally. His demand was immediately accepted by the Ministry and officials there decided to establish a boarding department in our school in order to bring up the girls of Tunceli (Ibid: 33).

The region where will the student be chosen from is also demonstrated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> article of the document mentioned above. According to this article,

Students from the district of the Fourth Inspector-Generalship covering Tunceli, Bingöl and Elazığ can register at the Elazığ Girls’ B. S.

However, the priority was given to the students coming from Tunceli. Hekimoğlu expressed this priority in her speech:

There is an organization founded under the Elazığ Girls’ Institute, which just serves to bring up the girls of Tunceli. This new organization exists only under the Elazığ Girls Institute, not under other institutes (Avar, 1999:32).

Almost all boarders who are mostly coming from Tunceli also express this priority. For example, Hediye (74, 1941, 13) tells, “The school was for the girls of Tunceli. And its name was ‘The Girls of Tunceli’.

Likewise, Saniye (73, 1946, 16) also emphasizes that the priority was given to Tunceli and that especially the state showed great willingness in this issue. She tells,

They did not want to enroll us, those from Bingöl. They just wanted those from Tunceli. Whenever the governor of the province came, Ms. Director used to say to us, 'When he asks you, say that there is no school at your neighborhood.' Really there was not. 'They want those from Tunceli. You say what I tell you so that they won't trouble me.' She used to tell us these at the back of the school. Not Sıdika Avar, the state wanted Tunceli. She used to tell us to say that we also did not have a school in our village, and that's why she enrolled us.

Like Saniye, Fatma, from Karakoçan (60, 1951, 8), also emphasized that those girls from Tunceli were given the priority. However, unlike Saniye, she adds that Sıdika Avar also gave priority to those from Tunceli. She sees the Dersim Rebellion and the remoteness of Tunceli from the city center (Elazığ) as the fundamental reasons of such tendency. She says,

Well, Ms. Sıdika used to visit the villages of Tunceli frequently. There, people were in deprivation, besides, they had seen the '38 coup. In other words, Sıdika Avar did not recruit students even from villages of Elazığ. They used to give the priority to Tunceli because of the '38 incident. To find students, Ms. Sıdika always went there. She did not come to our village. She also used to go Bingöl, but she had started to do that only in the later period.. So to say, her priority was Tunceli.

Actually, the school had been founded on a certain purpose and Sıdika Avar's special interest effectively serves this purpose. That is to say, recruitment of girls priorly from Tunceli is not on Sıdika Avar's own initiative. She was just striving to perform the existing practices. And according to her, it was a very appropriate decision to grant priority to Tunceli, because the significant point was to enroll those children in mountain villages remote from the center. Because of this reason, afterwards, when it was decided to enroll children from Bingöl, primarily those children in remote mountain villages were targeted. In other words, whereas it was easier for the modern Republic to convey by means of its institutions its ideals to the center and those neighborhoods close to the center and to create an 'imagined community' similar to itself, it was more difficult to reach those people who were remote to the center in every sense and to make these isolated people pursue the Republican ideals. For that reason, Sıdika Avar struggled to make these schools prevalent, for they were the means of the Republic to raise citizens committed to itself and to equip them with a nationalist, secular conscious, functioning in these remote isolated regions. About this struggle, Bahu Gork, daughter of Sıdika Avar, claims that when her mother first reached the school, the school was not serving its

own founding ideal. She says,

... A primary school that gave three-year education... This school attracted Avar's interest most. This was because; the school was in a bad situation and it seemed to have failed in achieving the purpose underlying its establishment. The purpose was to enroll children from the most remote and the least developed villages, and to teach these children, who did not know any Turkish, their mother tongue, simple mathematics and natural sciences. Besides, the aim was to provide them with the knowledge of hygiene, tailoring, needlework, and nutrition by making use of the institute program. In this way, they would be educated so as to adapt to the civilized life-style (Gork, 1996: 3).

Eser (76, 1946, 19), who was a teacher at the school, also emphasizes Sıdıka Avar's dedication to this purpose, and especially her voyages, done by risking her life and experiencing many difficulties, to collect girls from Tunceli. She says:

All students were from Tunceli. Our principal, Sıdıka Avar, taking one of the personnel of the school with her, used to go to the villages of Ovacık, Pülümür, Bingöl, Hozat and Pertek –she feared nothing-, and she used to bring the girls of the families that she could persuade to send their children to the school.

However, Eser states that girls from Bingöl were also enrolled to the school. Although it seems a little bit contradictory, she means that the quota of Tunceli was high. This is an expression of the priority given to Tunceli. Besides, as enrollment of girls from Bingöl had only recently started, nearly all of the students were from Tunceli when Eser started to work at the school. That might be the reason for her contradictory expressions. The quota devoted to the students from Bingöl was 25. That is why she uses the expression, 'all students were from Tunceli'.

Although there was not much change in the priority given to the girls from Tunceli, enrollment of girls from Bingöl would be realized only in later years, as stated in the Article 3 of the Regulations. Regarding this issue, Sıdıka Avar writes that the President İsmet İnönü had decided upon the enrollment of girls from Bingöl at the end of his visit to the eastern regions. The number of the students was increased to 100. That is to say, although girls only from Tunceli were enrolled until the year 1945, beginning the August of this year, enrollment of girls from Bingöl also started. . However, this number was limited and the number of the students from Tunceli would continue to outweigh it. On this issue, Sıdıka Avar notes,

The esteemed President gave an order after his visit to the East: accept 25 children from Bingöl to the boarding department of the Institute! The quota was raised to 100 immediately. After his return from Bingöl in August 1945, Muzaffer, the Fourth General Inspector, declared his command to go to Bingöl in order to collect students (Avar, 1999:136).



The main reason for the recruitment of girls especially from Tunceli might be the Dersim Rebellion of 1937-1938, which was mentioned in Chapter 4. The school was established during this rebellion. It was the last Kurdish Alavite rebellion. As I explained in Chapter 4, Dersim was a region that had been nearly isolated from the center since the Ottoman Empire. With the foundation of the Republic, this distance continued, and it posed a significant obstacle to the nation-building project and the homogenization purpose of the Republic. The facts that the military intervention on its own would be insufficient and that education could be one of the most effective tools to integrate the region were reemphasized time and again. The point was the adoption of the Republican ideals, the Turkish culture and Turkishness by the inhabitants of the region. The Kemalist Regime strived to realize this purpose with the aid of all its institutions, which were discussed in Chapter 1. Integration of the eastern towns through education was a part of the Eastern Reform Plan. Foundation of a girls' school at the region, and encouragement of women to speak in Turkish were also crucial parts of the plan. In this sense, the idea of foundation of such school was not new. However, this had not been put into practice anywhere. Actually, this boarding school was the first and the only example of this purpose. On the basis of the explanations I made above, it was no coincidence that the school was established by targeting the Dersim region. The previous Sunnite Kurdish rebellions had been suppressed and the Sunnite Kurds' subordination to the state authority was ensured to a great extent. Dersim was the last region resisting in this sense, and thus the establishment of the school in this region makes sense in this historical context. It should be of no surprise that the school had been established upon the suggestion of the General Alpdoğan, who had commanded the Dersim operation and suppressed the rebellion, and that, as an individual knowing the region very well, he had strong predictions in favor of the contributions of the school in the integration of the regional population. Moreover, his competences rendered him, on his own, the state in the region. On the other hand, the Eastern Reform Plan was already a plan that had been based on the reports of the soldiers and the politicians that had scrutinized the region (Yıldız, 2001). All earlier students of the boarding school particularly emphasized the school's relation with the Dersim Rebellion. Nuran, who had been brought to school in 1938 from Hozat, the center of the Dersim Rebellion, was the only witness of the suppression of the Dersim Rebellion. She tells that many among

her close relatives were killed during the suppression of the rebellion. She says, “we are people who escaped the bayonet in 1938”.

On similar lines, Sakine (77, 1938, 12) says,

The regions from which students were collected were mostly those that had rebelled first: Hozat, Pertek, Mazgirt, Nazmiye, Pülümür, Çemişgezek. Always from Tunceli... Much later they started to do that in Bingöl.

Likewise, Seher mentions the relation between the establishment of the school and the rebellion. She notes,

A three-year girls’ school that had been particularly established for the people of Tunceli... Later, when Sıdıka Avar was there, they collected homeless, orphan girls from the rural area and caves of Tunceli with lorries. They were like the African children shown on the TV; they were just skin and bones, with swollen abdomens. They had fed themselves with grass; they were hungry. First, they treated those children. Then they accepted those at the appropriate age. It was the time of Ms. Sıdıka. They made all those girls at unfitting age maidservants. All of them had to be maidservants, what else could they do?

Those girls she mentions were the children of the rebellious persons who died during the rebellion. Regarding this issue, Sıdıka Avar states:

We got a telephone from the Inspector-generalship at the beginning of August. They told that eight children who escaped to the mountains of the forbidden area were caught. They were children of the rebellious persons who were executed by shooting. Since six of those children were small, they were sent to the Society for the Protection of Children. However the elders were sent to our school (Avar, 1999:88).

As I mentioned above as well, most of the students enrolled to the school were from Tunceli, however, from 1945 on, they started to accept a limited number of girls from Bingöl. On the other hand, form of the enrollment of the girls also changed in time. For example, most of those earlier students had been brought by force of the gendarme. Two of my interviewees had been brought to the school in 1938 without any consent from their families. One of these students, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) states that her father was the *muhtar* at the time and he was called by the *kaymakam*, who had explained that such a school was opened and had wanted him to collect girls at appropriate age. She also told that neither her family, nor the families of other collected girls wanted to send their daughters to the school. Regarding the issue, Nuran (76, 1938,) says:

Then, my father was the *muhtar*. He went to Hozat. *Kaymakam* had called him. My father respected the *kaymakam*. At the time, of course, in 1938, everybody respected the civil servants. There was some fear as well. *Kaymakam* said to my father, ‘*muhtar*, we received a

command; Atatürk started a mobilization for literacy all over the country. So, we are going to send the Kurdish girls, especially those from Dersim, to boarding schools. Bring all those girls at the ages between 9-14 at your neighborhood. They want us at school in September.' A command is a command. We were afraid. A *kaymakam* had commanded! They collected the girls of our village. I was 11 when I went. Under the supervision of the gendarme, they sent us at the back of a truck to Elazığ. If we had resisted, they would take us by force. Nobody gave his girl voluntarily. They did not want, because they were afraid. Of course, parents were afraid. There had happened the 1938 incident, and they had witnessed it...

Another student that had been brought to school under circumstances similar to Nuran's was Sanem (74, 1939, 10), who had been brought to school in 1939 without getting her family's consent. She tells her memories of the school as follows:

We were children at the time. I mean just after the 1938 incident. They came and asked for the girls in order to send them to Elazığ Girls' Institute. People made their own girls escape, they married them off, they took them hither and thither, and somehow, they made their girls disappear. *Muhtar* took us and said that he would take us to school. Then Sıdıka did not come. We were two girls from our village. We were 10. *Muhtar*, that nasty guy, sent us just because of his fear!

On the other hand, Saray, whose father was a *muhtar* -like Nuran's father- when she started the school, tells that the headmaster of the district had called his father and told him to do whatever necessary to collect girls for the boarding school in Elazığ. However, she says that, unlike Nuran and Sanem's families, her family –especially, her father- did not resist but instead supported the situation. That was because they were very poor and, moreover, that year, the earthquake had demolished their dwelling. So her father had found the suggestion attractive.

Correspondingly, Sıdıka Avar also mentions about the enrolment of the girls by gendarmeries in her memoirs at the beginning of the academic year of 1940-1941. She remarks,

Twelve new students were brought from the villages to the Boarding School by gendarmeries. Their condition was miserable and there were lice in their hair (Avar, 1999:64-65).

Sıdıka Avar thought that collection of girls by force the gendarme had negative effects on both girls and their families. She believed that such a practice would prove unproductive; on the contrary, it would scare children and their families. Avar tells that she applied to the General Alpdoğan and tried to persuade him not to bring girls by the gendarme force. On this issue, she says:

I said, 'My General, collection of our girls by the gendarme scares both the children and their families. If you let me, I will go to the villages to collect children. Wouldn't be families be more comfortable if they had the opportunity to meet the person to whom they hand their children over, the one who will educate their children?' He said, yes. I thought the speech was over, I saluted him and I quitted after saying 'Thank you, my General!' (Avar, 1999:71).

Avar does not mention the exact date of this permission. However, as she states that even in the 1940-1941 school term girls were collected from villages by the force of the gendarme, she must have had the permission afterwards.

Bahu Gork, daughter of Sıdıka Avar, states the reasons of the collection of girls by the force of the gendarme, and also its effects on the villagers as follows<sup>6</sup>:

Villagers, who lived under wretched soil roofs and even in caves in remote and poor mountain villages, could not send their children to school because of the lack of roads, bridges, and vehicles as well as because of the hard natural conditions... Only the gendarme could reach those villages. But they were afraid to hand over their children to the gendarme. As they did not know Turkish, they could not understand why the state wanted their children... At last, as she believed that it was impossible to achieve the task with the gendarme, Avar decided to undertake the job herself (Gork, 1996:3).

Meanwhile, there were some other families who decided to send their girls to school after the suggestions of their relatives who worked in Elazığ in those years. Three of the students started in this way. However, two of these students state that their muhtar already informed their families that their girls would be collected and sent to school. The two sisters who started the school in 1938 had been brought to school with the consent of their family. Sakine, (78, 1938, 12) who thinks alike with with her sister, Seher, tells,

My uncle sent us a message. He said girls were being recruited to a new school there. The *muhtars* of the villages were already informed that a girls' school, for girls of Tunceli, was opened, and that it was free of charge. They were told to collect girls...

Moreover, Sıdıka Avar personally took most of the students to the school. For example, Saniye (73, 1946, 16) is one of the students who were taken to the school by Sıdıka Avar. She says,

Sıdıka Avar came, collected girls from villages, and then she took us with her. When I went there she controlled my id card and said that I was sixteen.

Likewise, Nazlı (67, 1944, 8) tells,

Sıdıka Avar came to the village, wanted the girls in order to give them education. She talked to my father and my father enrolled me. When he came home he said, 'Daughter, I enrolled you to the boarding school in Elazığ.' We were four students from our village.

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<sup>6</sup> Sultanahmet Ticaret Meslek Lisesi Öğretmenler Günü Konusması, 1996.

Besides, all of the students were from villages and most of them came from families of low socio-economic status. However, fathers of only two students were landlords. On the other hand, fathers of two of the students were *muhtars*. One's father was an instructor. Fathers of the remaining eight students were farmers.

As a conclusion, we can argue that there is a relation between the establishment of the school and the Dersim Rebellion. Because, such schools were not established in other Kurdish cities where the authority of the central state had already been accepted. The most fundamental purpose of the school was to teach the Turkish language to these girls, who were regarded as the prospective mothers, and to make them appropriate the Turkish culture. As Yuval-Davis points out that "women are often the ones who are given the social role of intergenerational transmitters of cultural traditions, customs, literary, songs, cuisine and, of course, the mother-tongue" (Yuval-Davis, 1997:28). Therefore, in its nation-building project, the Republic ascribed a significant role to women who were the primary instructors of the next generations, while they were both the symbols and the conveyers of the national culture.

## CHAPTER 7

### ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL

In this chapter, I am going to focus on the curriculum and the basic rules and regulations of Elazığ Girls' Boarding Institute. As my main objective is to try to figure out the social and ideological functions of the school, the curriculum and the objectives of the courses would be good indicators of these functions. For this reason, I am going to analyze the school curriculum. An analysis of the curriculum is important, because it reveals the basic similarities and differences between the boarding school, the Girls' Institutes and the Evening Art Schools in terms of their social purposes and ideological functions. Focusing on the basic rules and regulations of the boarding school is also crucial for a similar comparison. At the time, were there any other boarding art schools with similar functions under the girls' institutes in other cities of Turkey? Into which departments was Elazığ Girls' Institute divided? What was the basic distinction based on at other institutions? In order to find out the answers of these questions, I am going to use the Curriculum and the Regulation Booklet of the Boarding School as the official document. Moreover, I am going to benefit from the speech of Nuriye Dünder Hekimoğlu in the journal of *Altan*, which I had mentioned in Chapter 6. Besides, I will make use of Sıdika Avar's memories, her ideas expressed in Satı Erişen's article, and also the opinions of the graduates and teachers of Elazığ Girls' Institute with whom I was able to talk.

## **7.1 The Curriculum and the Roles of The School**

The Elazığ Girls' Institute was composed of three different schools educating different groups of students. The first one was the institute that accepted the graduates of primary and secondary schools and had the purpose of training them as skillful housewives and good mothers. Like other institutes, its education lasted for five years. It had a curriculum combined with general and professional courses, and it, at the same time, offered a chance to those girls who wanted to work or enter a faculty. The second one was the Evening Girls' Vocational School that opened vocational courses for the students of different age groups who could not attend the regular day classes. Being literate was the main condition for attending this school. Another one that is my main focus is the Girls' Boarding Vocational School. The main difference between this school and the other two was to be a boarding school and to have a tailor made curriculum that differed from the Evening Girls' Vocational School and the Girls' Institute. In addition to this, the enrollment of the students was different from the others. All of the students attending to this school were inhabitants of the villages of Tunceli and Bingöl. None of them were living in the city centers. Besides, its curriculum was not completely the same as that of the village schools and girls' institutes or evening girls' vocational schools despite having the same name with the last one. We can tell that this special curriculum was the combination of the curriculum of village schools, evening vocational schools and girls' institutes. In order to constitute a ground for a comparison, I will show the curricula of those schools mentioned above in the appendix.

In its 2<sup>nd</sup> article, the Notifications of Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School describes the period of education and the tailor-made curriculum of the school:

The period of education in Elazığ Girls' Boarding Vocational School is two years. Within the framework of the village school's curriculum vocational training is given in addition to the general education.

As it is seen, although the school period was determined to be two years according to this article in practice it was three years and this is noted in the expressions of all interviewees as well as Sıdıka Avar.

In relation to this, and to its tailor made curriculum, Sıdıka Avar says,

The education in the boarding school for the Kurdish village girls was three years and it provided training with a special curriculum. The school was at the level of the elementary school. There were forty-four hour lessons in a week. The priority was given to Turkish, then, civic, math, and child-care. However, in my opinion, housekeeping, cooking, embroidery, sewing were also indispensable for a housewife (Avar, 1999:32).

As stated in the Notification, the school would provide vocational courses within the frame of village schools. Why was it emphasized that education would be within the frame of village schools? As nearly all the students accepted to the school were those Kurdish girls coming from the villages of Tunceli and Bingöl, and as they did not know the language and they did not have previous education, the fundamental purpose of the school was to teach these girls Turkish. That is why education was given within the frame of a village school curriculum. However, while writing and reading hours -that is the Turkish course- were gradually reduced in village school curricula, in the boarding school the number of the hours of this course remained the same throughout the school year. Additionally, vocational courses were absent in the village school curricula.

Moreover, as mentioned in the 2<sup>nd</sup> article above, we see in boarding school curriculum common vocational courses with girls' institutes. This is what renders the boarding school curriculum tailor-made. However, courses of general knowledge are not the same with those of girls' institutes, and the boarding schools have more Turkish courses than girls' institutes. According to the curriculum of the school, the total hour of the classes including both general and vocational courses was forty hours per week and ten hours were arranged for the Turkish lesson in a week. What's more, there were civics, arithmetic, geometry, drawing, cooking, housekeeping, childcare, sewing, hat, embroidery, and music and physical education classes.

However, just like the length of the spell of the school, number of Turkish lessons is also more than stated in the curriculum. Sıdıka Avar as well as the students and the teacher of the school verified this.

Although on the curriculum Turkish courses were 10 hours per week, Sıdıka Avar says, "I used to teach Turkish courses for 13 hours with the boarding first classes, and for 12 hours with the boarding second classes" (Avar, 1999: 32).



On similar lines, Elmas (65, 1955,17), one of the students, also tells that the Turkish courses were emphasized. She says “We had four hours of Turkish in the morning, and four hours in the afternoon.”

Likewise, Eser (69, 1946, 19), one of the teachers, tells,

Normally this school lasted 3 years. Students had Turkish, math courses and courses of cooking, sewing, needling as well. I was the teacher of a vocational course. Hours of the Turkish course were more than the others.

One of the students, Hediye (74, 1941, 13), also notes that the Turkish courses outweighed the others. She says,

There were courses for the growth of children, for cooking, house management, etc. We also studied the alphabet. There was math, Turkish, art, music... Also there was the course for sewing and needling. Turkish was the weighty course.

Longer hours of Turkish course make sense when the fundamental purpose of the school is considered. It shows that this purpose is effectively pursued. Because, as I mentioned above, teaching the Turkish language was one of the most crucial purposes of the school. In addition to this, considering the fact that most of the vocational courses of the girls’ institutes were also given in boarding schools, we can conclude that boarding schools serve not only the purpose of teaching language but also another purpose. The other purpose is instructing students to be skilful housewives and good mothers who behave in their homes and community as representatives of the republican ideals and Turkishness. As can be concluded from the above, the main distinction of the Elazığ Girls’ Institute was to have also a Boarding School, which accommodated girl students coming from poor Kurdish villages as well as the students coming from middle class Turkish families and attending to the Institute. Nuriye Dunder Hekimoğlu evaluates this difference and the purpose of the Institute as follows:

...Thanks to the knowledge and training that the girls gained from the Institute, the boarding trade school and in the present special part they will consider all kinds of housework as a duty to be done with great pleasure (Hekimoğlu, 1938:33).

On similar lines, Eser (76, 1946, 19) also emphasizes the uniqueness of Elazığ Girls’ Institute as follows,

I worked at the Elazığ Girls’ Institute for 4,5 years, I was firstly appointed to that school...the most striking thing was the boarding part. There were two parts in the school: the first one was

the girls' institute like all the other institutes in all parts of Turkey and the second one-as far as I remember- was the boarding part named as the integration/ assimilation school... The pupils were made to complete their education. Although it was a three-year education, pupils were educated even for 5 years till they graduate. The ministry met all the expenses.

Similarly, Meral (70, 1946, 13), a student that attended the Institute, remarks,

I was thirteen. And I started to the school. There were other girls from Tunceli, taken from the villages in mountains of Tunceli, Nazimiye, Hozat and surroundings of Elazığ, especially from villages in the mountains, very underdeveloped places. But those girls were not taking the same courses with us. There was a special education, which was held only in that institute in Turkey. There were institutes in each city in Turkey, but they didn't have such part in them. It was in Elazığ, only. I mean it was the only one in Turkey.

Although it is basically the existence of this school with this tailor-made curriculum what renders Elazığ Girls' Institute different, the curriculum of Elazığ Girls' Institute was the same with the curricula of the institutes in other cities. They had physics, history, geography and social sciences and vocational courses mentioned above. In order to provide a comparative ground, the curricula of both Selcuk and Elazığ Girls' Institutes can be seen in the appendix. On the other hand, I had emphasized above that the fact that the boarding school is a part of this institute and that most of the vocational courses are also given in the boarding school gives this school similar roles and functions with those of girls' institutes. For that reason, those village girls graduating from boarding schools also internalize the basic roles and purposes given by girls' institutes. When we focus on functions and aims of the Institutes mentioned in the third chapter, we can see that they had very important ideological functions in the institutionalization of a new Westernized nation-state and in the transformation from a theocratic state to a secular one with the aim of modernization. They played a critical role in forming the new identity of the modern Turkish state and making the new society legitimized and be approved of. The ultimate goal of the girls' institutes is to bring up cultured, well-educated and intellectual housewives who will form an ideal family atmosphere by keeping their houses clean, tidy and healthy all the time and will contribute to the social development of their country by means of their children brought up in that happy house (Gok, 1998:242). Furthermore, since they emphasized the feminine roles and having single-sex education, they also provide a suitable school atmosphere for the moderate or conservative families who did not want to send their girls to the schools giving co-education (Toktas, 1998). The house was emphasized as the women's

domain by all of the institutes. However those housewives and mothers having education in the institutes, which would bring the scientific methods, western order, and discipline to their house, were different from the traditional housewives and mothers. They played the role of the carriers of the ideology of the republic to their children (Arat, 1997; Toktas, 1999). Motherhood was the primary duty of the every Turkish woman who was also encouraged to participate in professional life. In the institutes the requirements of being good mothers and the necessary knowledge to bring up the next generation were given to the girls. Additionally, the Institutions were the places where the modern, Western life style was introduced to the girls. In this way, the family, smallest unit of the society would have been modernized (Arat, 1997; Gok, 1998). The students, who wrote essays in the journals published by the school, also emphasized these functions of the institutes. For instance, a student from Izmir Girls' Institute wrote:

During the national revolution, you do your task with a strong determination. Because, you the Turkish girl, you are created to do and to create. Our government sees this and it rapidly prepares you for the future. In order to raise you as a housewife in its full sense, it establishes 'Institutes' all over the country. Because, you are going to raise the robust, brave, vivid children of tomorrow's Turkey; this will be your primary task (Bilginer, 1936-7)<sup>7</sup>.

Likewise, another student from the same Institute wrote:

...Our factories are gradually increasing and our revenues are rising year by year. All that old stuff is being renewed. However, our children are also not neglected... Although there are few women raised appropriately for these new homes, we are not unprepared for tomorrow. Institutes are working continuously. Then we can be sure of tomorrow. At the end of a quite short period, we are going to see a general change in the harmony of our homes. We are going to find well-educated children and thrifty women who utilize all their knowledge for the management of their homes. Only then the Turkish nation will have attained its goals in this area (Temucin, 1936-7).<sup>8</sup>

One of my interviewees, Şükran (a student in Elazığ Girls' Institute), expressed that the primary concern of the Girls' Institutes was to raise "modern, knowledgeable, economical housewives capable of raising the next generation perfectly."

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<sup>7</sup> Bilginer, Saadet (6th Grade) 1936-7 *Enstitü Dergisi*, Izmir: *Izmir Cumhuriyet Kız Enstitüsü*, 1937:11

<sup>8</sup> (Temucin, Aliye (4th Grade) 1936-7 *Enstitü dergisi*, Izmir: *Izmir Cumhuriyet Kız Enstitüsü*, 1937:51).

Besides, the Girls' Institutes provided the opportunity for entering the working life as well. Students could be teachers in the institutes after graduation. For instance, Eser who was a teacher in Elazığ Girls' Institute, graduated from İsmet Paşa Girls' Institute. She recalls the aim of this school "When I entered the girls' institute, it had two purposes: raising a good mother and a housewife as well as giving a profession to those willing to work."

On similar lines, Zahide (a student of Elazığ Girls' Institute) says,

It helped for the exceptional education of housewives; the appearance of cultured mothers and it had great contributions in their child-care practices. ... After graduation students generally become teachers in institutions again. Because in order to be able to attend other institutions of higher education or faculties we had to pass the high school completion examinations. In 1951, I started teaching in İsmet Paşa girls' institute and I remained there until 1959 when I started to give courses in teachers' school.

Similarly, the boarding school provided its graduates with the opportunities of profession. For example, graduates of this school could attend midwife schools, village institutes, and in later years, teachers' schools after complementing a two-year education. So the graduates could be nurses, teachers and midwives. Three of my interviewees were sent to the Village Institutes and became teachers after this school. One of them became a midwife and another became a nurse. Others are housewives. But they think that they are different from other housewives who did not have this kind of education.

Now I am going to examine the physical conditions and living arrangements of the school. I am going to dwell on the number of the students, the age groups, number and conditions of dormitories and cafeteria, student expenditures, basic rules of the school and social activities.

Sıdıka Avar states that the school building had three floors with a kitchen and a cafeteria at the basement, 13 studios and 14 classrooms on the first and second floors. She describes that "the cafeteria was in a bad condition; it was a dirty, quite dark place" (Avar, 1999:28). Like her, all students emphasize that there was only one large cafeteria and all of boarders had the same meal at the same cafeteria.

In addition, all of the interviewees also told that while all needs of the village boarders were met by the state, the expenses of that of attending to the Institute were

covered by their families. Fatma (60, 1951, 8), who was of the same opinion with the boarding student Sakine, notes, “all their expenses were covered by the state, I mean, we were looked after well. There were students whose families were very poor and there were also many orphans, there were plenty of them...”

All the interviewees told that they did not have any semester holidays and that they came to school in fall and could only return back home in summer holidays. Also they all stated that they could not leave the school on weekends, even those having relatives in Elazığ could not get permission for them. Their parents also could not come and visit them at school, because they were very poor and their villages were very remote. However, some families whose villages were relatively closer and those who could afford could come and see their children. Sakine (78, 1938, 12) describes these conditions as follows, “Yes, we did not have any semester holiday, we only had summer holiday. We could not leave the school on weekends. We used to come in fall, leave in early summer. Nobody could come and visit us, we were poor...”

Nazli (67, 1944, 8) also states that beside having no semester holiday they were not given permission to stay outside the school on weekends even when their close relatives came to the city. She tells,

They would come and see us. But the school did not let them take us home. For example my sister used to live in Elazığ. Her husband came a few times. Once there was a wedding of our relatives. He asked Ms. Principal to let him take me too. But the principal did not let. He said to him, ‘neither appear, nor tell the child about the wedding’.

However, there were some exceptional cases. Hediye was one of these girls who had weekly permission. Hediye’s father was from a prominent family of Tunceli, he was educated and he had also served the state. Hediye expresses that her father and grandfather did not oppose the state but served it. Besides, her family was on friendly terms with Sıdika Avar. Therefore, she says, she was treated different than the other students.

It is difficult to estimate the exact number of the students. None of the interviewees remember the number of the students at the boarding school. But they all say that the number increased in time. Regarding this, Seher (76, 1938, 11) says, “Then, there were 50-60 girls. As a matter of fact, the school was small. Just a

few classrooms at the ground floor of the institute... They would teach students for three years, and then they would send them back to their villages...”

However, Eser (76, 1946, 19) states, “...The number of the students was 100. This number never decreased. There was no practice of failing the class or dismissal. They would teach the children until they graduate...”

Eser had come to school in 1946. In Chapter 6, we had learned from Sıdika Avar’s explanations that the number of the students was increased in 1945 by accepting students from Bingöl. But for the previous years, we do not have the exact knowledge regarding the number of the students.

Besides, there were different age groups among the students. The required age of the prospective students was defined in Article 3 of the Notification. According to that, students to be accepted to the school should be between 12 and 17. However, the interviewees were between 8 and 17 when they started the school. Yet, it was preferred to accept students over 12, because younger students would be unable to take care of themselves and they would need the assistance of others. The interviewees also emphasize that the students were generally over the age of 10. Sıdika Avar also says that the children were between 10 and 17 (Avar, 1999:35).

All of the interviewees emphasize that they were participating in the national ceremonies such as 23 April National Sovereignty and Children’s Festival/Celebration and 19 May Youth and Sport Festival. They sometimes had picnics and occasionally were taken to the cinema or city center at the weekends. Beside, they say that they visited the People’s Houses mentioned in Chapter 1 and listened to lectures, conferences about Atatürk, the history of the Turkish Revolution and the War of Liberation.

In relation to this, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) remarks,

They would take us to the public houses regularly. Especially Sıdika Avar ... She would take us to the countryside in Harput and also to the public houses. There were pieces of writings there, and she would tell us to read them all. She used to say that she would ask about those writings. There were really wonderful writings. They would tell about the foundation of the Republic, the speech of Atatürk, plenty of stuff about the public... Sıdika Avar, would say, ‘these information will be necessary for you, you are the children of this nation, you are going to be teachers and go to our villages. Learn all these in order to teach there.

How was the order and discipline at school? How did the students express their ideas about the discipline? All of the students mentioned about the rules of the school. All of them tell that the school was much disciplined and there were some punishments if they broke the rules of the school. Yet, those earlier students say that they used to be punished even when they did not commit an offense; they say that they were treated unfair. Also they express that they were punished more severely than the students of the institute. They told that the punishments were generally in the form of beating, closing down in a room or in the coal bin, not giving meal or making the student clean the surroundings. For example, two of the interviewees who went there in 1938 remark that the punishments given to them were crueler than given to the students of the Institute. Sakine (77, 1938, 12) says,

The discipline at the school was very tough. They frequently made us stand on a single foot, hit us in the hand with a stick, did not give us meal sometimes. Yet, they were more tolerant to the students of the institute. If a boarding student was under consideration, teachers would double the punishment. They would punish the girls from Tunceli more than the others. There was a prejudice against them. They used to think that girls from Tunceli were wild, because they had opposed the state. Of course, then, it was called Dersim, not Tunceli.

As understood from Sakine ve Seher's explanations, during the earlier years of the school, before Sıdıka Avar started to work at the school, these girls might have been exposed to some kind of discrimination due to their ethnic identities and their poor and defenseless status. As a matter of fact, the effects of the Dersim rebellion were already very fresh, and this might have paved the way for the treatment of girls from the region as criminals. Besides, although the official policy of the state had an inclusive purpose, it was practically difficult for the school staff to accept these girls with different religious and ethnic identities.

Sıdıka Avar also supports the explanations of the earlier students. She clearly states the bad conditions of the boarding students as well as the physical and verbal violence they were exposed to when she first came to school. Like Sakine, she says that the punishments given to the boarding students were more severe. For example, they were left to starvation for 24 hours, and such a punishment neither had an official basis, nor could be acceptable. When Sıdıka Avar applied to Nuriye Dünder, the principal of the school at the time, she was told, "I know that the penalties are very tough, but we cannot annoy the teacher. These children deserve and are used to such penalties. They would not appreciate forgiveness." Similarly, she

mentions her testimony to many cases in which students were violently bit by both teachers and the school servants with thick sticks. Avar says she intervened every time. For example, one day one of the servants had tied six students' hands at the back, and he was beating them with a thick stick just as those practices in jails. Reasons for such punishments could be a damaged faucet or a broken iron. Avar was very anxious about such practices because she believed that such discrimination and violence would render children unfriendly towards the school as well as the ideals targeted. She expresses her anxiety as follows: "I was wondering how these poor little things would warm towards Turkishness among all these hostile penalties and despising manners? Because they were able to evaluate the penalties given at the institute, and they would certainly make comparisons (Avar, 1999:44)"

However, those who started the school in later years did not mention such unfair treatments and violent physical penalties though they emphasized that the school was very disciplinary.

The interviewees tell that there were other important rules in the school. The first was the prohibition of speaking in Kurdish and the second was that of doing religious practices such as fasting and *namaz*.

All interviewees state that speaking in Kurdish was prohibited for reasons of learning Turkish faster and speaking in it more fluently.

Hediye (74, 1941, 13) notes, "The Kurdish was prohibited. They did not let us talk so that we could learn Turkish faster"

Nuran (76, 1938, 11) also points out that speaking in Kurdish was prohibited at school for the sake of improvement of their Turkish. She tells,

As for Turkish, they saw that the students could not learn it fast. They told us not to speak in Kurdish among us. They were right; really, I started to speak in Turkish perfectly in three months. When inspectors came to visit the principal, our principal chose me among the students and took me to her room. On the way to her room, she suggested me to tell the inspectors that I had not known Turkish before; not even a word. I would tell them that I had learnt it in three months. She tidied up my clothes before introducing me to the inspectors. She asked again and again, 'you know what to say, don't you?' I said, I knew. When I met the inspectors, they asked me how I was. They asked me what I learned at school. I said that I had not known Turkish three months ago, not even a word, and that I learned it perfectly in the meanwhile. I had memorized these sentences. I love this word, perfectly (*fevkalade*), I really like it, and it delights me... Teachers were teaching us excellently, they were perfectly dealing



with us. Because they had been instructed to do so.

Nazlı (67, 1944, 8), one of the students, emphasizes the rigidity of the prohibition and she says that they were afraid to speak in Kurdish even among themselves. She says, “We would never speak in Kurdish among ourselves. None of us. Who can dare to speak in Kurdish? There is no such possibility. There were watchmen and others...”

As the Kemalist nationalism identified determined the construction of state, nation and national identity as its essential aims, it excluded every kinds of plurality, which were regarded as dangers and obstacles for realizing these aims. Therefore the Kemalists considered religion, social classes and ethnicity as the primary sources of conflict and danger for the homogenization of the republic. As a result, they tried to suppress them and did not lead them to be visible in the public sphere. All of these pluralities were evaluated as separatist elements and they were included into the sphere of prohibition. Consequently, the Kemalists fixed Turkishness as a unique identity for all of the population. The unity of race, ethnic root, language, culture and ideal (*ülkü*) were the vital conditions of the being Turkish nation. As long as bringing up the next generation who adopted those ideals was very imperative for future of the Republic, the Kemalists gave importance to the education as the main apparatus of their target. They started to put into practice an educational policy that intended to raise secular and nationalist citizens. Being secular and nationalist was imposed to the minds of students in every level of the educational process (Yıldız, 2001).

Language was an essential element of gaining sense of Turkishness as well as being a unique and homogeneous nation. Atatürk emphasized this point as Turkish nation is a pure and homogenous unity and the language of this nation is also unique: “Turkish; the most beautiful, the richest the easiest language in the world... It is a holy treasure, which preserves the Turkish morality, customs, memories, interests, so to say, everything that makes the Turkish nation a nation.” (Cited in Kaplan, 2002:790). Therefore, the primary condition for being a member of the Turkish nation was to learn speaking in Turkish. The one who did not speak in Turkish could not be a member of the Turkish nation. Everybody had to speak in Turkish (Ibid 790). In as much as the Kemalists thought that language was a vital tool for

mobilizing national consciousness; they established the Turkish Language Institute, which aimed to purify the Turkish language. It developed the Sun and Language Theory based on the argument that just the Turkish language was spoken in Central Asia. Moreover, Turkish language was the main source of all of languages. Consequently, with the Turkish Historical Thesis, Sun and Language Theory developed an argument that the Kurdish people were actually Turkish (Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997:102). As a result, it can be concluded that the prohibition of Kurdish language was the part of nationalist policy of the Kemalist regime that also developed a secular and nationalist educational policy of education aiming at molding and integrating all kinds of foreign cultures in order to construct a unique Turkish nation (Kaplan, 2002:792). As it is seen above, all of the students mentioned about the prohibition of their mother tongue as well as that of religious practices. Also, Sıdika Avar pointed this out and she stresses that all of the girls “were seemed to feel ashamed for they did not know the language.”

As I mentioned above, nationalism and secularism were the most fundamental elements of the Kemalist regime. As explained in Chapter 1, the modernization/Westernization process that the Ottoman state initiated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century arrived at a new stage with the establishment of the nation-state with the Republic and it turned into a social engineering project aiming at a radical transformation in the society. Now, the Ottoman *millet* system based on different ethnic and religious identities were substituted by the secular, territorial, monolingual, mono-cultural state system based on a single nation. As well as other identities, this modern system of nation-state would exclude the religious identity from its center. Therefore, the fundamental purpose was to provide the public, which had constructed its identity on the basis of religion for centuries, with a new identity (Lewis, 1968; Karpas, 1959; Ahmad, 1993). This new Turkish identity should be different from the Ottoman identity based on the religious identity. Therefore, Turkishness was defined on the basis of a contrast with the rest of the Islamic world, and secularism was emphasized (Ahmad, 1993:78). Hence, the main target of the Republic was to cut the links between the Turkish people and their Islamic, imperial past (Lewis, 1968:263). So, in a way, the Islamic past was treated as the ‘other’, and rather the pre-Islamic past was emphasized (Bora, 1999).

Although Sıdıka Avar would not use a direct method of prohibition, as a militant follower of the Kemalist ideals, she would tell the students that religious practices were unnecessary, and, in a way, she would not let them. Most of the students emphasized that these conditions did not create any problems for they did not have orthodox Islamic identities in reality. Even we can say that, as Bruinessen states, what made the people of Dersim warm towards the Republic was its repressive attitude towards the orthodox Islam. He claims that despite the 1937-1938 incidents, the republican emphasis on secularism made the people of Dersim closer to the Kemalists rather than the Sunnite Kurds who were perceived as bigots (Bruinessen, 2001).

For the issue of prohibition of the religious practices, Saniye states (73, 1946, 16) “At the boarding school, we could neither fast nor perform *namaz*. Not even on religious feasts... Sıdıka Avar would say that a student should eat for a healthy brain. That was why she was so opposed to fasting...”

Similarly, Sakine (77, 1938, 12) notes, “Nothing religious could be practiced at school in our times. We could not. Perhaps the day students could fast, but I don’t suppose that they could... They would not let them, too”

Nuran (76, 1938, 11) also tells that the religious practices were prohibited. She remarks that “... In any case, Sıdıka was not a religious teacher. Perhaps that’s why she loved us. There was no religious practice at school. Never... Her worldview was based on social ideas, she used to teach us the best of the literature.”

In the same way, Hediye (74, 1941, 13) states,

There was no fasting, no *namaz* or other religious practices. Ms. Principal did not let such things penetrate into our school. Anyhow, we the boarding students did not know much about fasting, *namaz*, etc., you know. We knew the Fast of Twelve Imams, but the principal did not let it either.

As can be concluded from the statements of the students, religious practices were undesired and Sıdıka Avar tried to instill secularism to her students. As I mentioned before, girls, who were members of a heterodox religious sect, felt friendly towards Sıdıka Avar for, in a sense, her secularism. Nuran is the one who emphasized this most clearly.

In this chapter, I tried to understand the roles and the functions of the school by analyzing its curriculum, its regulations and rules. I tried to figure out the primary distinction of the Elazığ Girls' Institutes from other Institutes located in different cities of Turkey. As it is seen, the distinction of the Institutes was the Boarding School. The basic characteristic of this school is that its curriculum was a combination of the curricula of the girls' institutes and the village schools. In this sense, although the school was at the primary school level, it also provided the vocational courses, which were the basic tools of the functions of girls' institutes. Therefore, besides teaching Turkish, it served another fundamental purpose. One other significant purpose of this school was to raise the Kurdish girls as the ideal Turkish mothers, which was the basic purpose of the girls' institutes. The emphasis on secularism and nationalism reflects the deep influence of the basic elements of the Kemalist ideology on the Turkish educational system. As mentioned before, these two elements would be emphasized in each level of education. In the next chapter, I will search the processes of the adaptation of the students to the school and their first perception about the school and the education.

## CHAPTER 8

### **STUDENTS' EVALUATIONS ABOUT THE SCHOOL, THE EDUCATION AND THEIR POST-GRADUATE LIVES**

In this chapter, I will examine the processes of the adaptation of the students to the school and their first perception about the school and the education. Furthermore, I am going to investigate their relationships with each other and the students of the Institute as well their teachers and the personal of the school during this processes. Then I will search their lives after school. How did they feel, when they came to school first? How did they experience the process of adaptation? What was the role of Sıdıka Avar in their adaptation process and how did she affect their perceptions about the school and education there? What were the effects of the education on their self-perceptions? How do they evaluate their education? Was there a transformation in their lives? Did they have any further education after this school and who supported it? How they perceive themselves right now? In what ways did having this education affect their relation with their families and children?

#### **8.1 Their Initial Perception and Experiences**

All of the women whom I talked to were from villages. They were mostly Kurdish Alaouites from Tunceli and Bingöl. Just two of them were from Karakoçan. Nevertheless, they also had the origin in Tunceli. Although nearly none of the students who started to school in 1930s and 1940s knew Turkish, those students who started in 1950s could speak Turkish to a certain degree. Because, by that time, the number of the village schools had already increased and one or two individuals from

their families had gone to these schools. Actually, from the 1950s on, the state had started to penetrate the region more effectively with its institutions. Besides not knowing the language, nearly all of these girls fell apart from their parents for the first time, they saw a different city, which was quite different from their hometown, and for the first time they started to live in an environment where individuals having religious beliefs and ethnic cultures different from theirs. Being a villager, coming from different religious and ethnic groups, being a member of the lower class, and meeting students and teachers completely different from themselves... How did all these affect them? How did they experience the adaptation process? Some of the students stated that they had very hard times especially during the first year as they could not speak in Turkish and they were separated from their families, whereas some others stated that they experienced less difficulties as they could speak a little Turkish and they had some relatives at school who had been brought there with them or before. People from the same culture or region made life easier for some children during the first years. They express that in later years, sharing the environment with students similar to themselves, sharing a strong solidarity made their school lives better. Additionally, they all emphasized the role of Sıdıka Avar during the enrollment process. They defined their status and differences on the basis of their relations with and ideas about the students of the institute, the teachers and the school servants.

When they started to tell about their adaptation process to the school, almost all of the interviewees mentioned their first day at school and their impressions as well. They had vivid memories in their minds about their first day at school. Although they had been influenced quite differently, there were common details that were emphasized by all of them. All of them talked about their haircut –some students' hair were shaved-, the bathroom and their dressing up the school clothes. Moreover, most of the interviewees told that they had been photographed dressed with their old and new clothes, respectively. However, except one of them, no interviewee made any comment about why they had been photographed with their old clothes on. Later, everybody talked about their ordinary lives at school, their relations with other students and with their families in summer holidays, their main experiences, and their general ideas and feelings about all these. Some of them talked

about their special memories at school. Although the impressions of the first day were generally similar for all interviewees, three of the students that had started the school in earlier years talked about some different experiences. For example, Sakine, who had been brought to school with her sister Seher and her cousin, expressed how they were negatively affected by their experiences on their first day at school. They said that, they had come to school with the consent of their family, because their uncle who was a civil servant and who was living in Elazığ had recommended this school. They were aware of the rules and practices of the school. Therefore, they had had a shower at their uncle's house before they came to school and they had worn clean clothes. Yet, still they were locked in a room and were not let meet the other students for three days. They were let outside only for meals but they were not let approach to the others. As the school term had already started when they arrived at the school, there was no other new student around. So, only they had been kept closed in a separate room. As they were still young, as they could not speak in Turkish and as they had been separated from their family for the first time, they were deeply influenced and scared by this quarantine but they could not understand the reason. Actually the quarantine was practiced for the purpose of hygiene only, but they were deeply influenced due to the fear and insecurity they felt among unfamiliar people speaking in an unfamiliar language in an unfamiliar place.

In this respect, similar to her sister Sakine, Seher (76, 1938, 11) says,

They delivered us to the school. There we were closed in a room for three days. We were three children locked in that room. They were arranging us in a row and we had to follow them to the meal without breaking the row. They made us eat at a separate table just like itchy goats. They did not let us eat with other children. They quarantined us for three days. We did not know what was going on. Three days later they took us to the bathroom. This year I watched the movie 'Büyük Adam Küçük Aşk' and I wept loudly. I had experienced the same thing in the movie. We used to urinate under a cover in the room, because we thought that there was no WC. In fact there was. But no body told us that, no body held us in the hand and took us to the WC. How cruel they were! We thought about escaping, but there were the watchmen, they had the wistles. We were much scared of the voice of that whistle. They kept us for three days in that room as if we were itchy. They had controlled our clothes, our hair. If they found anything dirty why didn't they take us to the bathroom immediately, why did they kept us in quarantine? They could have kept our clothes out of the school, but they did not because they wanted to take our photographs with those clothes. They took our photographs in order to say, 'this is how they came to school. They were such wilds.' After finishing the school they would say, 'how civilized they became!' We learned this later, how could we know? We can never forget those treatments. Thanks god, we did not have any mental defects in our mind, or any inferiority complex. We used to love our families, our sisters and brothers so much. We hoped to finish the school as soon as possible and help our sisters and brothers have education. Those who were brought to school with dirty, lousy hair were shaved. We had heard this before, and we had gone with clean hair. So they did not shave us, but they cut our hair short. That year we

had hard times just because we did not know any Turkish. We were being punished unfairly and we weren't able to say anything for we could not speak in Turkish. If we had known a little Turkish we could have said 'we did not do that, there were also those girls, we did not do!' I could have defended myself. We suffered a lot. We were homesick and we did not know any Turkish...

In addition to this, her sister Sakine (77, 1938, 12) also expresses that this quarantine affected them so deeply that when they saw that this was applied to the new coming students, they started to cry. She notes, "Whenever poor students came, they would quarantine them. We would weep. We would remember our first days at school. As we had kept in the quarantine for three days, we would weep."

On the basis of Sakine's expression, we can conclude that this practice of putting the new comers in quarantine continued for a while.

Likewise, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) mentions about similar things. Despite the fact that she had wanted to go to school, in the first fifteen days she was disappointed during the process of quarantine. She notes,

We went to Elazığ with the gendarme. They delivered us to the institute. A teacher came. There was a big classroom close to the entrance of the school. She put us there. I was not alone. There were girls collected from Hozat, Ovacık, Nazimiye, Mazgirt, Mugundu, and Pülümür. We were villagers; we were all Kurdish girls. I mean, Kurdish Alaouite... There were also Kirmancis. We call them Kirdaski. Also there were zazakis. There were also girls who knew both of these languages. We first met there. There was a watchman soldier, because most of us were brought by force. I had wished to come there but no other girl had wished that. But still, I wept a lot while I was quitting my family. They used to take us to the WC under the guidance of the soldiers. Also, we were taken to the cafeteria in the same manner. We were kept in quarantine for ten days; we were waiting for our new clothes, our new shoes. They isolated us from the rest of the students; they did not let us join them. We were with our village clothes on us. At the time we knew nothing about photography, I don't know, perhaps we were also photographed. But later they started to take the photographs of the new comers. Sıdika came in the second term... The ground was concrete and there was only an oilcloth on the floor. We would lie down on that cloth. We had a few blankets. There was no bed. I swear; that was the case. We were more than 10 girls. They would bring our meal to the door, and leave it there. We were not used to meals made with olive oil, so they would smell bad for us. We weren't able to eat. They had brought olives, we thought it were grape. We attacked on it, we ate, it was bitter, we spitted out. We spent 15 days there. There were also the girls recruited from Dersim in 1937. They would come and look at us sometimes. ... Sometimes we would open the door secretly and watch the teachers. Some of them were very beautiful. They had well-cared hair and clothes. They were blonde; their hair was fashioned. We would call them angels; we would call the wicked teachers evils. Believe me... Of course we were very scared. We did not know what would happen. We suffered a lot during that quarantine. Anyway, 15 days later our clothes, collars, and shoes came. A school servant came and took us to the bathroom. It was like a WC. She poured some hot and cold water on us. She did not wash us clearly. She made us wear our new clothes. They took our old clothes, I don't know, perhaps they burnt them. Then they accepted into the classrooms. Later everything changed for me because I was a hardworking student. In three months, I nearly coped with Turkish...



They think that in spite of the shocking experience of the first days, they do not carry any inferiority complex in their minds. Rather, they tell how they became assertive and helpful in their lives.

None of the students that started the school in later years told about such a quarantine process that had feared and humiliated the girls. The others generally talked about the details of their first days and their feelings during the adaptation process.

Saray (71, 1941, 9) states,

You know, village girls generally have long hair. They checked our hair. They cut my and another girl's hair at the level of the ear. But they cut the others' hair like boys. They washed us cleanly in the bathroom. They took away our clothes; I don't know what they did with them. My clothes had come after the earthquake, they were very beautiful; especially my coat... They were all new. They took away all of them. I don't know whether they burnt them or gave them to someone else. We wore the clothes of the school and also our new coats and shoes... We came to the school. At school they showed us the cafeteria, and we ate there. Then Ms. Principal smelled our hair. They sent us to the study hall with the elder students. We did not have much trouble.

On similar lines, Nazlı (67, 1944, 8) says, "They took our photos when we first arrived there. They cut our hair, and washed us. They gave us new clothes; collars and school clothes. Our village had a school and I had had gone there for one year. So I knew a little bit Turkish."

Nazlı says that knowing Turkish a little made her first year much easier. Salime also mentions the same details but she says that she suffered much in the first year though she could speak in Turkish a little.

Salime (60, 1952, 9) tells: "As soon as we arrived there, someone took our photo with our village clothes on us. Then our hair was cut short. I would miss home a lot. Others did not care about their homes. I would cry every night for two months, then I got used to the situation."

After emphasizing the same details, Emine (62, 1952, 11) expresses her feelings about the first day as follows:

It was my first departure from the village. When I saw the shops in Elazığ, I said to myself, 'will I be able to cross all those mountains and reach my village again?' That is what I remember, I asked myself, 'I crossed many mountains, I traversed many paths, how will I be able to return back to the village?' Also, the school seemed too big to me. My previous school

was very small. I thought I would never be able to learn the classrooms of this new school. Later, I learned quickly. Everything was new to us. We would secretly talk among ourselves. We would ask how we would be able to return back home, what would we do, how would we learn, how we would be able to communicate... Our photographs were taken; new clothes, shoes were given. Then we were washed in the bathroom, I mean, we, the new comers. Later we went to have breakfast. It was as if we were in a dream. For one week, everything seemed like a fairy tale for us. There was a big locust tree in the garden; we would gather under that tree and talk in whispers. There were some girls from our village; they had come earlier. They were shrewd and alert. We tried to get used to each other. I would say, 'I wish I could fly like a bird'.

Despite the fact that her hair was not cut and she had the permission to stay outside the school at weekends as well as knowing Turkish, Hediye (74, 1941, 12) also felt sorry when she left her mother. She notes,

They sent me. I was very upset for the first day. I was very unhappy to leave my mum; I did not want to be a boarding student. I was unhappy that my hair would be cut short... My hair was long, and I had ribbons. Nobody had such ribbons at the time. My father said, "They shave everybody's head, but they won't cut Hediye's hair". My father knew that all girls attending that school were shaved. He said, 'don't worry. They won't touch your hair, neither your clothes'. And I went to the school. Everybody looked like a boy. Everybody around me was shaved. But the names are all girls' names. Ayşe, Fatma, Hatice... I asked them, "Are you boys?" They said, "No, we are girls". I was really surprised when I saw them. Then I got used to this. Ms. Sıdıka met me at the school. "Don't worry, my brother", she said to my father, "I won't let her hair be cut." Afterwards, I got used to the school. I would never weep when I saw my family; the elder students would... I would go home at weekends. My father never left me alone at the school.

Nevertheless, Gülümser (76, 1940, 13) tells that she did not feel too bad and did not cry when she came to school. As her mother died, she left her village for a while. Therefore she had an experience of living apart from her family. Besides, she saw Elazığ before coming to the school because her uncle lived there. She puts emphasis on that her father was a landlord. However, she observed other girls' behaviors and feelings and conditions in the first day and later on. She remarks,

Before I came to school, I had visited my uncle in Elazığ, so I was clean and tidy when arrived at the school. Therefore, my hair was not cut like a boy. I had very long golden blonde hair. But they would shave the other girls' heads. They would take away the village clothes and wash the girls. Nobody knew Turkish. But I had heard a few words. I never wept. As I told you before, I do not even remember my mum; I had lived away from my family previously. Sometimes my uncle would come and see me. Other girls, particularly the younger ones would cry after their families; they would cry in Kurdish, 'don't leave me here!' Of course it wasn't easy to get accustomed to. They were parted from their parents, they were poor, scared, they had come to a foreign place, they did not know Turkish. I did not have so much trouble.

On similar lines Fatma (60, 1951, 8) says that she did not suffer too much and she did not feel badly, in the first day and later. She notes, "I can't remember my first day at school, but I was not afraid. That was because I was willing to have education.

Moreover, my elder sister was also at the school. Our parents used to visit us. I did not have much problem.”

Additionally, all of the interviewees emphasize the importance of the feeling of solidarity among students, and also the role of Sıdıka Avar during adaptation process. They express that they felt comfortable and they became accustomed to their school life because of the solidarity among the girls and Sıdıka Avar’s attitude towards them. While telling about their relationships with the students of the institute, the teachers and the school servants, they, in a sense, reveal their self-perception and also the reference points of their identities. In their relationships with other students, we can see the expressions of the feeling of having the same cultural and ethnic origins, and also the feelings of security and solidarity that it results in. Among these expressions were their capability to understand each other’s feelings without saying a single word, their desire and need to speak secretly in their mother tongue among each other, or their efforts to find a solution when any of them had a problem. Actually, they were not homogenous in terms of the language they spoke in. There were girls among them who spoke in Zazaca and Kirmanci. Despite this fact, they perceived they were similar. We can see this feeling of solidarity also when they define their relationships with teachers, the institute students and the remaining school stuff. They make comments on these people from their common point of view, and so they give the clues of the questions, ‘why were they so close to each other as the boarding students?’ and ‘why did they always feel a distance towards the others?’

Their feelings of being similar may be related to the effects of common language. As underlined by Cornell and Hartman (1994), Isaacs (1975) and Hutchinson and Smith (1996), common language, a common body of knowledge and a common culture foster a shared consciousness of society: It is in many ways a primary mark of identity. In this respect, for Lewis (1998) language is in many ways a primary mark of identity. Mother tongue as acquired in infancy brings with it a whole world of memories, associations, illusions and values. It serves as a bond of unity with others who share it, and as a barrier against those who do not. Hence, they developed solidarity of being the same.

Fatma tells that she did not feel awful since there were many girls coming from her region, her culture, and her sister was in the school too. In this respect, she states, “My relationship with my friends was fine. Moreover, there were many familiar girls from the villages nearby. We were all from the same neighborhood.”

Similarly, Sanem says, “Our friendship was very nice. We, as the boarding students, were committed to each other. We were all village children; what else could we do? We would love and protect each other.”

Students would always help each other, and the former comers would guide the later comers. In this respect Elmas (65, 1955, 17) states,

In our class many knew no Turkish like me. Almost all of them were from Tunceli. As we were from the same region, they helped us a lot; they would tell us the meanings of some words; they told us that we should return to the class when the bell rang. However, we would not speak all the same Kurdish. We would help the students that came later than us. We would assist them in the bathroom, cafeteria, etc. Sıdıka Avar used to say to us, ‘you know their language. Tell them that you are going to play with them, that you are all together. Tell them that you got accustomed to the school and so will they. Tell them that they will learn how to write, how to read... They will write letters to their mothers, brothers and sisters... Help them, make them relieved.

Additionally, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) says that their relations were very well. She says,

We, the boarding students, had strong relationships. Our relationships were beautiful, great. Whenever someone wept, we would try to find out a solution all together. We would laugh, cry and discussed all together. We would be mad at each other, but we would make peace; we were like a family. All of the girls were Kurdish Alaouites. There was no outsider...

Hediye was the only girl among the boarding students who was, as mentioned before, treated differently. Her class status was different; her father was an educated *ağa*, and he was also an ex-servant. He was one of the few *ağas* that had not been exiled. Therefore, Hediye (74, 1941, 13) was the only student whose hair was not cut when she came to school, and moreover she had the permission to stay outside the school at weekends. She knew Turkish when she started the school and she had already inherited from her family most of the habits that the school tried to impose. Hence, she lives a dilemma about her identity. She mentions her friends at the boarding school as ‘they’ or ‘girls from Tunceli’, and she gives the impression that she feels herself belong to another category. For example, in her words, “I did not pay any money, neither did the girls from Tunceli”, she talks as if she did not have

the same ethnic and cultural origin with them. On the other hand, she knows that she did not belong to the other category either. We can clearly see that while listening to her memories about the school. She is a girl from Tunceli in those memories, and she stresses on this fact.

She expresses,

... They called me 'favored girl'. They became jealous of me. All those girls with shaved head were jealous of me. Then Ms. Principal collected them all together, and she told them. She said, "She was clean. There was no louse in her hair. Unlike you, she was wearing beautiful clothes; she wasn't wearing village clothes like you." At school, there was no other girl with long hair. Only in their third year of the school, students were not shaved. Until then, students would learn how to be hygienic. ... I did not have much relation with the boarding students. We were together in the classroom, but they would keep away from me. Because, my hair was not cut short, and my clothes, language had not changed. That's why they did not like me much. They were not hostile but jealous. Why was I permitted to leave the school at weekends? Why wasn't my hair cut? They would say, 'they don't let us see anybody.' My father would always come and see the principal. Ms. Principal would always visit my family. Once a month, or once fifteen days she would visit us in the evening. My father would bring her back to the school. ... I never forget; I was in the first year. An inspector visited the school. The school stuff was looking for a student to serve the inspector his coffee. Ms. Principal decided on me. I served his coffee, I moved backwards, and I stood with the tray in my hands. This is an old custom. Then I collected the empty cups and put them on the tray. Just I was about to leave the room, the inspector asked, "Where is this girl from?" Ms. Principal told that I was from Tunceli. The inspector expressed his surprise; he had not expected such a girl from Tunceli. Ms. Principal said the people of Tunceli had plenty of capabilities. The inspector was from Ankara. He was looking down on the people of Tunceli. ... When we were in the third year, Sıdıka Avar took us to Diyarbakır. The principal of the girls' institute of Diyarbakır had invited her. Sıdıka Avar chose five of the boarding students, and one of them was I.

S: She chose you with respect to what? What was the reason?

H: In order to introduce us. She had taken us in order to introduce us as the enlightened girls of Tunceli.

All of the interviewees tell that they did not face any particular bad treatment of the students of the institute, but that they always had frosty relationships. Just one of them says that the students of the institute had once humiliated her verbally. But this was not a constant attitude. However, all of them point out that they did not have close contacts with any of the students of the institute. They felt that the others had special status thanks to their cultural backgrounds and classes. Even though they say that there was not any discrimination, they mention about the special position of them. This is explicitly expressed only by some of them. What's more, especially three of the interviewees stress that how they were discriminated by the teachers and the workers of the school.

Emine (62, 1952, 11), who was verbally humiliated, tells her story as follows,

We were discriminated by the day students and the institute students. I never forget those days. One day I was coming from somewhere; I was just entering the school garden. One of the day students said to another, 'look, these are boarding students. They always lie like cats and dogs.' I was deeply affected by these words. I was 13 or 14. I could not say anything. It was really painful for me... Those elder girls said these girls. They were fascists. They were the time's fascists. ... I loved the school. It was really a distinguished school. I believe I learned much from that school. ... We felt different from those students of the institute as well as those boarding students who paid their charge. Our conditions were very different. We would think about our own conditions, our villages, and we would be envy of those girls. I mean, we would think, we would ask why our roads were so bad, why our people were so miserable. We knew how talented our people were; we certainly knew that. But there was poverty, deprivation, etc.... It was such a horrible situation...

Elmas (65, 1955, 17) also emphasizes that there was little connection with the students in the Girls' Institute. She remarks,

We would talk to them, but generally they were by themselves. We did not have much relationship. They would look down on us a little. Of course, their clothes were different than ours. Their collars were different. Their fabric was different, also they were styled differently.

Sakine (77, 1938, 12) further emphasizes the class difference between them and the students of the institute. She states,

Everything they had was more beautiful; they were well cared. ... We used to eat at different tables at the cafeteria. They had finished the primary school. We had not. We did not know Turkish well. Furthermore, they were all children of servants. Their salaries were fine. We were poorer than them...

Sanem (74, 1939, 10) expresses, "we did not have any connection with the day students. We were poor villagers, but they were from higher sections of the society. Yet, they would not treat us bad."

Like Sanem and Sakine, Salime (60, 1952, 9) also underlines the different status of the students of the institute. She says,

Their status was obvious! We were from the lower layers with respect to them. Yet Sıdıka Avar never let us live this feeling, never... No fight occurred between them and us. If there had been, we would not be able to cope with them, neither on the cultural basis, nor physical.

Sıdıka Avar also tells about the humiliation of the boarding students by the students of the institute. She says,

The children had the inferiority complex. Because all of them had shaved hair, and those whose hair had grown had misshapen hair. Their school clothes were grey and they were generally short for their bodies. They had old, unpainted black shoes... Then the day students started to come. They were in urban clothes; they were well dressed. The boarding students would respect them as their elder sisters; they would hang their coats, carry their bags, etc.

Some of them would watch them with adoring eyes. The students of the institute would look down on the others. The inferiority complex of the villager girls was very strong... (Avar, 1999:27).

Saniye (73, 1946, 16) also says similar things about her relations with the students of the institute. That is, she says that she would do some of their jobs in order to attract their attention.

Although the other interviewees express that they did not encounter any apparent hostile attitude of the institute students, as mentioned above, two of the interviewees, who were enrolled to the school in 1938, talk about bad treatment of the teachers and the workers of the school. These interviewees say that they were verbally humiliated and discriminated because of their ethnic and religious identities. The discrimination they encountered caused them to perceive themselves different from the others, and it led them to intensify the solidarity among themselves.

One of the interviewees tells us how different they would find their teachers. Their clothes and hairstyles were very strange for the students.

Seher (76, 1938, 11) tells that they were deeply influenced by the humiliations about their ethnic and religious identities. She mentions that she used to ask her parents if those humiliating words were reflecting the truth or not? She used to ask why they were discriminated because of their sects and ethnicity.

Seher (76, 1938, 11) says,

The principal of the school was a woman from İstanbul. She was overrefined!!! She would approach us with a feeling of disgust. All our teachers from İstanbul would treat us in the same way. ... As we were Kirmancis, they were saying many shameful things about us; especially about our sect. They would implicitly accuse us for incest relationship. Of course, we would feel awful, but we could not say a word. Our teachers would say the same things. When we came back to our village, we asked our fathers. Were those gossips true? We knew that we were Alaouites and Kurds. Yet we weren't so much conscious. My father would answer, no. He would say that all these were lies. He would recommend us not to rack our heads with such issues. He would say, 'don't bother yourself.'

Nuran also mentions the attitudes towards religious identities. Besides, while she expresses how their teachers would behave and get dressed different from them, she also emphasizes, in a sense, their own ethnic identities.

Nuran (76, 1938, 11) notes,

We would consider all our teachers differently. They were so interesting for us. Their clothes, make-ups, their tongues were different. They were from İstanbul. They were not from anywhere else, because everybody cannot have the opportunity to get education.... At the time, our school principal, Nuriye Dünder, was an overrefined lady. She would treat some with kindness, some with disdain. ... We were called as 'girls from Dersim', or 'Kurdish girls'. We most suffered from the school servants. There was a cleaner called Abdullah. He was from Elazığ; he was *şafi*. He would say that the holy Hızır was a mouse. He would say that just in order to tease us.

On similar lines, Sıdika Avar also mentions the bad treatments of the teachers, the students of the institute and the workers towards those girls. She says that she personally witnessed physical violence as well as humiliation and discrimination against the ethnic and religious identities of the boarding students. Moreover, she remarks that before she came to the school, even during her period, those village girls did a lot of tasks in the institute. In relation to this, she states,

I was on duty; there was half an hour for the bell to ring ... Elder girls had waken up and they were carrying woods for the fire, setting the stove on fire, cleaning the rooms, etc. Servants were giving them orders. I asked the servant, 'don't you do these tasks yourself?' She rumored nervously, and said, 'of course they are going to do these tasks. These are the offsprings of the Kurdish rebels. They are mountain bears...'

Contrary to the expressions of the boarding students, the students of the institute say that they had close and fine relationships with the boarding students. Yet, while defining their relationship, they perceive their status higher than the others. They also mention the distinguished status of their class and ethnic identities. They perceive themselves civilized and advanced, and they feel that the boarding students would acquire such civilization by following the students of the institute. Their self-perceptions as models reveal their feeling of superiority in the relationship. They perceive themselves as models in their relationship with the boarding students. They perceive themselves as the new women of the Republic who were the representatives of the civilization. They define the boarding students as backward, even primitive. Some of them define these girls from the point of a white Western individual defining a native in a colony. For example, Nigar (70, 1946, 13, student at the institute) describes almost all of the village girls as extremely primitive in terms of their appearances and behaviors. She stresses,

Some of them knew little Turkish. I mean those who came from regions close to the center... Others did not know any... They were very backward; they did not know how to walk, how to use the WC, and how to wash hands and faces how to comb their hair. ... The principal used



to collect these from the villages. She would send them to the bathroom immediately, and she would apply medicals against louse. They would be given new clothes. They would acquire a modern appearance. Our principal taught them how to walk first. Our education was different from theirs. Do you know what made us different from them? Our behaviors... They were taught how to eat at the cafeteria, how to treat their teachers, how to behave in the dormitories, how to brush their teeth, comb their hair, tidy their beds... All these were taught. They would overcome their deficiencies by our assistance. I mean the assistance of the children of the civil servants. For example, there was a girl from the mountain villages of Tunceli. She did not have a Turkish name. I don't remember her real name. Later she was given a Turkish name. She was brought from a cave where her family lived.

S: Why did they live in caves?

Ş: Because they did not have any place to live. When she came to school, she used to walk on her four limbs. She would not know how to walk. And, her face resembled an orangutan's face... It was 1946-47, I guess.

Similarly Sukran remarks,

They learned good manners, courtesy, family, behavior from us. We were models for them. And really they would resemble like monkeys. They would comb their hair just the way we did. They would wear whatever we wore on weekends. They were given a special education. They had both the primary school courses and the vocational courses like we had.

As it is seen, they evidently perceive themselves as modern, civilized girls of the Republic, which aimed at creating this image for all the women of the Turkish Republic. They thought that they had to be the role model for those Kurdish village girls, who were inferior, even primitive in every aspect.

To know how the 'Self' and the 'Other' are constructed is critical in the analysis of the relationship between different ethnic groups. In the cases mentioned above, the interviewees, while defining the 'other', defined their own group identity as well. They constructed their identity, as Hall (1991) stated, "through splitting between that which one is, and that which the 'other' is... 'Other' can only be known from the place from which one stands" (1991: 48). Therefore, all of these experiences led the Kurdish village girls not only to become aware of their differences but also the others' differences during this socialization and adaptation process. Nevertheless, this consciousness did not lead them to construct their identities just according to their ethnic and religious differentiation. Rather, they tried to behave like the Turkish middle class girls. As it can be observed from the expressions of the Turkish students of the institute that those Kurdish village girls chose them as their role models despite all those awful treatments that they faced. This situation, which defines the internalization process of others' attitudes, can be

explained by the concept of the 'generalized other'. This concept was developed by Mead (1934). He emphasized 'role taking' in children's play as learning process whereby one becomes aware of 'self' through applying the standards of the 'generalized other' to his/her actions. Mead claims,

In the form of generalized other, the social process influences the behavior of the individuals involved in it and carrying it on; i.e., that community exercises control over the conduct of its individual members; for it is in this form the social process or community enters as a determining factor into the individual thinking (1934:155).

Role taking refers that one only pretends to hold the role especially the roles of those who in some sense control him/her and on whom he/she depends, whereas, role playing is related to acting out the behavior of a role one actually holds (Mead: 159).

They started to transform after starting to this education. Hence, how did this educational process affect their relations with their families and other people living in their villages during the school years? What did they live when they went to their villages in summer holidays? How did their environment look at the changes in their appearances and behaviors during the school years? Did they live a dilemma during the school process?

Most of the interviewees say that nobody in their villages showed any negative reaction towards the changes that took place in their behaviors and appearances. Furthermore they also tell that how did they have influence on the children of their villages. The girls and boys of their villages tried to learn something from them. They were curious about their lives in the school and they also wanted to go to the school. However, some of them say that they faced with the reactions of their families or people of village.

Seher (76, 1938) states that even though she did not have so many problems with her relatives and other people, she started to live a dilemma after learning new things from the school. She notes,

They saw that we were very harmonious; there was no change in our attitudes. The only change was that our skirts were shorter... But Sıdıka Avar used to warn us, "You are going to your villages. Help people there. Don't behave disrespectful towards your village fellows for their dirtiness." I heard that some girls did such things. You go to school and learn there

something. Then you return back to your village and, as a child, you do not like it. That's why my grandmother used to call us quasi-enlightened. Neither enlightened, nor ignorant... I understood the meaning of these words much later. Now I love this saying...

Emine recalls that nobody behaved them badly. On the contrary, they supported them. She says, "Our village was an enlightened village. Nobody treated us badly; instead they were happy that we had education. Only our clothing was different. They used to find our clothes weird."

Similarly, Saray tells,

In summer holidays, we used to return back to our villages with our school clothes on... We could wear them in the village, nobody would react us. They tolerated... We were 10-15 girls... All of us had nice dresses, our heads were open, and our arms were naked. We would leave our dresses in the village in order to wear them when we come back. Later we learned how to sew and make dresses for ourselves....

Nuran remarks,

In summers, we would enjoy in the village. Sometimes we would wear our village clothes, and sometimes our school clothes... There was democracy in our village; women would not escape from men. Nobody in the village reacted us because of our clothes. They were proud of us. ... I would go to the fountain and wash my hands and face. I would practice anything I had learned at school. I would call my friends and teach them also. My mother did not bother me. She used to say 'she is free to do anything.'

... In our village, there was nobody that I could talk to in Turkish. I used to do practices by myself. I had young cousins, children of my uncle; I used to gather them. I had a notebook and some pencils. I used to try to teach them the Turkish alphabet. I used to say that they would also be a teacher like me. My cousins tried to teach what they learned to some other children. Then these children came to me. They wanted me to teach them. I tried to teach them too. I talked to them in Turkish. I used to say, "Try to speak in Turkish". There was an old man in our village. He used to say, "What can we do? She brought the Turks' school to the village. Children want to learn Turkish now."

Nazlı also tell that she did not face any reaction during the school years when she went to her village. She stresses,

Although the women in the village used to cover their heads, we used to uncover our heads, and we used to wear clean dresses. We could also wear our school clothes in the village. Nobody would react us. My family was open-minded; they did not say anything negative. Moreover, my father used to buy dresses for me. The villagers knew that we went to school,; they wouldn't react to this.

On similar lines, Fatma states,

I did not have any problem with my family and with other people in the village. We were not so marginal. The villagers would rather support us; we were the first being educated in the village. Girls would always hang around us when we returned to the village. I don't know... They expected much from us. Turkish was attractive for them. They would pay attention when we spoke in Turkish. They would try to learn how we spoke... We would tell them what we

saw in Elazığ. They were very curious about Turkish, really.

Gülümser expresses similar points. She notes,

I was appreciated in the village. Girls would gather around me and they would ask me to tell them about my experiences. I would, for example, describe a meal that I had learned at the cooking course. Once I cooked *yaprak sarması*, but nobody tasted it. They regretted that they could not taste. I would wear also my school clothes in the village, and nobody felt uncomfortable about this. I also used to wear village clothes; I used to wear three skirts and a *fes*. Nobody in the village could speak in Turkish, so I could not practice in summers. The girls of the village would feel envy for my clothes and my hygiene. I would tell my brothers and sisters whatever I had learned at school.

On the contrary, Sakine recalls that they faced some reaction from their relatives and other people in the village at first. Nevertheless, her mother and father protected them from others. She states,

...They called us ‘tango’ in the village when we first returned there. Initially my uncle found our skirts short. Once, he was angry with us and he started to shout and swear at us. My mother hit him in the head. In summers we returned back to our villages with uncovered head and naked arms. Actually, there weren’t strict rules about clothing in our village. Yet, sometimes my grandmother would warn us to cover our legs. She used to say that we would be burnt in the other world. And we used to say that we didn’t care. My father was an enlightened man. He was not an educated man, but he had made his brothers educated. My father could not go to school due to the death of my grandfather. We used to gather the children and give lessons as if we were teachers. My cousins were very happy. They always wanted to learn more. Only one of them could go to school. My uncle had 5 daughters. He didn’t let any of them go to school. My father insisted that he send her daughters to school, but my uncle didn’t send. We spoke in Turkish. Other children also would try to speak in Turkish. We would speak in quasi-Turkish, quasi-Kurdish.

Similarly, Elmas expresses that, on the one hand, there was a reaction at first, and on the other hand, the village girls and boys tried to learn something from them. She states that they lived a dilemma. She notes,

We used to return back to our villages with our school clothes on. We never wore those village clothes again. They criticized us for uncovering our head, and for wearing short skirts. Actually our skirts were below our knees’ level. Later we started to wear some kind of pajamas under our skirts. We used to call them “*pantol*”. We used to sew it ourselves. We would try to practice our school habits in the village. For example, we would try to persuade people to eat from separate plates. But we failed. It changed much later... There were schoolboys in the village. We used to speak in Turkish with them. They used to appreciate my Turkish. Other children of the village were happy for us; they were happy that we could speak a foreign language. Sometimes they would want us to teach them too. We used to try, but they could not understand. They used to give Kurdish answers to our Turkish questions. Our teachers used to warn us not to speak in Kurdish in our villages. They would say, “Don’t speak in Kurdish even in your villages so that your Turkish can improve.”

Emine points out that although she did not have any troubles, she heard that some girls experienced problems traumatically. She tells, “They were sent to school, they were educated at the institute, then they went to the village and they could not adapt. There have been cases of suicide.”

As Emine remarks, the transformation process had been traumatic for some students. Sıdıka Avar also mentions the severe conflict some students experienced with their families and/or other villagers when they returned back to their villages. Sıdıka Avar tells that three of her students had committed a suicide after the sharp conflicts they lived with their families and their close environment. Sıdıka Avar states that she never perceives these three girls as victims; she perceives them rather as the heroes of the attempt to civilization. Sıdıka Avar emphasizes that the main reasons for the conflict between the educated girls and their relatives were the issues of hygiene, the dressing style and marriage. She tells about one of her students who got accustomed to modern dressing, and who loved to dress skirts. This girl returned back to her village and got married. However, when she dressed a skirt, the villagers called her ‘the bride without underpants’. Avar also mentions one of the cases that ended up with a suicide. A girl, who had been sent to the school, was forced to marry a man already with two wives. The girl opposed the idea of polygamy and threatened her family that she would commit a suicide if she were forced to marry that man. Nobody took the girl seriously, and she killed herself. However, Sıdıka Avar expresses her belief that these enlightened girls; these prospective mothers will never give up their struggle, on the contrary, that they will fight more severely. Regarding such conflicts between the girls and their environment, Hikmet Feridun Es states, “Most of those young girls who return to their villages as heroes of the civilization have to fight there a lot. Because, all of these girls have become prototypes of Sıdıka Avar, and they generally encounter great resistance” (Es, 1957:943).

Eser remarks that some students lived contradictions with their families after finishing their education. She stresses, “Most of these children learned Turkish at school. They underwent great transformations during their education, and they became completely different. ... Some of them did not admire their villages when they returned back there”.

On the other hand, she also remarks that most of the girls internalized the new culture and identity given to them in the school despite of these contradictions. She thinks that it was easier for them adopting the school life since the conditions of the school was better than their home. Moreover, she observes them to figure out that whether they transformed into their first condition or not when they came back to school after summer holidays. She says,

The school was fine; it was easy to get accustomed to, and it was more comfortable than their homes. They loved it... They used to go to their villages with a good Turkish, and they would not return back as Kurtdified. They would come back to school without any change during the holiday. Of course, they would not come back with their village clothes on. They all had albums at school. You can see the difference between their initial appearance and the final one.

However, the transformation was not an easy process for the girls who began to feel themselves different from other people in their villages. On the other hand, they did not feel belonging to the new culture given to them completely. They compared themselves with Turkish middle class girls and teachers in the school and they were aware of especially their class and culture that were distinctive from them. They lived a contradiction inside of themselves but they could not handle this and they chose suicide. These contradictions occurred since the transformation-taking place in them, did not start to take place in their community. The socio-economic structure of those places nearly was the same while these girls were educated in line with modernization and new national identity. Therefore the success of the educational institutions was limited without a total transformation-taking place especially in the infrastructure of the country. Although these girls internalized the ideals of the republic and felt themselves as the new women of the republic, they lived a great contradiction due to the reality of their villages.

Nevertheless, almost all of the interviewees express that they did not confront any sharp reactions, even though a few of them stress that they had some conflicts in their mind and faced with some difficulties because of the reactions of the villagers or their relatives which were not so harsh. Also the students tell that their families tried to protect them from any reactions. Moreover, the teacher Eser points out that especially the appearance of the students transformed and they did not wear their traditional clothes anymore when they came back to school after summer holidays. This was an important mark of the internalization of the new culture and identity. As

Yuval-Davis points out, the specific cultural codes reflected in the dressing styles and behaviors are also among the markers of the identity of an ethnic group. The transformation of their style of dressing and their behaviors indicate the cultural change in these girls. The transformation in the dressing styles of the girls shows that they adapt the image of the modern Turkish woman, and they try to convey this image to their own communities. This, in a sense, is an evidence for the accomplishment of the purpose pursued by the school.

Debates on woman's body as the most significant element and symbol of the nation-building and modernization projects have been on the agenda of the intellectuals and politicians of not only the republican era, but also the pre-Republican era. These debates were also concerned with the introduction of the woman to the public sphere. One of the main purposes of the early republican period was to create an image of the new modern Turkish woman. So, all those values attributed to women, i.e., beauty, dressing codes, expected patterns of behavior, underwent great transformation within the scope of the modernization/Westernization project of the Republic (Kadıoğlu, 1994:659). By education, these girls experienced such desired transformation. Although nobody told them to return back to their villages and educate other children, they voluntarily undertook such a task, and they became role models.

## **8.2 Sıdika Avar's Influence on Students' Adaptation**

In this part I will focus on Sıdika Avar and her influence on the children. She is the most primary figure in the adaptation process of them as well as being a model for them. Moreover, the Kurdish village girls regarded her as a mother. Therefore, they could internalize the new identity that was based on the Turkish culture and Turkishness. Those girls were considered to be the representatives of the ideals of the republic in their own community since they would be the pioneers and carriers of the national culture of the republic. Then, they were accepted as the mothers of the future who would be influential over their offspring. Being one of the new women of the republican Turkey and an ardent follower of the Kemalist ideology, Sıdika Avar had the responsibility of carrying these nationalist, secular ideals of the Kemalist

ideology to other women coming from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. She was aware of the role of women in the nation-building and modernization project. Accordingly, Avar -who was always described as the idealist Turkish woman or the Turkish pioneering educator- tried to construct a new identity and a life style for village girls who would be the new women of their own community and education provided a powerful ground to realize those aims. It was the vital element of the success in constructing the new woman (Thapar, 1993:83). As mentioned before, girls' institutes played very essential ideological functions in the construction of the new national identity and culture. Those institutes served to raise the new women of the Turkish state and to provide the unity of language and culture by means of these new women who would be the mothers of the next generation.

To introduce Sıdıka Avar we should get answers to these questions: Who was Sıdıka Avar? What were her primary targets? In what ways did she influence the village girls?

Sıdıka Avar was born in 1901 in İstanbul and she graduated from Çapa Teacher's Training School of Girls in 1920. She worked in İzmir and Ankara as a teacher of Turkish language. She was appointed to the Elazığ Girls' Institute in 1939, during the time of the undersecretary Rüştü Uzel. Then, she started to work as the director of the Elazığ Girls' Boarding Trade School from 1940 till 1959.

She was the patriotic and nationalist new woman of the republic. Hence, when she came to the school, she had a mission. This is expressed with her own statements in the following:

I knew for what reason I was appointed here. The director general of national education, Nurettin Boman said, "As a Turkish missionary your duty is to help them to internalize the Turkish culture and Turkishness. This is what Atatürk wants...But if people realize this-what you want to do-, it will hurt their feelings, so you should be very careful." Did not I get the higher education at Gazi University for this purpose? (Avar, 1999:46).

After coming to school, she undertook the responsibility of changing first the enrollment of the students then the conditions. Before her and for a while after she went there, the girls were enrolled to the school by force of the gendarme but she changed this regulation because she believed that this was not a good and effective



method. She thought that the teachers had to win the hearts of the families. Thus, those families would give their children easily. However, taking the girls by force did not work and the families tried to hide their girls. For this reason, the number of the girls was very limited when she first came. Then, she began to change the misbehaviors of the teachers and the workers/school servants towards girls and she tried to protect them against unfair punishments and arbitrary behavior of both. Besides, she also promised the girls' families that she would not cut girls' hair like boys. As it is seen from the impressions of the women about their first day at school, they were badly affected by their hair's being cut. She states that especially not changing the form of the girls' hair led both the girls and their families feel closer to her (Avar, 1999:65). Consequently, she got the sympathy of the families and the students; what's more the students regarded her as a mother. Sıdıka Avar assumed that this sympathy was necessary for imposing Turkishness and its culture on their hearts and minds. Those children who suffered from the results of the uprising and economic difficulties needed love and compassion. In relation to this, she mentions about the traumatic effects of the rebellion on them. She stresses,

... Some of the pupils were talking and crying out in their sleep. The village life and their experiences in those years affected them seriously...Some of them were talking in sleep; they told a lot of things... Most of the girls were from the villages where rebellions were seen. Beautiful or ugly, every one of them was a young human being. Their broken hearts, which needed love and compassion, should be filled with Turkishness.

Accordingly, she believed that if she had not changed all terrible attitude and regulations towards the children, they could have become a stranger to the school and the education. This would have created a negative effect on the environment and imposing the ideals of the republic to it would have faced a strong resistance. Consequently, she wanted to take children directly by going to those areas, but she faced with the rejection of the newly appointed director of the national education. In this respect, she notes,

He was unaware of the aims of the school, the types of the village children to be educated, the influence of this study on villagers, making the people and the state integrated by means of this method. How could we enter those deserted villages? In fact, it was necessary to enter those regions. There was no use in collecting children from villages which had schools already (Avar, 1999: 77).

In her annual school report, she expresses the reasons of the special treatment of those children. She explains,

The education level is the most important subject to be discussed by our institute. We should do this in an acceptable, effective, gentle and indirect insistent way. We have to make a group-different in terms of custom and tradition, way of thinking and ideology-be assimilated. Today, we should deal with all the difficulties and reactions knowing that we are responsible for implementing this ideal and make people like Turkishness. We should never forget that we have a hard duty which is to teach the Turkish ideal and the values of the time to the children whose families never trust us. Those boarders are the ones we should look after especially after classes-in their spare time. They are not the students of the institute and they are not like any other village children; because they even do not know the Turkish language. Tolerating their anxiety, nervousness and suspicions due to their new environment, we should endure every kind of attitudes and solve their problems (Avar, 1999: 256).

After these explanations, she describes the main qualifications that the teachers should have. She also points out the difficulties that they would face. She remarks,

Our friends-teachers of the institutes-should come here knowing that they will have to teach everything to those children from using handkerchief, to wearing belt, going to bed, using taps, opening the door and tying their shoelaces. ... This school needs volunteer teachers, not the ones appointed by drawing lots. Also, this school requires idealistic teachers who are not inclined to be a snob, not after a luxurious life and who can create radical changes under the deprivation of good conditions (Avar, 1999: 256).

She was conscious of women's role and educating them to create the patriotic, nationalistic citizens of the republic in the most remote areas where the centrist state has not been diffused since the time of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the fundamental aim of the Turkish nation-state was to create patriotic, nationalistic citizens who were the carriers of the ideals of this state in order to homogenize the country in terms of ethnic characteristics, language and culture. For this reason, the republican regime tried to integrate all kinds of ethnic and religious majorities into Turkishness and its culture. As mentioned in chapter four, the policies of those teachers were apparent especially in the Kurdish issue. As they desired to solve this issue by molding ethnic identity of the Kurdish people into the Turkishness, they excluded their ethnic differentiation and existence. Sıdıka Avar was the representative of these policies of the republic regime that tried to fill the gap between the state and the periphery by means of its institutions and teachers. The main issue in the Kurdish area was to integrate them into Turkishness. To build roads and schools were not only made for carrying the civilization to those areas. In fact,

the civilization meant the justification of the integrative policy of the state towards Kurdish area (Kalman, 1994:446). In this regard, Sıdıka Avar points out that Eastern province were backward and it was ignored by the state for many years. The teachers and other officials of the state were afraid of going there. She believes that paying attention to that subject would alter this situation. She also remarks that the incompetent state officials and inadequate applications of the state brought about a gap between the state and this area. In relation to this, she expresses,

It is our ultimate duty to make these people happy, help them to get rid off this feeling of inferiority, to gain their personality who were educated by incompetent civil servants once and deprived of judges, doctors, teachers and who lost their values (Avar, 1999:302).

In the same way Eser, a teacher, describes herself as an idealistic teacher. She also adopted the mission of carrying Turkishness and its culture to the students in that school. She notes,

The aim of the school was to integrate Turkishness into the minds of Kurds and I did my best. All the other teachers of general education were trying to teach everything to those children and bring them up as good citizens. And I know that there were successful students... Later, I heard that the boarding part was closed for the new teachers did not approve of. We were ready to face with every difficulty when we came here; but I remember a friend from Manisa who said, 'I am an institute teacher, I do not care those Kurdish girls and I cannot bare washing them and their bad smell.' This duty was really a matter of self-sacrifice for teachers and if the education ministry had supported those teachers more, I think nobody would have given up the duty. This is, of course, my opinion and I never thought of gaining money since I was an idealistic teacher.

How do the interviewees express Sıdıka Avar and her influence on them? What do they think about her efforts during their education process? As mentioned before, all of them regarded her as equal to their mothers. Just two of them found her effort a kind of assimilation but they also express that they loved her very much. They think that she provided the opportunity of changing their lives. She is considered as the most important person of their educational career as well as being good mothers and wives. They compare her with other teachers and point out the difference. One of the students, Nuran (1938), notes,

She introduced herself to us. She said, 'I am Sıdıka Avar, I came here for you, I am your Turkish language teacher.' We felt happy. She examined us one by one, asked our names. Then, she had a notebook; she was taking some notes that I did not understand. Maybe, she was writing our names down, I do not know. Later on, we admired and adored Sıdıka Avar...We were second year students. We did not like the Turkish language classes because our former teacher was scorning us, beating us with a ruler. Sıdıka Avar took a notebook out and wrote down all the names. She was writing everything in detail. She was asking, 'Where

do you come from? Who are you? How old are you? Your name? Your surname? Your address?' She had a very big notebook that we had not seen before in the former teachers' time. What would she ask, what would we say? We were afraid. We did not hear of books, stories before and who would read them for us then? We passed to the second year... We were like hostage birds in those teachers' hands. We were really scared...We studied hard. Afterwards, she opened the Heidi book. We were calling it as 'Haydi'. The story was very strange and at the same time really marvelous. We were waiting for the next class impatiently to hear the rest part of the story from Sıdıka Avar... We adored her very much. She was like God for us-Oh,I hope God will forgive me-, but that was true. We adored her as Kurdish girls, as girls from Dersim. We regarded her as a mother; she was the closest person to us after our own parents. She interested in all our problems, she became the person in charge of us at the school. She was responsible for us. Later we became third year students. There were successful students among us, but also there were some unsuccessful ones who could not pass the classes. Some of them could not learn Turkish. Everything was like this...And Sıdıka Avar was now the person in charge of us, a responsible director. She became the deputy school principal, and then principal and we thought that the institute was ours, then.

In the same way, Nazlı stresses,

There is nobody like Sıdıka Avar. It's impossible. I think there is no other educator like her in the world and there will be none.

Likewise Hediye states,

She was telling about the freedom of girls, the principal was saying 'Our girls should learn everything; they should be exemplary and pioneering girls. One day you will become mothers and you will teach everything to your children, especially to your daughters.' She was gathering these girls around her like a mother, with the love of a mother and tells them how to go to bed, wake up, comb and braid their hair, brush their teeth and clean their feet. She taught everything to the children from rural areas that knew nothing. It was thanks to her that girls from Tunceli became educated and cultured... She was interested in everything even more than a mother. She was not a teacher or a director, but a real mother.

Similarly, Sanem notes,

Sıdıka Avar was the mother of the students. Once I was ill and every evening she gave me something -I think it was castor oil- after dinners. She was our real mother; she was our second mother at the same time. She was very earnest and sincere.

On the other hand, Seher and Gülümser tell that Sıdıka Avar wanted to integrate them into Turkishness. However, they also loved her due to her humanistic attitudes towards them. In this respect, Seher claims,

... Later we heard that she knew how to behave to us and win our hearts to integrate us into Turkishness. I remember, she came near us as soon as she took her salary and she used to buy a kilo of sugar and a kilo of something like pistachio nut, which we had not tasted before. She taught us how to eat it. Thus, she was winning our hearts. She taught me embroidery by using a pin. She was interested in every one of us. She did her best for us as far as she could. For a few years she was a teacher only, and then she became the school director for she was a successful teacher and she became popular. At that time she could not spare much time for us, she was very busy, and we graduated after 5 years. Then we returned village and stayed there for 2 years. What should we do in the village? We should go to school, of course, but how? Luckily, we enrolled at this village institute with Sıdıka Avar's help. We would not have gone to the school but stay in the village, if she hadn't helped us. What would have happened, if we had

stayed in the village? We would have married after the third year at school. We would have married, that's all. Then we would have had children... But we became teachers. Firstly, three girls from our village became teachers one of which was the daughter of my aunt. She was working at the Children's Protection Association. His father was killed in the slaughter in Tunceli.

Similarly, Gülümser adds, "Sıdıka Avar brainwashed the girls. She was taking the girls to the institute." Despite this expression, she believes that they had a good education by means of her efforts.

On the other hand, Emine says,

I strongly disagree with the idea that Sıdıka Avar brainwashed. The eldest girls in the institute was 15 or 16 who could not learn how to read and write, or gave it up. When she found girls like this, she immediately took them to the institute. To educate them... People said that it was the time of assimilation. I say, 'OK' but 'I was among the girls then, so I knew. There was assimilation and I knew who were assimilated and who were not. Did Sıdıka Avar brainwash? ...There were meetings in the evenings, in certain meetings Sıdıka Avar was talking and we were listening to her. I admired her way of talking and her behavior. She was very industrious, very strange and very clever.

In addition to this, Seher mentions about how they began to feel close to Atatürk and his principles after the explanations of Sıdıka Avar. She states,

The most interesting thing was Sıdıka Avar's reading the novel to us and teaching the principles, revolutions and reforms of Atatürk. Up to that time, we have not learnt these; we knew who was Atatürk, only. Do you know who are the three great men of Turkey? As friends: Atatürk, İsmet İnönü and Celal Bayar and then the Chief of the General Staff Marshal Fevzi Çakmak. We knew these, but we didn't know how they made those reforms. We learnt all these from Sıdıka Avar. She told us. She integrated the love of Atatürk and the Republic into us. She heard that girls from Dersim hate Atatürk...Once an operation was held in Dersim, but no explanation was made. Sıdıka Avar must have heard about it, she told us about the operation. Up to that time we were all against Atatürk, I mean we believed that Atatürk stopped the Dersim revolt and he held the slaughter... But Sıdıka Avar explained it to us one by one. In short, according to Sıdıka Avar's words, the Dersim event was like this: Atatürk was ill at that time. The great men of Dersim should stop the rebellion, if they do so they would be given lands in Elazığ and in other big cities. The state should improve the backward Dersim. Dersim people should receive state services and schools. Dersim revolt started in 1937 and Atatürk could not be interested in the revolt since he was ill. At that time the Marshal Fevzi Çakmak was the chief of the General Staff. İsmet İnönü was the prime minister. İnönü presented his resignation petition when Dersim revolt started. We learnt all these from Sıdıka Avar. She was telling how Atatürk rescued Turkey, told about our Independence War, Atatürk's reforms, the reign of the Ottoman Empire, national war. We learnt all about our historical women in the Independence War like: Nene Hatun, Woman Ayşe, etc. On the other hand, we did not tell her about the Dersim event. Neither she asked nor we told. However, day-by-day, our love for Atatürk increased upon her explanations. I mean we learnt how Atatürk was innocent because the orders about Dersim were out of his authority, he was ill then. Sıdıka Avar taught us that Atatürk did his best for Dersim; he opened schools and factories there and changed its name as Tunceli. She taught us everything. Besides, she always talked about women, women in the Independence War. She regarded us as heroines and said, 'every one of you is a heroine and you are Nene Hatuns, Woman Ayses. You, girls from Dersim, you Turkish women, you will improve Turkey. She was so patriotic and she was a Kemalist, too. After we got to know Atatürk and his reforms, we started to love him. She also told that it was Atatürk's order that provided education for us. Hasan Ali Yücel-the national education

minister... Yes, she was telling about him a lot. She liked him very much. She was telling about Hasan Ali Yücel, these village schools, and village institutes, all these. Sıdika Avar told that those village schools, village institutes-all of them-were thanks to Hasan Ali Yücel. Furthermore, I knew about all ministers, think. I cannot remember their names now, but I shall never forget Hasan Ali Yücel. Sıdika Avar was talking about all those village schools, all of them, since it would be the same in the future. She was saying that we would be the women of the Republic. We would be intellectual women. She was explaining to us what to dress, how to behave. Today people claim that there is no difference between men and women and she was showing it in practice then. There was no difference in our school, no difference between men and women... She was hopeful about us very much.

In relation to these issues, Hediye remarks,

The school principal was always explaining Atatürk's studies as, 'Atatürk taught how to read and write to Turkey. He provided civilization for Turkish women. He gave them freedom. He made great reforms...' Sıdika Avar was always saying that it was thanks to Atatürk that we gained our freedom. When I look at the school, I saw that she did a very good job; she raised all the students. The children of her time became teachers, except me. Sıdika Avar sent them to Akçadağ, and all became teachers, educators. I wish everybody were a teacher, a revolutionary like her. She made the literacy reform; it was she who brought the culture of Tunceli. Everybody should accept this, they should be proud of this...

As we can see, all of the interviewees feel that they learnt a lot of things from Sıdika Avar. The sense of being Turkish, being the new woman of the republic, was given to them by her. As mentioned in chapter four, the Turkishness of Tunceli, as well as Kurdishness, was emphasized by the state as the part of the Turkification policy of the state (Bruinessen, 1995; Yıldız, 2001). The feeling of being a member of the Turkish society was constructed by means of creating a common historical memory. From the expressions of Seher and Hediye, it can be concluded that Sıdika Avar tried to give them this feeling by means of the emphasis on Turkish history. As mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the primary reasons behind the establishment of the republican institutions was to construct a new national identity, and to make the non-national Islamic definition obsolete. As Yeğen also says, "as it is vital to all nationalisms, the 'discovery' or the construction of the unity in the historical consciousness and in the language was vital to the Turkish nationalism, which had shouldered the establishment of a Turkish identity" (Yeğen, 1999:189). The Thesis of the Turkish History, which was a thesis of the Turkish History Institution, also aimed at presenting to the Turkish people a sense of pride for their pre-islamic history and their new national identity. The best way of imposing this thesis to the public was to create a nationalist education of history on the same line with the thesis, and to educate the next generations of the Republic. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the idea of a Turkish nation which denied its Ottoman past was the basic drive of the Kemalist

project. And the fundamental purpose was to destroy whatever there was related to the loyalty to the Islam and the Ottaman, and replace it with a new loyalty to the Turkish nation and its homeland. Therefore, the Kemalists perceived the history as a basic tool. The early Republican period saw historians as the founders of the nation-state (Ersanli-Behar, 1992). Their political missions were more critical than their scientific missions, because, Atatürk believed that history was a cornerstone of the principal of nationalism (Inan, 1981). That is to say, the Kemalist regime saw the history as the basic tool of conveying the national consciousness and the national identity that they aimed at, to the public. As the Ottoman Islamic past was the anathema of the Republic, a new ideology would have to be built on a new basis. And this would make the creation of a new history inevitable. As the islamic past could be denied, then the pre-islamic past was chosen to be the basis of the national origin. In this new concept of history, there existed only Turks; other ethnic groups were also Turks in reality. That is why Sıdıka Avar, as an educator that adapted the Thesis of the Turkish History, imposed this thesis on the Kurdish girls, and she tried to adapt the idea that they were actually Turks. She excluded their ethnic identity. She assigned them the role of being patriotic, educated Turkish women who would be the strong basis of the Republic. Since she believed that the republican ideals and Turkish identity had to be given the girls and their families by means of getting their sympathy not by force, she criticized any kind of use of force. She expresses this strategy in the Journal of Yeni Gazete in 1970 as follows,

I accepted introducing the Turkish language to other family members and strengthening it by means of the mother as my first duty. I would make Turkishness and Turkish language attractive by being a model for them. The first thing I struggled against was the undeserved punishments at school. Later I tried to make villagers love school. I decided to get on well with the religious leaders in the region to get their support. I made a good contact with children's families and won their trust. Thus each educated child became a revolutionary in her own village. I worked hard for many years, but I never gave up, nobody crossed me. I integrated Turkishness into young brains. (Yeni Gazete, 1970:4)

However, despite the fact that she preferred this strategy, some state officials discriminated the girls by using awful phrases referring to their ethnic identity. At this regard, Avar points out the shocking treatment of the governor of Bingöl in her memory book. She says that his attitude affected the girls deeply who started to feel that they belonged to the Turkish nation. She notes,

One day Bingöl governor Mr Sahinbaş came. He entered the class of the last year students. The girls stood up with respectful and lovely looks on their faces. Mr. Governor asked, ‘Are these the Kurdish girls?’

Upon this question, the expression on girls’ faces changed immediately, it turned into a deceitful one. I said, ‘they are the Turkish girls of Tunceli, sir. He was continuing as, ‘you see, your fathers and grandfathers paid the price of rebelling against the state by their lives.’ I tried to interrupt him saying, ‘Oh, sir, those were not their fathers. These girls are honorable students. But he went on, ‘Are they not Kurdish? If you behave like this... The government is so strong that it would destroy you all...’ Later I went near the third year boarders. All of them were crying. They were asking me such questions: Why do they see us so guilty? Why do they insult us by calling us ‘Kurds’? Why do they consider Kurds rather worse than miserable people? Did not you tell that we were all Turks? (Avar, 1999: 200).

Sıdıka Avar thinks that these kinds of approaches do not work instead they strengthen their ethnic identity. She says that her strategy is the most effective one and she observes its results from the attitudes of children. In this respect, she states,

The senior students were guiding the new ones very well, especially in terms of Turkish language teaching. They did not answer questions, which were not in Turkish; they were teaching the Turkish equivalence of the question to the new students and giving answers in Turkish. They were doing the same even to me and they get out of my questions about the meaning of a Kurdish word easily by saying that they did not know Kurdish. They seemed to be ashamed of knowing the Kurdish language. However, the 4<sup>th</sup> Inspectorcy was forbidden to use the word ‘Kurdish’ as an insult (Ibid: 100).

In relation to this, one of the interviewees express that she could not accept being a girl from Tunceli and being Kurdish. Seher expresses,

... Later we couldn’t accept the fact that we were from Tunceli. How could we do? We were scared after the slaughter. They frightened you so much that you could not say ‘I am Kurdish’. You could not... We could not tell anybody that we were Kurds even after we became teachers. I am Kurdish. I am Alaouite. People look down on you, how you can tell the truth. We were afraid of being humiliated. However, there are a lot of Kurds. You have an interest in your own identity, as you get to know your roots your love increases. You make friends with others and you have to make friends with Turks, too. We were so afraid that we could never talk openly, especially being Alaouite was regarded as a big crime, and people were making fun of us. They called us, ‘atheist’ etc.

Sıdıka Avar observes the change in her students. As mentioned above almost all of the interviewees told about the photographs taken in their first day at school. This was the implementation of Sıdıka Avar’s project. She wanted to prove the transformation of her students by means of these photographs. She tells,

I presented some photos of some of our girls to the undersecretary Rüstü Uzel in the school term of 1944-1945. They were small photos taken by my own camera. The village costumes of our girls were original and at the same time worn out. There was an anxious, severe and scared impression on their faces. A several-week school life changed them a lot. In order to show the difference between their first and last appearances I took their pictures in the first day they came and in the last day of the first year. The undersecretary liked the photos very



much and ordered me to prepare a growth table about new students by taking their photos and the state gave money to me for the expenses (Avar, 1999: 17).

A few of these photographs can be seen in the appendix. These photographs were described in the Journal of Hayat in 1957 as the testimony of the story of creating excellent persons. They were reflections of the success of a Turkish woman who educated them, brought them up as the mothers of the future and sent them back to their villages to make changes in their community. According to Hikmet Ferudun Es, these photographs had to be regarded as the miracle of Sıdıka Avar (Es, 1957: 958).

To sum up, Sıdıka Avar was the most important person who gave the ideals of the republic and the new identity to the Kurdish village girls during their education process and after it. All of the interviewees think that she was their mother who protected them and taught them very necessary skills. Interviewees think that she led them transform their lives into a positive state.

### **8.3 The Lives of The Students After School**

In this part, I will introduce their careers, their marriages and their relations with their families and other people as well as their perception about their education and transformation after school. Did they pursue their educational careers after school? Who supported their education after school? How did they marry? In what ways did they feel the effects of their school in their lives? How do they evaluate their transformation when they compare themselves with other women who could not have any education? Did they teach their mother tongue to their children or not? Do they think that this education provided a strong ground for their lives?

Having education in this school provided the opportunity of pursuing their educational careers in other educational institutions such as in the Village Institutes, the school of nursing and midwife. Five of the interviewees continued their education after the school. Three of them studied in the Akçadağ Village Institute and two of them studied in the school of nursing. Eight of them could not continue their education due to various reasons. Sıdıka Avar was the most influential person in their

training process after the boarding school. She mostly sent them to the Akçadağ Village Institute. Moreover, their families especially their fathers supported four of the interviewees to continue education after the school. However, one of them tells that she created this opportunity by her own effort.

With respect to this issue, Seher who went to Akçadağ with her sister Sakine by the help of Sıdıka Avar tells how they were afraid of attending the Akçadağ School where there was co-education. Akçadağ was established a short time ago before they went there. Therefore, enrolling girls to this school was a vital problem for the state officials. So when the principal of the primary school persuaded her father, he promised him that the state would help his children's expenses. However, when her father went there and noticed that there was a co-education, he changed his mind. Nevertheless, the principal of Akçadağ School told him, "I never let you take the girls back since this may cause bad reputation about the school. You have to leave them here now. If you want, do not send them back to school after the holiday. However, if you still insist on taking them back I would call General Alpdoğan to arrest you."

Similar to her sister Sakine, Seher states this story as follows,

We went to the school as the fifth term students. Sıdıka Avar insisted on sending us to the school, but we didn't accept since we were afraid of going to a co-education school. So we stayed at home for two years. After two years passed, Sıdıka Avar called on us to go to school every time. She wanted us to come to the police station and we went but said, ' We don't want to come to the school, we don't want to learn how to read.' In fact, we wanted to learn how to read and write very much.

- Why didn't you tell her?

- Because of boys.

I mean, we came across many troubles when we went to that school. Imagine, we were brought up among girls, we were village girls and we met many boys there who were older than us. We started to run away from school as soon as we got our bread. I think we were about 14 or 15. I remember that there were tables but there weren't any chairs in the school since it was newly established. Our families didn't want to send us there and we didn't want to go either. On the other hand, it was a bad time, people of the village would gossip about us. Anyway, I will tell you how my father decided to send us to school. The director of National Education department of Tunceli came to the village to find a suitable place for the school building and my father met him and told that he had two daughters who were illiterate. The director asked my father which school we went to? And my father told him that we attended the Elazığ Village Institute. Upon this, the director said that a village institute was opened in Akçadağ and the institute officials wanted girls from Tunceli. At that time the school in Akçadağ was newly

opened. According to the director's words, students repeated the fourth and fifth years there then they started the first year in the Village Institute. Later, the director took my father into his jeep, they visited many villages together and the director made my father promise to send us to the school. He said, "Please send your daughters to the school. I promise you will not regret. You should take them to the Inspectors' Office first, then to Abdullah Pasha. You can be sure that you don't need to spend any money." As a result, we went to Elazığ. My father visited the National Education director. They welcomed my father and gave a lot of stripped clothes to him as bribery. Then they sent us to a Turkish bath. As far as I can remember, there were 15 or 17 girls in the school from different places. My father stayed at the boys' dormitory since there weren't any hotels at that time so they gave a shelter to my father. However, at the dormitory boys told bad things to my father as, "How can you bring your daughters here, this is a dangerous place." And caused my father to give up his idea. My father came in the morning and said, 'Let's go, this is not a suitable place for us.' But we had already given our identity cards to the director for enrolment and we should take them back because it was impossible to go anywhere in Tunceli without your identity card since police checked everything at the police station. There was Alpdogan in the national education inspectors' office at that time. Then, we went to the director's room with my father and we said, "We don't want to attend this school." Our father had said the last word as usual, we could not reject. My father quarreled with the director and said, "They are my daughters and I do not want to give them. Why don't you give my children?" And the director threatened my father and said, "If you take these girls back, other people will speak ill of our school. For this reason, we will not let your daughters leave the school, but they do not need to come back after the holiday if they don't like the school. Furthermore, I will not give their identity cards to you now. If you reject, I will call Abdullah Pasha and want him to arrest you." Hearing this, my sister said, 'Father! You have 4-5 boys, if we make any mistakes here and you find us guilty; assume that your daughters are dead. You shouldn't argue with everybody, I mean we came here from very far. Why do you want to take us back? We will not turn back to school after the holiday, if we don't like it, we will not leave our village. 'As a result, we stayed there. My father got angry with us and didn't let us kiss his hand to say goodbye.

As it is seen above, the co-education was a crucial problem for the families who hesitated to send their children to such schools. As it is obvious above, the efforts of the civil servants and the officers to recruit students indicate the vital role of the institutes for the center. The prospective teachers that would be the graduates of the institute would undertake significant and special responsibilities in the region. As the Kurdish people were the inhabitants of the region, these teachers would have to do more than teaching reading and writing; they would have to instill the Turkish consciousness in these people. That might be why they did not spoke with their students in Kurdish when they were appointed to their own villages as teachers. Unless necessary, they would not speak in Kurdish even with those people around. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the village institutes had a dual function. The first one was to disseminate the Kemalist ideology into the people living in the periphery. The second one was to prepare the rural economy to dissolve in the national market economy. Regarding the issue, Yeğen says, "Although the modernization of the countryside and the subordination of it to control of the center was one of the most significant aspects of the construction of a national culture and the destruction of the

cultural and political autonomies in the periphery, it was not adequate. A new national market economy had to replace the closed ‘economies’ of the periphery. ... Institutes, as significant tools for the inclusion of the periphery in the center, were organized so as to dissolve the closed economies of the periphery in the national market economy. The second paragraph of the tenth article of the Law on the Establishment of the Village Institutes defined the distinguished role of the institutes in the diffusion of the market relations into the periphery. ... However, although the preparation of the periphery to include it in a national market economy was the basic purpose of the institutes, their roles as the representatives of the center were not limited to that. Like other republican institutions, the village institutes were also responsible for the assistance in the construction of a national culture and identity” (Yeğen, 1999:2001). Therefore, it was very important to educate young people there. Sıdika Avar tried to send the good students from the boarding school there. Sıdika Avar says that the graduates of these institutes, those young Prometheus, would be the genuine fighters against ignorance. She also demands allocation from the Ministry for a boarding school. She tells that when the two-year preparation class was initiated in Akçadağ Village Institute, she sent children there in groups.

However, as Seher emphasized above, having education in Akçadağ was something that scared girls. Women were considered as the honor of the family, the community and even the nation, and this imposed a big pressure and responsibility on girls. It was not easy for them to decide to attend to a co-educational institution as boarding students. Actually, they themselves had also internalized these paternal codes, and they expressed that an erroneous behavior or a bad gossip about their family could result in a destruction of their family and their own lives. As Yuval-Davis and Anthias also state, “Often the distinction between one ethnic group and another is constituted centrally by the sexual behaviors of women. Therefore, women were constructed as the symbolic bearers of the collectivity’s identity and honor, both personally and collectively” (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1997: 24-25). Therefore, the supervision of the woman’s body and her sexual, reproductive behaviours and her relationships with others, especially men, in a sense, ensures the protection of the borders of an ethnic group and the maintenance of its difference. All of the girls were conscious of this responsibility, and this was a big burden for them.

This is reflected in Seher's sister's words to her father: "assume us dead if you hear anything dishonorable about us."

Saray also says that she was afraid of going there because of the co-education. However, her father gave her a great support. She compares the Girls' school with Akçadağ and she thinks that Girls' school is better than it. She remarks,

I was a third year student when an education inspector came to our class and said, "Do you want to continue your education?" Sıdika Avar was there at that time and she answered his question as, "Yes, they want." And we all said, "Yes". Only our class was left in the school at that time because the first and the second classes were on holiday. The inspector said, "Inform your fathers that a good school is opened in Malatya where you can become a nurse, a teacher, a health officer, etc." Yes, he told us these. Frankly, we liked the idea very much. We would not do anything in the village; we would not have any jobs there. We said, "OK". Then some fathers lived nearby- villages in Pertek were near- came to school. There was not any telephone in the school so I went to the post office to call my father. They sent the school servant with me and they wrote down my father's address. We called my father and I told him everything. He said, "You should go to school, it doesn't matter where to go, I want you to go to school. Are you alone there?" "No, I go to school with my friends." I answered. In addition, my father always wanted us to go to school and people asked my father why he didn't send my brother to school, but me.

I remember my father's words, "Boys can find a job everywhere, but girls cannot. I did not send my elder daughter because her mother didn't want."

It was afternoon when we arrived at Akçadağ. We went to the dining-hall; all the boys rushed the table. We got shocked when we saw so many boys older than us. There, we started to have the meal in copper dishes, but we used to eat in porcelain ones in our former school. We- me and the other girls near me- didn't touch anything and went out. The other girls in Akçadağ were wearing trousers and short or long sleeved blouses, whereas we had our beautiful traditional hand-made clothes on us. We had ribbons on our clothes and the girls immediately gave us a name: "Spring Flowers" and even they called us: "Daisies". All village girls' clothes were the same- the same color, the same ribbons... It was the first time that we saw so many boys together and there were very few girls in the school...

Interviewees who studied nursing tell that they preferred that school. But one of them notes that she could not get any family support for her decision or education since her family was poor and her father was in exile. On the other hand, another one says that she went to school and her father supported her during her education. She also remarks that there were not Village Institutes when she graduated from the school in 1955. There were Teacher's Training schools, which were located in other cities far from Elazığ and Tunceli, and the nursing school.

Almost all the interviewees who did not attend the Village Institutes mainly tell that their fathers did not send them Akçadağ because of the co-education. However, three of them point out that they did not have the choice like Akçadağ

since it was closed and they could not go to other schools because of their fathers' unwillingness or their economic conditions. Except for them, one of the interviewees went to Akçadağ but she left the school in the last year since she decided to marry. She states that she married a man who also studied there and he did not allow her to become a teacher, because in those years a married couple was not appointed to the same village. Another interviewee also had the opportunity to go the Akçadağ Village Institute but she also decided to marry and she could not continue her education. Afterwards, she regretted her decision.

In relation to these, Hediye states that her father did not let her study in the Akçadağ Village Institute since he did not want her daughter to be educated in the same school. She notes, "My father did not allow me to go to Akçadağ. He said that he would not send his daughter to a co-education school. That was the only reason."

Similarly, Nazli (67, 1944, 8) express her feelings about the results of her father's decision. She still feels terrible, as her father did not give her permission to go to Akçadağ. She says,

I could not go to school after I graduated from the Girls' Institute. I could attend Akçadağ School for one year only. My father did not allow me to continue because villagers influenced him saying, "Why do you send her to that school where boys and girls are all together, do not send her there." That affected my father most. Oh, today I still blame him, I hope he is uneasy even in his grave. Why did not he send me school? Everybody let their children have that education... Why did he hinder me?... I remember, one day he was ill and I accused him saying, "If you had sent me school, I could look after you now, I could take you to the doctor. But I cannot." Listen dear, if I had graduated from that school and become a teacher, I would be a retired woman now...

The primary reason of Emine (62, 1952, 11) was the economic condition of her family and not having the chance of attending the Akçadağ Village Institute since it had been closed before her graduation. She stresses,

I wanted to go to Akçadağ very much, but my family could not afford at all and also Akçadağ was already closed when I graduated from the Girls' Institute. There were teacher's training schools in two cities such as: Bolu and Trabzon at that time. Oh, how terrible it was! But we could not afford... Going from one place to another was very difficult. On the other hand, people were very narrow-minded. Besides, I suffered from the difficulties of being jobless and I still do, still I dream about the school.

When we look at their marriages we see that all of them did not get marry with farmers. They married educated persons, such as teachers, lawyers, civil servants, judges and tradesman. Eight of the interviewees got married with the

teachers graduated from the Village Institute or Teacher's Training School and one of them married a judge and another married a lawyer. Two of them got married with civil servants and just one of them married a tradesman. One of them married with men who were not Kurdish Alaouites coming from Elazığ and Denizli. One of these who married a man from Elazığ in 1950s says, my family was against my decision at the beginning but then they had to accept and we did not get any problem. She also tells that although her husband is from Elazığ, he is neither Sunni Kurdish nor Kurdish Alaouite. He is Turkish and his family went there a long time ago due to the Law of Settlement. She states that she did not want to marry a Kurdish man at all. The other one whose husband is from Denizli notes that her father and other relatives did not oppose her decision and they were kind to her husband. However, she married him during the 1960s when the mentality of people began to change and she stresses that her father was an enlightened man who believed that humanity was more important than ethnic identity.

In addition to these, all interviewees say that they did not desire to marry an educated man since they were educated. Their families also did not want them to marry uneducated farmers after this education.

In relation to this, Seher remarks, "We and our families both wanted an educated man as a husband. Why should I marry a villager?"

Despite this consciousness, only three of them could choose their husbands on their own. Their families already made decisions about the marriages of others. Hence, it can be concluded that the traditional marriage patterns continued to exist in those times. Even though the families noticed that the education was an important tool for the transformation of their daughters' lives, they wanted to hold their traditional roles and power in their children's lives. This approach can be seen in their reaction to the co-education. While they could accept that their daughters had the education in the Girls' Institute, most of them did not like the Akçadağ Village Institute where there was a co-education system. As it is known, women had an important place firstly in their families then in the Kurdish and Turkish community. The modernization brought about some changes in traditional patriarchal codes such as women's participation into the public life; women's suffrage, it also continued to

reproduce many patriarchal codes (Kandiyoti, 1987). As Toktas points out that the Girls' Institutes provided a middle way for solving the problem of education of women coming from the traditional life-circles (Toktaş, 19: 400). They reproduced the traditional feminine roles according to the modernized requirements as well as nationalist ideals of the republic. The institutes contributed to the bringing up process of the mothers of the future who combined traditionalism and modernism. Consequently, it can be told that the Kurdish Alavites families also started to transform as a result of the diffusion of the state's policy. However, as their infrastructure did not change totally, this limited transformation took place gradually. Because of this, the effects of the Kemalist reforms did not reach those places for a long time. Consequently, the practices of underage marriages, requiring dowry in the marriage contracts and polygamy, the rejection of educational rights of female children was still dominant in those places. All of those issues created conflict among the modern state and the traditional familial structures which resisted intervention of the state to their hegemony. In conclusion, they did not want their daughters to attend a co-educational program and they wanted to arrange the marriages of their girls as well as their behavior. As mentioned in the third chapter, although the process of the modernization gave the state the opportunity to penetrate into the public domain extensively, its fundamental need to transform the private domain was limited; furthermore this became apparent in rural areas where the women's participation into institutions of the modern state was only possible by mediation through males. Consequently, these males were dependent on influencing recognized male authority figures such as religious or tribal leaders to instigate change (Kandiyoti, 1997; Arat, 2000). In fact, it is known that the republican reforms related to making women equal with men in public domain ignored the differences between men and women in the private domain. Being a modernist ideology, Kemalism tried to make women visible in the public life on the contrary to the traditional, religious patriarchy which made women as sexual objects who had the potential to shame her family and community honour and excluded them from the public life totally. On the other hand, Kemalism also attempted to compromise traditional gender roles with the modernized ones by asexualizing women in public life. It did not attempt to address radical transformation in basic traditional gender roles in the home front. The Kemalist thought that the question of male-female



equality had been resolved through the new legal framework. Therefore, the traditional gender roles of women were reconstructed in the nationalist project of the Republic. Family was described as the basic moral unit of the nation and the sexual division of labour in the family was rearranged according to the traditional gender roles which regarded men as breadwinner and women as homemaker. In addition to this, women remained the primary symbols of honour and morality (Durakbasa, 2000; Arat, 2000; Berktaş, 1998). Because of these reasons, the changes brought via republican reforms scratched only the surface. They did not touch the vital part of the gender relationships. Hence, especially the marriage contracts which regulated women's lives remained to be under control of the local communities (Kandiyoti, 1997).

In what ways did this education affect their lives after school? Could they make use of that knowledge and training in their lives? How do they evaluate themselves today? What do they think about the education and its effects on their lives?

All interviewees think that they are lucky in having this education. They state that it transformed their lives as well as that of their families since they supported them at least in economic terms. Besides, they remark that they affected their community somehow because they became a model for other families in their villages. Their bad opinions about the education of the girls started to change and they began to send their daughters to these schools. The interviewees stress that the number of the girls attending school increased after they started to work as teachers in the school because other families saw that those girls had a status in the society and helped their families in economic terms. In addition, they emphasize that they used especially the skills, which were taught them at school in their villages and at home. All of them stress that they are good mothers and wives. Therefore, they think that they are different from other women who could not have such a kind of education. They think that the school did not only pave the way for having a job but it also made their lives easier. Although they remark that they could not use their knowledge effectively in their villages except for practical things, they say that they use it in the other phases of their lives. They also emphasized the importance of

education of woman. Almost all of them believe that mother is the most essential person who teaches everything to her children, so the education of woman is necessary for the future of the country.

On the other hand, Seher (76, 1938, 11) points out that she finds herself lucky in having this education that also provided a ground for having a good job. She states that she felt very useful happy that she could help her relatives in many subjects and she notes,

If we hadn't gone to school, everybody in the family would remain uneducated. We helped our family with the use of our knowledge we got in school. There were a lot of people in the village who admired us at that time...If Sıdıka had not been here, we would not be educated. We would have stayed in the village and married after our third year in the school. Yes, there was not any other thing to do, we would have married and had children. Then we became teachers in Akçadağ we heard that about 20 girls married in our village afterwards. Other people in the village saw that we were going to school and studying hard-also nothing changed except that we started to wear short-sleeved blouses- they saw this and decided to send their daughters to school.

Likewise, Fatma states,

I certainly believe that the school had a good affect on our lives. What we learnt at school was very useful for our children and our housework. We have learnt a lot there, although some people do not like those schools... I do not have any idea about political things, but we had a good education there. I learnt sewing, embroidery and Turkish language at school. Just alike my sister-in-law taught us many things, we taught many things to the younger generation.

On similar lines, Sanem (74, 1939, 10) also expresses that having education was a good chance for her as well as influencing other people in the village. She notes,

Seeing that we did a good job, people decided to send their daughters to school. Some of them regretted that they forced their daughters marry or made them run away from home... It was much later than the rebellion that the school was opened. However, nobody knew anything about the school in 1938 in the village. Nobody could speak Turkish, either. Now everybody can speak Turkish and everybody has been modernized...God gave this chance to us and we had education. We had difficulties and also good days in the school. Our poor families could not afford to send us school; we even did not have anything to eat. As well as ourselves, we sent our own children school, too. What would we do, if we had not gone to school? You see, villages have water and electricity now, but it was not like that in my time... In the past, there was not any school or any other place to learn Turkish, we only had that institute. The state attached importance to girls' education and it wanted girls to learn Turkish and knowledge and training about their houses. We went to school and became the examples of this project. Later, seeing that we started and finished the school, everybody began to send their daughters. People got accustomed to the school.

Gülümser (76, 1940, 13) notes that she benefited from the advantages of the school and she thinks that the school education was not only useful for her but also for her family and her environment. She continues,

I made myself useful not only for my village but also for everybody in the environment and for the school where Mr Tahsin -my husband- worked as a teacher. I made use of my knowledge and training at the school where my husband worked. At first, we went to a school in a Kurdish village in Elazığ. I was teaching sewing, embroidery and other things to the girls... I mean my education was very useful for my children, my grandchildren and other people as well. I cannot imagine what I would do now, if I had not had any education. I might have been making buttermilk, milking cows, cleaning the stable... However, I feel very well right now. I have a good husband, a house and a successful son who became a lawyer.

Similarly, Saniye (73, 1946, 16) feels that she is lucky. She notes,

Really, if I had not gone to school, I would not have known many things. Now, at least, I can take a bus, I can write, I can read the number of the street when I go somewhere. In those old days, nobody let his girls go to school, that school provided us with chance to have education.

In the same way, Salime (60, 1952, 11) notes,

I find myself lucky when I compare myself with uneducated women. It is a very important thing that I can understand what I watch and listen to on TV, at least. On the other hand, last year we went to İstanbul with my husband to visit one of his close friends and his family. Those people were from our hometown. Then, in the room there was a TV and songs on it. Later my husband asked, 'Do you like watching TV, Mrs. Seyire?' to an elder relative of the family visiting the family and who was rather older than my husband and who was not literate for she did not go to school. 'Of course I like TV but I cannot understand anything, I wish I found songs on TV that I can understand' was her response...

Likewise, Elmas (65, 1955, 17) states that she used the skills in her life after school. She tells,

After a certain time, I bought a sewing machine because people had me sew clothes for them. I was sewing clothes for my children as well. I had learnt it at school and I was an exemplary woman in the village. I took the life in the boarding school as a model in my own life and that made me feel self-confident. I think that I am a good mother and a housewife. When I compare my present state with the past, I can say that I improved myself and today my peers have more or less reached the same level as me... I find myself lucky in going to that school. However, I cannot imagine what would happen if I had not been so determined to be educated and so insistent in going to school. I think, I could not have expressed my feelings so easily.

Sakine remarks that although they could not benefit from all they learnt at school in their villages at first, they began to use them by combining them with the education they got in Akçadağ. She believes that they became good examples for other people in the villages. She explains,

We could not make use of everything what we learnt at school in the village. However, we combined our former education with the one we got in Akçadağ and we profited from that knowledge and training while raising our children... When we returned to the village after we graduated, people admired us. We felt very useful there. What's more, I remember there were not any girls in the first school where I worked as a teacher. When I went near people, they were running away. So I spoke in Kurdish and told them that I was coming from a village in Tunceli and encouraged them to come to school and get the education. Then people started to bring their daughters to school on their own.

Obviously, all the interviewees think that they gained many things from the school. Besides, they remark that they became models for others and they also tried to be useful for their people as well as their families.

As it is mentioned above, the interviewees think that they are different from other women of their community who did not have the education. They feel that they had a status in their community and entire society.

Furthermore, Sakine (77, 1938, 12) notes,

Surely, people who did not have any education were different from us. They admired us and they complained saying, "I wish I had the chance. Look, how self-confident you are, how modern you look." I recall that my uncle's daughters were crying when they saw us and they curse their father as, "Damn him! If he had allowed us to go to school, we would have become teachers or we would have got a salary and we would not need to ask for loan from others." In my time there was a clear distinct between educated and uneducated women. For example, girls, who could not come to school, were married to a man by their families and their husbands beat them. Moreover, when we return to village for summer holidays, villagers were welcoming us. They respected us... Today whenever I visit my hometown, people call me as, "Look, this is Mustafa's daughter, they became teachers." We took the advantage of our education everywhere and all the time. For instance, I visited a tribe called "Hıran" and the headman of the tribe from Moğundu. "Seyid Hussein"-who helped me most- called all the villagers who were performing the holly dance of Alaouites. Hussein made me sit in the seat of honor and introduced me as; "She is the daughter of Mustafa from İzol tribe. She had a good education and became a teacher. Listen, Hasan Ağa, you should have sent your daughter to school." Then Hasan Ağa answered, "Once I could not perceive, but look our new teacher will train our girls now." I educated his daughter with difficulty, but she became a midwife at last...

In the same way, Nazlı (67, 1944, 8) remarks,

There is a very sharp distance between the uneducated women and us. We are luckier, for example, when my husband criticizes me for something I can defend myself, I have the courage and the power. In contrast, village women cannot do such things. Fortunately I had that education because I never had any difficulty in the cities we went then, I could do everything on my own.

Fatma (60, 1951, 8) notes,

Certainly, there is a great difference between my elder sister and me in the village although she is older than me. I find myself lucky. If I had not got the chance to go to school, I would stay in the village. On the other hand, I have never felt that I am stuck between two different cultures, although my husband belongs to another culture.

Gülümser (76, 1940, 13) also points out that she is different from uneducated women and she stresses,

Frankly, I feel superior to those women who did not go to school. As a woman I am not different from them, but I know how to, where to go and what to do. For example, I know how to host guests better than them and moreover, in the same social community you can distinguish my manners from theirs. I never talk without thinking. I behave differently. For this reason I feel a bit superior to them. However, as I have said before, I am a woman like them. On the other hand, I know that there are very clever village women...

In addition to these, the interviewees point out that their children mostly graduated from universities. They think that they became a good mother for them. They also remark that they did not speak their mother tongue with their children even though almost all of them lived near villages or in Tunceli for a long time.

In this respect, Seher (76, 1938, 11) states,

We did not speak Kurdish with our children. I do not know, maybe we were afraid then. I accept that it might be because of our unconsciousness. Our children accused us saying, "Why did not you teach us Kurdish though it was your mother tongue." I think we felt ourselves under pressure and also we might have thought that it would not be useful to teach Kurdish thinking that it would not be spoken in the future. How could we know that it can be defined as a language today?

On similar lines, Saniye (73, 1946, 16) expresses,

My children do not know and cannot speak Kurdish. They can never speak Kurdish. We were living in a place near our hometown, my husband was a teacher, and we spoke Turkish with our children all the time...

Likewise, Elmas (65, 1955, 17) says,

We were speaking Turkish with our children. My husband was a teacher in a village near our district. Later we went to cities, but we spoke Turkish all the time... At that time we found it unnecessary to teach Kurdish to our children thinking that they could not use it in their lives.

Similarly Sakine (77, 1938, 12) stresses,

I spoke Turkish with my children all the time. My husband knew the 'Kırdaşki' dialect

and I knew the ‘Zaza’ dialect, I mean we did not understand each other’s language. My husband said to me not to teach Kurdish to children believing that it would affect their Turkish accents badly, which might affect their success at school since he wanted them to have a good education and a good status in the future.

Likely, Saray (71, 1941, 9) notes,

None of my children knows Kurdish. My husband forbade it saying, ‘ The Kurdish language does not have any grammar so it is no use teaching it and also speaking Kurdish may make prevent them speaking Turkish well.

Moreover, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) tells that she wanted her children to speak Turkish very well and she goes on,

We never spoke Kurdish with each other at home but only with my mother. I beat my children and forced them to speak Turkish with Istanbul accent.

It can be concluded that they all internalized the nationalistic ideals of the republic given to them at school. We can also observe that they regard themselves as the new woman of the Republic from their own point of view. They believe that they are different from traditional women in terms of their appearance and education. They think that they became models for their community and they gained a status in the society. They know how to speak, how to walk and how to use knife and fork in public areas as well as being good wives and mothers in their private lives (Durakbaşı, 1998; Sirman, 1989). These are the characteristics of the republican woman. All of these characteristics were given to those women by means of education, the vital element for the construction of the new woman since it could give them the virtues such as companionship, being clean and self-controlled (Thapar, 1993:83). However, these characteristics were combined with their traditional roles in the family as wives and mothers. Their perception about the women’s roles in the society also reflects the ideology of the Kemalist period. They emphasize the instrumental functions of women in the society.

In this respect, Nuran (76, 1938, 11) remarks,

In the past, the situation of our country was better thanks to the great leader Atatürk and our teacher Sıdika Avar. I realize that women were respected much at that time in our school. Sıdika Avar told me, ‘you will not educate only women when you become a teacher. You should teach in the school in day time and you should gather everybody from women to men, children, young and old people together and teach them the Turkish alphabet. That means that I started the illiteracy campaign there. I would do this for my village. Especially women can do this well, because they are the ones who know how to bring up children. Now I can

understand that this kind of implementation was the order of the state, Hasan Ali Yücel gave these orders. We were teachers at school in daytime and educators in the evening. Probably none of my friends is like me, none of them can understand what it is like to be an educator and a teacher at the same time. That is what I can remember. They wanted to make a revolution by means of women's power, literacy and by expressing Turkey's facts.

Seher (76, 1938, 11) also expresses that how she internalized the characteristics of the republican woman who was self-confident in the public domain. She remarks that how she decided to participate in the local elections. Moreover, she expresses that even though she did not continue her educational life, she never gave up developing herself and her children. She notes,

It was the local election time in the district when I went there. I met the village headwoman, I examined her dressing style and I found both herself and her appearance quite nice. I decided to participate in the elections thinking that I should do something for myself as well as my children. I forced my children to improve themselves then and in the future, but what about me, why should I remain the same? Having these questions in my mind, I took part in the elections. At night I was making some plans that I would not accept any men involve in my struggle, which would be held only by women. Normally, there should be nine staff in the office of the village headman except for him. I planned to form a group of female officials. I had dreams about the womanpower in the Çankaya Presidential Palace. In the morning I talked with every women whom I had good relations with, for example with an advocate Leman Gök and Bahriye Üçok... And I won the elections...

Similarly, Gülümser (76, 1940, 13) emphasizes on the function of women as a mother in the society. She tells,

The state officials wanted us to go to school for both educating us and teaching us the Turkish language. There was a great difference between an educated and an uneducated mother in terms of bringing up children and in terms of their social manners...

Hediye (74, 1941, 13) also mentions the importance of women and the ideological function of the school. Although the Republic supported women's participation in the public sphere, the basic responsibilities of women were still within the limits of the private sphere. The most important task of women was the motherhood. They were the ones who would educate the next generation with the ideals of the republic. So, the main point was to perform this task as good as possible. Hediye states,

We would be brought up as good mothers and wives. For instance, they said to us, 'Imagine, you will marry one day and become mothers. Then you will teach your children what you have learnt here and you will use this knowledge and training while you are raising your children...'

Fatma (60, 1951, 8) explains why the state gave priority to women's education. She says,

They might have thought that it was women who had the greatest role in the training of their children. That might be why they gave us the priority. We would raise children in the future.

In the same way, Sakine (77, 1938, 12) thinks,

If a woman has education, she can educate her husband and her children, she can teach them Turkish. Certainly, it's women who develop the family and teach them many things. She teaches her children Turkish, tells and teaches them what she learnt at school and in this way they improve.

Sıdika Avar also observes the transformation that took place in her Kurdish village students. She thinks that she was successful since they used the knowledge and skills in their lives after school. She visited them to examine their lives after school and she came across with her students who got married in the villages when she went to take the girls from the villages or sometimes they came to visit her in the school. She mentions her observation about the transformation one of her students underwent. She says,

Lütfiye -one of the married ones- was whom I helped most at school. People were even afraid of comforting her because her uncle was one of the executed rebels. The child should not be blamed for his uncle's mistake. Lütfiye married. Eleven years passed after her marriage. One day she brought her one-year-old daughter to me wanted me to educate her, what made me very happy. The mother's skin was light brown and the child was fair and she was speaking Turkish very well. Her appearance was very good -she was neatly dressed; her hair was well combed just like the children in the city. That means that Atatürk's project came true and mothers introduced the Turkish language, social manners and knowledge and training to his family. (Avar, 1999:64).

In addition to this, Hikmet Ferudun Es mentions about his experience about a student of Avar who was working as a teacher in a village school at that time. He states this event as follows,

A young girl welcomed us in front of a white building in the first village we visited... This young girl was the teacher of the village school and she was one of the old students whom Sıdika Avar gathered from the mountain villages and educated in the Elazığ Institute. The young teacher said, "The first day Sıdika Avar took me from home I knew only four or five Turkish words. We got on a white horse and went to the city. A big school... A woman more than a mother..." I realized that the young teacher was speaking Turkish very fluently. Furthermore, Sıdika Avar did not only educate a human being but a young Avar. The young teacher was doing her best to do the same miraculous thing for her own village, which her master did once. Avar's enlightened students were working in the same regions and try to educate people from their own hometowns. Sıdika Avar says, "The districts where I sent my students as teachers were marked as the easy places to work in our map because every one of our teachers become our best representatives there. The most important thing is to work where



we have not gathered any students yet” (Es, 1957:939-940).

To sum up, when we combine these explanations with the interviewees’ explanations, we can conclude that the ideological function of the education mostly became effective on these women. They experienced a transformation process without a trauma despite the difficulties that they faced with during the first year of the school. They all internalized the roles given by the republic to women during the nation-building and modernization process in spite of the ethnic, religious and social differences. They were satisfied with their lives and status. They consider themselves as the pioneers who brought change and civilization into their community. Now they were the models for the civilization of their underdeveloped people. On the other hand, one of them remarks that she is aware of what happened to them. She expresses how she was afraid of revealing her ethnic and religious identity during the school and after it. She states that they could not accept that they were girls from Tunceli saying “How could we accept, others would make us feel like outsiders.” Seher is the only person that expresses her feelings about exclusion of the Kurdish and Alaouite identity despite of the fact that she used the advantages of the school in her family life. She is the only person who explains her dilemma. However, even today, none of the others question why, for instance, they did not teach their mother tongue to their children.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

In this study, I analyzed the inclusion of Kurdish women in the Republican nation-building and modernization processes by means of the Elazığ Girls Boarding Vocational School. The Kemalist modernization and national ideology had deep influences on Kurdish women, who were integrated in these two processes through education. All these women have internalized these ideologies and they believe that they should live accordingly. These women have internalized the themes of civilization and progress, the basic emphases of the Kemalist ideologies, and they accept the backwardness of their own ethnic identities and traditional lives, perceive themselves improved and civilized, and believe that they recorded significant progress when compared to their pre-school conditions. This school also contributed to the transformation of women's self-identities. They define their identities as citizens of the Republic who adapt the secular, modern and Kemalist ideology. They not only adapted these identities and ideologies, but they also voluntarily undertook the mission of conveying these ideologies to the next generations.

On the other hand, being educated in this school contributed not only to the ethnic transformation of these women, but also to the transformation of their class identities. They changed their social-economic conditions by going outside the village, acquiring vocational skills through education and marrying educated men. Education is the most essential means for the transformation in self perceptions of people. It is also a functional tool for the construction of a new national identity and culture. We can conclude regarding the effects of this school on Kurdish women

during the processes of Turkish modernization/Westernization and nation-building in three main points.

First, one of the main purposes of this school was to teach Kurdish girls Turkish in order to integrate them into the Turkish culture. The school has been functional in its purpose of teaching the girls the Turkish language and making them adapt the Turkish culture. All of the women actively used Turkish during the rest of their lives. None of these women taught her children Kurdish, her mother tongue. In this sense, it is obvious that the Kemalist ideology, which emphasized that speaking in Turkish language was a prerequisite of being a part of the Turkish nation, proved very effective on these women. In order to be a part of the Turkish nation, and in order to make their own children a part of it either, these women did not teach the Kurdish language to their children. Because, they believed that Kurdish had no function in the public sphere, that it could spoil their children's Turkish accent and even that it constituted an obstacle on their children's way to a higher status in the society. This approach results from the fact that the official ideology has excluded anything about the Kurdish identity from the public sphere and it has declared separatist any attitude sympathetic to the Kurdish culture. The Kemalist nationalist ideology was so effective in this respect that, as Sidika Avar also observed, girls started to avoid speaking in Kurdish. These women not only taught Turkish to their own children, but they also conveyed it to other people in their villages. Although none of the women defines herself plainly as Turkish, they do not mention their ethnic identities as their primary identities either. They define themselves as Kemalists, and they put no specific emphasis on their Kurdish identities. Actually, their ignorance of their mother tongue, which is one of the main markers of the ethnic identity, shows that they construct their identities primarily on the basis of the modern, secular, Turkish identity. By the help of these women that are the graduates of the boarding school, the state achieved limited progress in its project of diffusion into the regions of Dersim and Bingöl, which had remained isolated from the center for a long time, and integration of these regions into a new national culture based on the Turkish identity and culture. This is because, these women have actively practiced in the rest of their lives what they learned at school, and they affected other people around them.

Second, another fundamental purpose of the school was to raise girls as the new women of the Republic, and to reshape them according to the needs of the modern requisites. So to say, it was to form the identity of the new ideal Turkish woman. All these women adapted this new identity. They perceive themselves as the representatives of the new woman of the Republic. Adaptation of this identity, which actually represented the upper class, urban Turkish women, by women with different ethnic, religious and class backgrounds indicates the success of the girls' institutes and other educational institutions, which were the most significant apparatuses of the Kemalist ideology.

All of these women internalized the identity of 'new woman', who was active in the public sphere, Kemalist, secular, enterprising in the professional life, strong as to protect her own rights, ambitious, a good mother and a good wife. In this respect, they attribute themselves a much different status from that of other women in their communities. Those with professions emphasize the advantages that their professions provided, and also they stress on how exemplary wives and mothers they have been. They perceive themselves as modern woman who knows how to behave in public sphere, how to speak and how to eat. Those without any professions put stress on how good mothers they have been and how successfully they have transferred their own skills and ambitions to their children. They reflect the modern Republican woman image also by their style of dressing. Adaptation of the dressing style of the modern Turkish woman is another important point signifying that these women were successfully integrated to the Turkish culture. Debates favoring the woman's appearance in the public sphere have always taken an important place in the political agenda of the state. The ability of these women to bring new styles of dressing to their villages, especially at a time when the traditional Kurdish values were still strong, indicates the strength of the education they had at school. For these women, the main point was to establish new lives far beyond their old lives. At the same time, each of them perceived herself as a representative of the civilization. Those women, who became teachers, transferred these ideals to their students and so they contributed to the reproduction of the Kemalist ideology. Having adapted the Kemalist ideology, they transferred it to their own communities and their children, and they became the first representatives of the republican ideals in their

communities. All of these women stress that they are certainly distinguished from the other women of their communities, they have established their own family lives on a modern basis, they have utilized all the skills and knowledge they had acquired at school, and they have formed a more egalitarian relationship with their husbands. They tell that their children were well educated, and that, for this, they owe much to their own education. For them, providing their children with a respectable status in the society has been very crucial and they think that this was achieved through the advantages offered by the Republic. In addition to these, there is not radical transformation in their gender perception in line with accepting the identity of the 'new woman' who was confident in the public domain and accepting the notion of female modesty which referred to the traditional values of virginity before marriage, fidelity of the wife, and a particular public persona and dress. They tried to compromise main moral codes of their communities such as upholding honour with their newly founded paradoxical identity. Therefore, they had a strict self-discipline and adapt strategies to overcome the contradictions and clashes by emmeshing modernization and tradition at the same time. They were aware of the necessity to show a sexually modest respectable image that would not threaten the patriarchal morality of their own community. Consequently, when they came back to their villages they generally pursued traditional gender roles in the private domain by mixing their new moral codes. They remained the wife, the mother, bride and nurturer. Moreover, almost all decisions about their marriages and further educational development were given by their families.

Third, although they all experienced some problems of adaptation during the initial period of the school, these problems did not result in traumas during the adaptation process of the identity of the new Turkish woman. Because, rather than the negative effects of the experiences at school, they talked about the advantages and the opportunities they attained during and after the school.

The ideology was so effective that these girls became ashamed of using their mother tongue in the public sphere. Perhaps this might be considered as a trauma, however, the important point is that they do not consider this as a problem. Almost all of the interviewees emphasized that going to that school dramatically changed

their lives; however, they did not come to interrogate the reality that their own ethnic identities became invisible. They did not even ask themselves why they did not speak in Kurdish in their own homes. Because of the opportunities provided by the Republic, they were quickly integrated into the nationalist and modernist project of the Kemalist ideology. The most significant point was that the modernist ideology of the Republic introduced to their lives dissolved and transformed the traditional tribal ties, and paved the way for these women to participate in the public sphere and to have certain rights there. Like the upper class, urban, professional Turkish women, they also think that the Republic introduced many opportunities for women, and thus they have contributed to the reproduction of the republican ideals by internalizing them. As Kandiyoti (1987) also states, it is a standard practice of the secular state to attract women -by the help of mass education, participation in the workforce and legal rights- to the 'national' spheres defined at various levels. Transformation of the traditional structures of the religious and ethnic communities, that is the modernization of the society by the state, provided women with certain liberties. Although the Republic attributed great importance to the traditional roles of women in the private sphere, it also provided women with opportunities to participate in the public sphere and to escape from the control of the traditional structures, and this is the main reason that made their integration easier.

To sum up, the ideological function of the education mostly became influential on these women. They all internalized the roles assigned by the republic to women during the nation-building and modernization process in spite of their ethnic and religious differences. Generally, the literature about the roles of the women in these processes taking place during the early Republican period reflects the experiences of upper class, urbanite Turkish women. The experiences of women belong to different ethnic and religious communities are invisible in the literature. In this study, I intend to shed light on the experiences of Kurdish women during the modernization/Westernization and nation-building processes of Turkish Republic. However, in researching my thesis I found limited resources on gender, nation-building and modernization processes. Within the research material included in my thesis, there appears to be a lack of concrete findings to reflect transformation of gender relations in the private domain. It is my opinion that future research needs to

look at the transformation of the individual experiences about the gender roles in the private domain in more depth.

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## APENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### THE NOTIFICATION AND CIRRICULUM OF ELAZIĞ GIRLS' BOARDING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

T.C.  
MİLLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI  
Kültür Kurumu

284

Sıra No:	Öğretmen:
Adı Soyadı:	
Önceki Kurum Sayısı:	
Tarih:	

**ELAZIĞ YATILI AKŞAM KIZ SANAT OKULU  
TALİMATNAMESİ**

**Maddes 1 -** Elazığ Kız Enstitüsüne bağlı olmak üzere Elazığ'da Yatılı Akşam Kız Sanat Okulu açılmıştır. Bu okulun gayesi, kuvvetli bir millî duyguya sahip bilgili ve meharretli kıy kışları yetiştirmektir. Okul yatılı ve parasızdır.

**Maddes 2 -** Elazığ Yatılı Akşam Kız Sanat Okulunun tahsil müddeti iki yıldır. Bu okulda üç yıllık kıy okulları müfredat programı gergi- venci aahilinde umumî malûmatla birlikte melekî eahiller verilir.

**Maddes 3 -** Elazığ Yatılı Akşam Kız Sanat Okuluna, umumî Genel Müfettişlik mintakasına dahil yerlerden talebe alınır. Okula alınacak talebenin şı şartları haiz olması lazımdır :

- Devlet nizamlarına aykırı hareketlerde bulunmamış çereflî ve iş sahibi bir ailenin çocuğu olmak.
- Zekâ ve kabiliyette yetismeye ve bir sanat öğrenmeye müstait bulunmak.
- Heden ve rahça aasta, illetli ve kumurlu olmamak.
- Okula alınmasına ailesince muvafakat aahili bulunmak.
- Yaşı 12-17 arasında olmak.

**Maddes 4 -** Okula kayıt ve kabul edilecek talibe, aahen şı belgeler istenir :

- Nüfus hüviyet cüzdanı.
- Aşı belgesi, sıhhat raporu (güz meahneet aşı yapılmış olmak şarttır).
- Fotograf.
- Talebenin geldiği yerin en büyük müfettiş aahurundan kabul şartlarını haiz olduğuna dair alınmış bir belge.



T.C.  
MILLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI  
Kültür Kurulu

285

Konu	Çocuk
Tarih	
Önceki kararın sayısı	
Tarihi	

Madde 5 - Elâzığ İstati Akşam Kız Sanat Okulunda kız enstitüleri talimatnamesi hükümleri tatbik olunur.



Sıra No	Öğretmen
Tarih	
Çocukların sayısı	
Tarih	

**Elazığ Yatılı Akşam Kız Sanat Okulu Meslek**

**Dersleri Müfredat Programı**

**BIÇKI-DİKİŞ DERSİ**

Biçki-Dikiş dersinin hedefi, talebeye, biçki-dikiş usullerini ve dikiş tekniğinin inceliklerini öğreterek, ailesine ve kendisine lazımlı olan dikişleri bizzat biçip dikiş kabiliyet ve mesleğini kazandırmaktır.

Biçki-Dikiş dersinin tedrisinde aşağıdaki noktalara dikkat edilmelidir.

1 - Biçki-Dikişte zevkin rolü çok mühim olduğundan daha başlangıçtan itibaren talebenin zevkini inkişaf ettirmeye çalışmak lazımdır.

2 - Talebeyi görmeğe alıştırmalı, iyiye fenadan, güzeli çirkinden ayırtabilmesi için tetkik ve araştırma kabiliyetlerini inkişaf ettirmelidir.

**I - 1. sınıf dikiş programı**

**II - 2. sınıf dikiş programı**

- a) Mühtelif el dikişleri
- b) Makine dikişleri
- c) Paçaltı ve örgü ilikler
- d) Mühtelif cepler
- e) Bebek çamaşırları
- f) Ufak çocuk elbisesi
- g) Çocuk mantoğu
- h) Kadın iç çamaşırları

- a) Buluz
- b) Etek
- c) Düz elbise
- d) Şekli elbise
- e) Manto
- f) Erkek şmölge
- g) Köylü ve iş elbisesi

**ŞAPKA DERSİ**

Şapka dersinin hedefi : Talebeye kadın ve çocuk şapkaları yapabilmeyi öğretmektir. Bu dersin tedrisinde aşağıdaki noktalara dikkat edilecektir. Talebeye bir taraftan şapka yapmayı öğretirken, diğer taraftan derste kullanılan malzemenin mahiyeti hakkında malumat vermek lazımdır. Talebeye yaptırılacak şapkaların kullanılacak malzemenin daima muhitte kolayca tedariki gözönünde tutulmalıdır.

T.C.  
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Kültür Kurulu

289

Sıra	Özellik
Tarih	
Önceki kararın sayısı	
Tarifi	2

I - 1. sınıf şapka dersi

programı

- Kenar temrinleri
- Kalot
- Makine parçaları
- Dikiş neyileri (çirpiş, gizli dikişler)
- Bebek başlıkları

II - 2. sınıf şapka dersi

programı

- Etilli bütçü parçası
- Bütçü parçası (bağöncü)
- Kumaş kedin ve çocuk şapkaları
- Pötr şapka
- Elbise ve şapkalar için basit çiçekler

NAKİŞ DERSİ :

Bu dersin hedefi talebeye, ipek, pamuk ve yün elbise, çamaşır, ve diğer ev eşyası üzerinde muhtelif usullerle zevkli bezinât yapmasını öğretmektir.

Talebeye nakış yaptırılırken dikkat edilecek noktalar şunlardır :

- Nakış, yorucu ve zaman kaybettirici bir iş olmaktan kurtararak herkes tarafından yapılabilecek zevkli bir iş haline getirmek.
- İşin çoklğundan ziyade, sadelik ve zarafete ehemmiyet vermek.
- Bu işlerin mümkün olduğu kadar az zaman içinde yapılmasını temin etmeğe çalışmak.
- Yapılacak nakışların her zaman kullanılabilecek şeyler olmasına dikkat etmek ve bilhassa muhitte kullanılan nakışlara yer vermek ve bunları daha zevkli bir hale getirmeğe çalışmak lazımdır.

I - 1. sınıf nakış dersi

programı

- İplik çekme
- Antika
- Ajor
- Sepi işleri
- Kanaviçe

II - 2. sınıf nakış dersi

programı

- Etamin
- Dantel
- Oya
- Filtire
- Muşabak
- Aplike

EYİDARESİ VE YEMEKPIŞIRMA DERSİ :

Eyidaresi ve yemekpişirme derslerinin gayesi, ev kadını

ve olacak olan talebeye, ailenin sıhhatini korumak, geliri tasarruf

T. C.  
KÜLTÜR BAKANLIĞI  
Kültür Kurulu

290

Sayı	Özeti
Tarifi	
Önceki kararın sayısı	
Tarihi	3

ve idare ile kullanmak usullerini öğretmek ailenin temiz, ucuz, medeni bir şekilde yaşamalarını temine lüzumlu bilgi ve becerileri öğretmektir.

1 - Dersin mevzularının talebenin yaşayacağı hayatı teşkil edecektir.

2 - Okul hayatı, dış hayatın canlı bir örneği olmasına göre talebe okuldaki işleri bizzat yapacaklardır. Alâkadar öğretmenler de bu işleri bizzat yaparak talebeye örnek olacaklar ve ilk işleri daima kendileri yapacaklardır.

3 - Talebeye evidaresine ait yalnız sıfahi malûmat vermek kâfi değildir. Öğretmen, okulda evidaresi ile alâkadar olan ve yapılması lazımgelen işleri bilfiil ve zevkle yaptırarak ve bu suretle onlara bu işlerin yapılması hakkında şuurlu bir itiyat kazandırmaya çalışacaktır. Binaenaleyh evidaresi mevzularına taallük eden işlerin talebe tarafından yapılması için okulun bizzat kendi evleri olduğunu dikkate alarak temizlik ve intizamından kendilerinin mesul olduklarını telkin etmelidir.

4 - Evidaresi ve yemekpişirme dersinin diğer derslerle mümkün olduğu kadar ilgili ve müvazi olarak yürütülmesine çalışılmalıdır.

5 - Mevzuların intihabında daima muhitin şartlarını ve eldeki vasıtaları gözönünde bulundurmak icap eder.

6 - Talebenin okula girmeden önce muhitlerinden ve ailelerinden öğrenmek yoluyla öğrendikleri bilgileri, evidaresi ve yemekpişirme derslerinde dikkate almak ve okulda verilecek malûmatın hududunu ve şeklini bu bilgilere göre tayin etmek lazımdır. Meselâ tahtalardaki yağ lekelerinin çıkarılması için esas itibarile talk kullanılmaktadır. Fakat okulda yağ lekeleri çıkarılır ve talebe bu hususta bilgi verilirken muhitlerinde kolaylıkla elde edilen undan istifade etmeyi ihmal etmemelidir.



Sıra	Özellik
Tarih	
Önceki Kuruluş Sayısı	
Tarihi	4

7 - Talebeye çamaşırlarını bizzat yıkatarak, ütülererek ve lekelerini çıkartarak mümkün olduğu kadar ameli bilgi ve numareselerinin arttırılmasına çalışılacaktır.

Evidaresi ve yemekpişirme derslerinin yukarıda anlatıldığı gibi, daima muhitin ihtiyaçları ve imkânları gözönünde bulundurulmalıdır.

Evidaresi ve Yemekpişirme  
Programı

I - 1. sınıf programı

- Evidaresinin mahiyeti, ev kadınının cemiyetteki kıymeti; ailedeki vazifeleri
- Vücut temizliği (su, sabun)
- Gündelik temizlik (el, tırnak, burun, ağız, kulak, ayak ve baş temizlikleri)
- Çamaşır yıkamak ve muhafaza etmek
- Ötü ve ütünün faideleri
- Muhelif yamalar
- Çorap tamiri
- Bir evin temizliği. (Toz alma, ayna, cam, lamba ve tahta temizliği, muhtelif temizlik vasıtaları.)
- Bir evin sıhhi şartları
- Muhitlerinde bulunan tenvir ve teshin vasıtaları ve bunların kullanılmaları hakkında malumat.

II - 2. sınıf programı

- Badana
- Yağlıboya
- Hall temizliği
- Haden temizliği
- Lekeler
- Muhelif örgü ve yamalar
- Bahçe işleri, tavuk beslemek
- Musaceret kaideleri

292

Sayı:	Ozet:
Tarih:	
Önceki kararla sayısı:	
Tarhi:	5

#### Yemekpişirme Programı

##### I - 1. sınıf programı

- Gıda hakkında malumat
- Muhtelif salatalar
- Çorbalar
- Mahitlerinde bulunan kru ve yas sebze yemekleri
- Hafif pisküvit
- Et yemekleri
- Kofteler
- Yemek adabi

##### II - 2. sınıf programı

- Pilav
- Tavuk ve hindi dolması
- Muhtelif tatlılar
- Ev makarnası
- Reçel
- Turşu
- Basit konserveler

#### ÇOCUK BAKIMI VE HIFZISSİHHA DERSİ //

Bu dersin gayesi, anne olacak kızlara gürbüz, sıhhatli çocukları yetistirmeyi öğretmek ve bunun için lüzumlu bilgileri kazandırmaktır.

Bu derste bilhassa şu noktalara dikkat edilecektir :

1 - Çocuk bakımı nazari olduğu kadar ameli bir derstir. Dersi o suretle vermelidir ki okulu bitiren talebe çocuğu bizzat iyi bir şekilde ve sâlih fennî metodlarla büyütebilsin.

2 - Çocuk bakımı dersinin gayesi, gürbüz ve kıymetli çocukları yetistirmek olduğuna göre, anne olacak kızların bu dersti öğrenmesinin mühim ve vatani bir vazife olduğu talebeye anlatılmalıdır.

#### Hifzissihha Dersi Programı

##### 1. sınıf programı

- Vücut hifzissihhası
- Nebati ve hayvani gıdalar hakkında malumat
- Yemek esnasında ve yemekten sonra dikkat edilecek es'ler
- Gündelik muhtelif gıdaların tetkiki.
- Ev kadınının hifzissihhası
- Ev hifzissihhası
- Hastalığın tarifi ve sebepleri
- Hasta bakımı
- Hastalara yapılacak ilk ihtimam (arı sokması, ular ve akrep zararlemesi, kançibanı ve muhtelif yaralar, ıstıhla tehlikesine karşı alınacak ilk tedbirler.)
- Çıkıklar ve muhtelif askılar.

Sayı		Özet:
Tarih		
Önceki kararın sayısı		
Tarihi	6	

k) Pansumanlar.

Çocuk Bakımı Programı

I. - Birinci Sınıf

Yeni doğmuş çocukla büyük insan vücudunun mukayesesi, çocuğun büyümesi, çocuğun beslenmesi, tabii süt verme, en iyi tarzda emzirme usulleri, 2 saatte verilecek süt miktarı, memeden kesme, anne sütü ile muhtelif hayvan sütlerinin mukayesesi, çocuğa verilecek hayvan sütünün evsafı, şişe ve emziklerin temizlenmesi, muhtelif yaşlarda çocuklara verilecek yardımcı gıdalar, çocukların giydirilmesinde esaslı noktalar, küçük çocukların eski ve yeni tarzda giydirilmesinin mukayesesi, çocuk beşileri ve yıkanması, büyük çocukların giydirilmesi, muhtelif yaşlardaki çocukların uyku ihtiyacı, banyo.

II. - İkinci Sınıf

a - Çocukları hastalıklardan koruyucu tedbirler. (Aşılar)

b - Çocuk hastalıkları : dizanteri, kızıl, boğmaca, difteri, kabakulak, zatürriye, çiçek, suçiçeği. Memleketimizde tatbik edilen vakitli vakitsiz toprağa yatırmak, geç memeden kesmek, kundağa, salıncığa beşiğe koymak ve uyutucu ilaçlar vermek gibi fena usuller. Çocukları bulağıcı hastalıklardan korumak, çocuğun hasta olduğunu anlamak ve ona göre tedbir almak usulleri.



## APPENDIX B

### THE CIRRICULUM OF ELAZIĞ AND SELÇUK GIRLS' INSTITUTE

245

**Ev idaresi:** Yanın ev kadınına, ailesinin sağlığını korumak, parasını tutumlu, idareli kullanma usullerini öğretmek, ailesine genlik ve mutluluk sağlamak için lüzumlu olan bilgi ve mahareterini vermek.

**Müzik:** Müziği sevdirmek, sesi ve kulağı eğitmek, Türk kadınına aile ocağında, çocuk eğitiminde, müziğin ve millî folklorün rolünü, önem ve değerini idrak edebilecek seviyeye yükseltmek.

**Beden eğitimi:** Sağlam, kuvvetli, çevik, disiplin ve düzensiz, cesur, karakterli, yurduna bağlı öğrenciler yetiştirmek.

**Yurt bilgisi:** Türk topluluğunda her yönden erkekle eşit bir varlık olan Türk kadınına vatan, millet ve devlet şuurunu kazandırmak; aileye, vatana, millete, devlete karşı ödevlerini göstermek.

Tablo 1. Selçuk Kız Enstitüsü Ders Programı (1932-1933)

Genel Dersler	Sınıf 1	Sınıf 2	Sınıf 3	Sınıf 4	Sınıf 5
Türkçe	X	X	X	X	X
Yurt Bilgisi				X	
Coğrafya	X	X	X		X
Tarih	X	X	X		X
Hayvanat-Nebatat	X				
Rüziye	X	X	X	X	X
Fizik		X	X		
Kimya		X	X		
Fizyoloji		X	X		
Fransızca	X	X	X	X	X
Beden Terbiyesi	X	X	X	X	
Musiki	X	X	X	X	
Mealeki Pratik Dersler	Sınıf 1	Sınıf 2	Sınıf 3	Sınıf 4	Sınıf 5
Biçki-Dikiş		X	X	X	X
Moda		X	X	X	X
Terziyet	X				
Beyaz İşler	X	X	X		X
Renkli İşleme	X	X	X	X	
Nakış					X
Tamir	X	X	X	X	
Ürü-Kola	X	X	X	X	
Yemek Piyirme	X	X	X	X	
Çocuk Bakımı				X	X
Ev İdaresi					X
Şapkacılık					X
Hafızahha				X	
Teknoloji			X		

Tablo 2. 1947 Programı

Genel Dersler	Sınıf 1	Sınıf 2	Sınıf 3	Sınıf 4	Sınıf 5
Türkçe	X	X	X	X	X
El Yazısı	X				
Coğrafya	X	X			
Matematik	X	X	X	X	
Fizik		X	X		
Kimya			X		
Tabiat Bilgisi	X	X			
Yabancı Dil	X	X	X	X	X
Cimnastik	X	X	X	X	X
Müzik	X	X	X	X	X
Mesleki Dersler					
Biçki-Dikiş	X	X	X	X	X
Moda		X	X	X	X
Çiçek			X	X	X
Çamaşır	X	X	X	X	X
Nakış	X	X	X	X	X
Genel M. T. Resim	X	X	X	X	X
Ev Idaresi		X	X	X	X
Yemek Pişirme		X	X	X	X
Çocuk Bakımı				X	X
Hijyen			X		

Notlar: 1937-38 öğretim yılında bütün sınıflara askerlik dersi konmuş,  
1947-48 yılına kadar bu durum devam etmiştir.  
1942-43 yılında moda ihtisas dersi kaldırılmıştır.

### Eğitim İlkeleri

3. Milli Eğitim Şurası'na göre Kız Enstitülerinin amaçlarına ulaşması için derslerin işlenmesi sırasında uyulacak temel ilkeler şöyle sıralanmıştır.<sup>9</sup>

I- İş ilkesi: En önemli amacı becerikli ev kadını yetiştirmek olan Kız Enstitülerinde, bütün derslerin, tatbiki mahiyetli olması, öğrenci ve öğretmenlerin konuları yaparak, görerek, sürekli gözlemler ve deneylerle işlemeleri gerekir. Hiçbir konunun tamamen teorik şekilde kalmasına meydan verilmeyecektir. Bu çalışmalarda iş zevkini körletecek, usanç verecek tekrar ve zorlamalardan kaçınılmalıdır.

II. Yaratıcılık, başlıbaşına ve yardımlaşarak iş görme ilkeleri: Her öğrencide, yeteneği ölçüsünde yaratıcı kuvvetlerin geliştirilmesine çalışmak gerekir.

Öğrencilere verilecek resim ve desenler, örnek eşya yaratıcılık yeteneklerini körletecek kuru temrin mahiyetinde olmamalıdır, bunlar yeni gelişmelere imkân verecek esasları içine almalıdır.

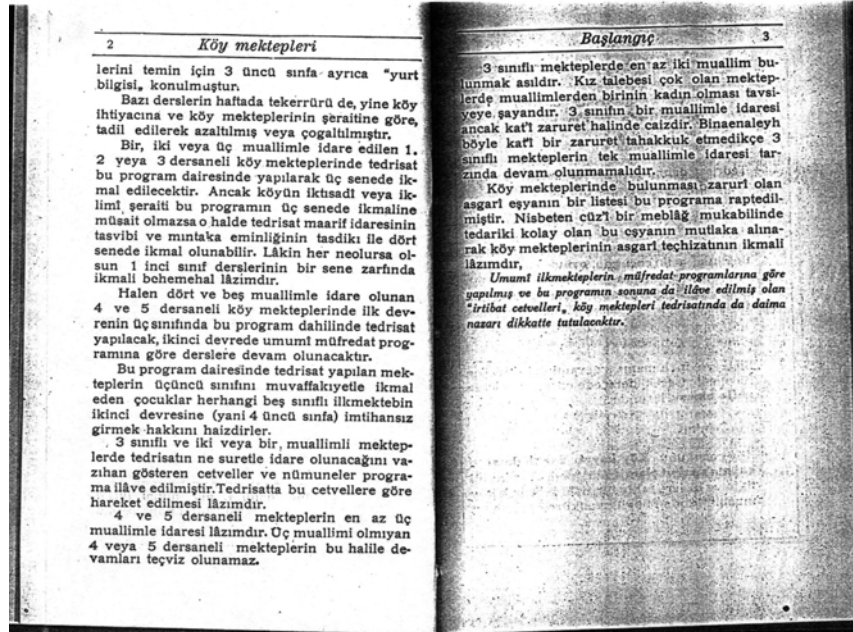
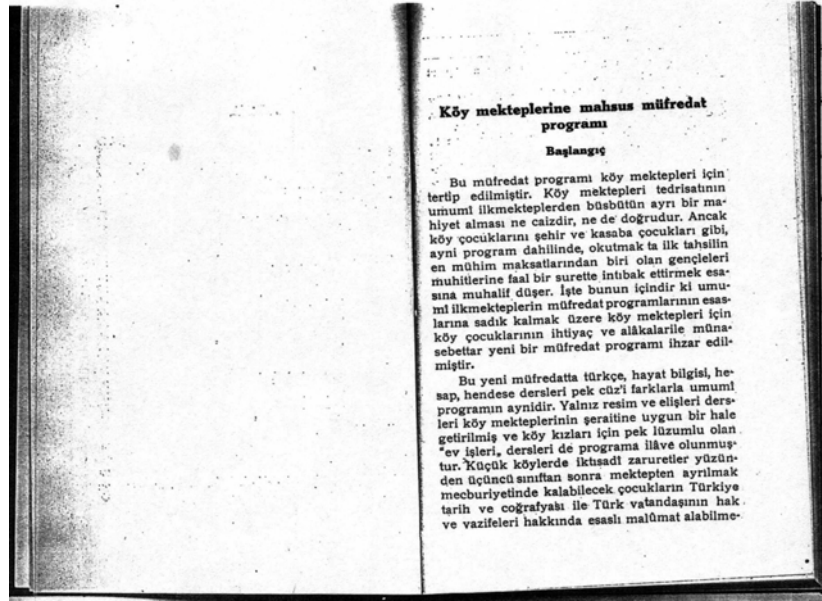
Sanat derslerinde, bir yandan işlerin nasıl yapılacağı öğretilirken, öte yandan da bu tekniğin

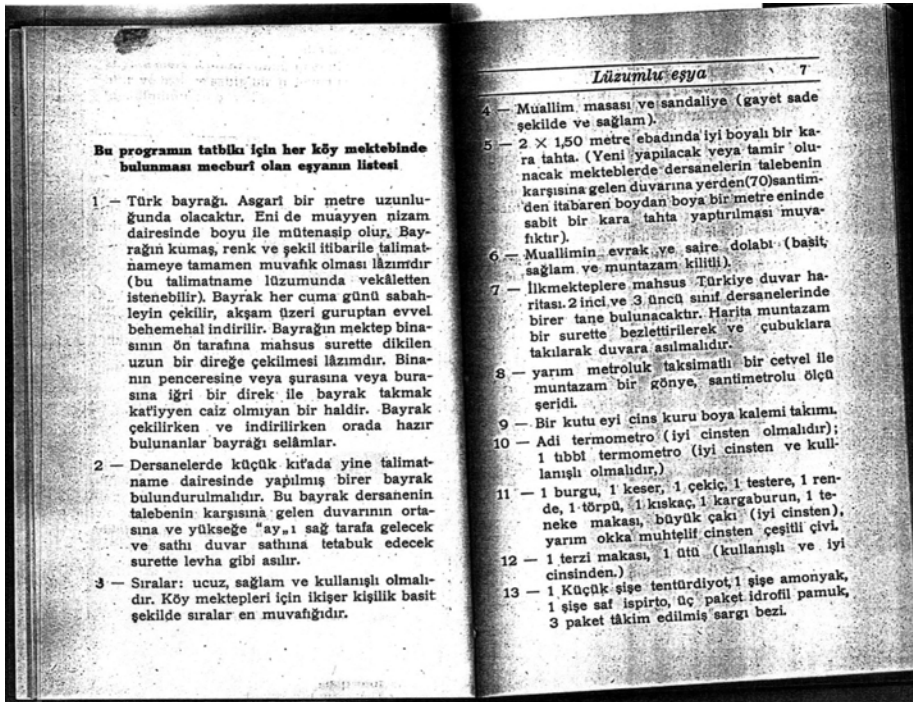
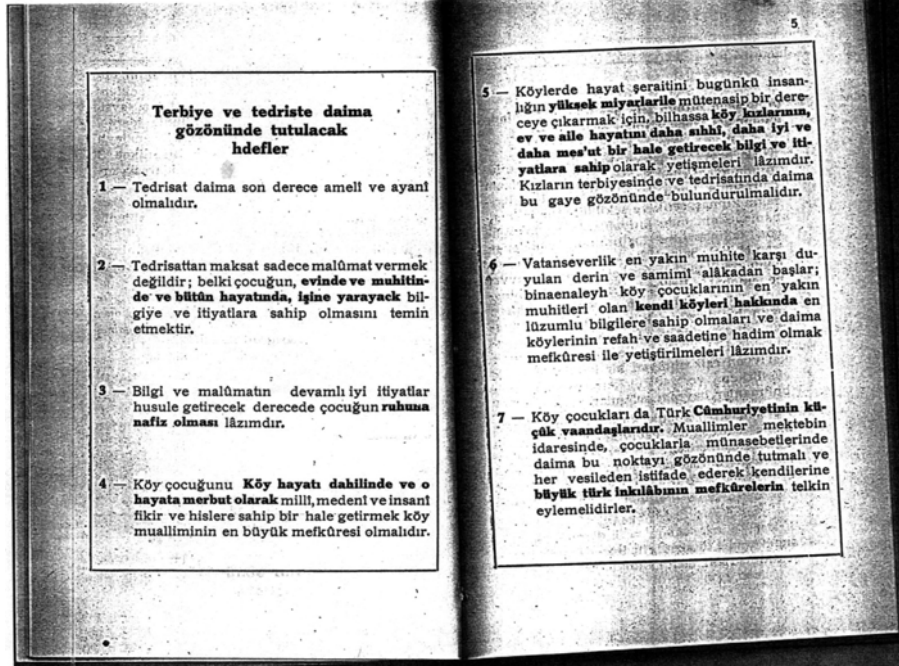
9. 3. Milli Eğitim Şurası, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Kararı, karar sayısı: 363.



## APPENDIX C

### THE CIRRICULUM OF VILLAGE SCHOOLS





8 Köy mektepleri			
14 — Talebe başına yarım okka hesabla icabı kadar büyüklükte ve temiz tutulmaya müsait musluklu bir içme suyu kabı. Üst kapağı gayet muntazam ve imtiyazlı olmalı ve daima kapalı tutulmalıdır.			
15 — Bir badana fırçası (icabında duvar badanalarını tazelemek ve kirleri izale etmek için.)			
16 — Bir çalı, bir hasır süpürke.			
17 — İlk tedrisat kanunu, ilk mektepler talimatnamesi, ilk mektepler ve köy mektepleri programları.			
18 — Eyi işliyen sağlam bir duvar saati.			
19 — Eyi cinsten kuvvetlice bir adese,			

DERSLERİN HAFTALIK TEVZİİ			
Dersler	Sınıf I	Sınıf II	Sınıf III
Türkçe	12	—	—
Alfabe . . . . .	—	4	4
Kıraat . . . . .	—	3	2
İmlâ . . . . .	—	2	2
Tahrir . . . . .	—	—	1
Grammer tatbikatı . . . . .	—	4	3
Elyazısı . . . . .	4	4	3
Hayat bilgisi . . . . .	4	3	3
Hesap-hendese . . . . .	—	—	2
Yurt bilgisi . . . . .	4	4	4
Resim, elişi (erkeklerle) . . . . .	(4)	(1)	(1)
Resim, elişi . . . . .	—	(3)	(3)
Ey işleri . . . . .	24	24	24

1 — Din dersi her perşembe günü öğleden sonra yarım saatır.

2 — Cımnastik ve musiki için ayrıca saat tahsis edilmiştir. Program haricinde olarak her sabah birinci dersten evvel ve her akşam son dersten sonra ta-lebe ye yirmi dakika cımnastik yaptırılacak ve şarkı söylettirecektir. (Bunun için köy mekteplerine mahsus bir « musiki risalesi » ile birde « cımnastik risalesi » neşrolunacaktır. Şarkıların ve hareketlerin bu risalelere göre söylettirilmesi, okutulması ve yaptırılması lazımdır.

10 Köy mektepleri			
3 — Pazartesi ve perşembe günlerinden maada her gün beş ders okutulacaktır. Pazartesi ve perşembe günleri yalnız sabahları iki ders okutulur. Günün diğer zamanları mektebin temizliğine ve tertibine hasredilecektir. Pazartesi günleri « küçük temizlik » yapılır. Mektep silinir, eşya ve alat temizlenir, her şey yerli yerine konur. Perşembe günleri büyük temizlik gündür: bu günlerde mektep duvarları, kapılar ve camlar da dahil olmak üzere, mükem-melen temizlenir. Temizlik işlerine kız erkek bütün çocuklar iştirak edeceklerdir.			
4 — Elişleri dersleri bunları: tedris edebilecek kadın muallim olan mekteplerde kızlara ayrıca gösterilecektir. Erkek muallimlerden bu müfredat dahilinde tedrisat yapabilenler varsa onlar da bu dersleri okutabilirler. Kadın muallim veya tedris edebile-cek erkek muallim bulunmadığı takdirde kızlar da erkekler gibi resim ve elişleri ile meşgul edilirler. ancak programın ev ve kadın hıfzıssıhhasına ait kısımları kızlara mutlaka öğretilmek lazımdır.			

### Hayat Bilgisi

1. — Dersin hedefi

Hayat bilgisi dersinin tedrisinde takip olu-nacak hedefler şunlardır:

1. — Çocuğun köyü ve köyü civarında tesa-düf edilen en maruf taş, maden, nebat ve hay-yanları çocuğa tanıttırmak; etrafında cereyan eden tabii hadiseleri tetkik ve izah ettirmek; canlı mahlûkların yaşama şartlarını ve bunların yekdiğerine karşı icra ettikleri tesirleri göste-rmek.

2. — Bir taraftan suyu, havası ve toprağı ile tabii muhitin insan üzerine yaptığı tesirleri, diğer taraftan insanın hayvan beslemek, orman yetiştirmek, toprağı işlemek, yollar yapmak, kanallar açmak suretille tabiat üzerinde vukua getirdiğı tahavvülleri göstermek.

3. — Çocuğun köyünde ve köyü civarında insanların mesai ve faaliyetlerini tetkik ettir-mek. Aile, nahiye, belediye ve hükümet teşki-lâtını gayet müşahhas bir surette öğretmek.

4. — Müşahedeye müstenit tetkiklerle ço-cuklara insanın vücudü ve vücuttaki azaların vazifeleri hakkında malûmiat vermek. Buna müteallik hıfzıssıhha kaidelerini amell bir su-rette öğretmek ve bilhassa her hususta çocuk-ları temizliğe ve intizama alıştırmak.

5. — Mektep hayatında aile veya şehir mu-

## PHOTOGRAPH OF A BOARDER AND TEACHER ESER





**BELİŞ** — Ellî Belge Hanımın Sadıka Avar tarafından köyünden üzüp Elâzığ Kü Enstitüsüne, gel.



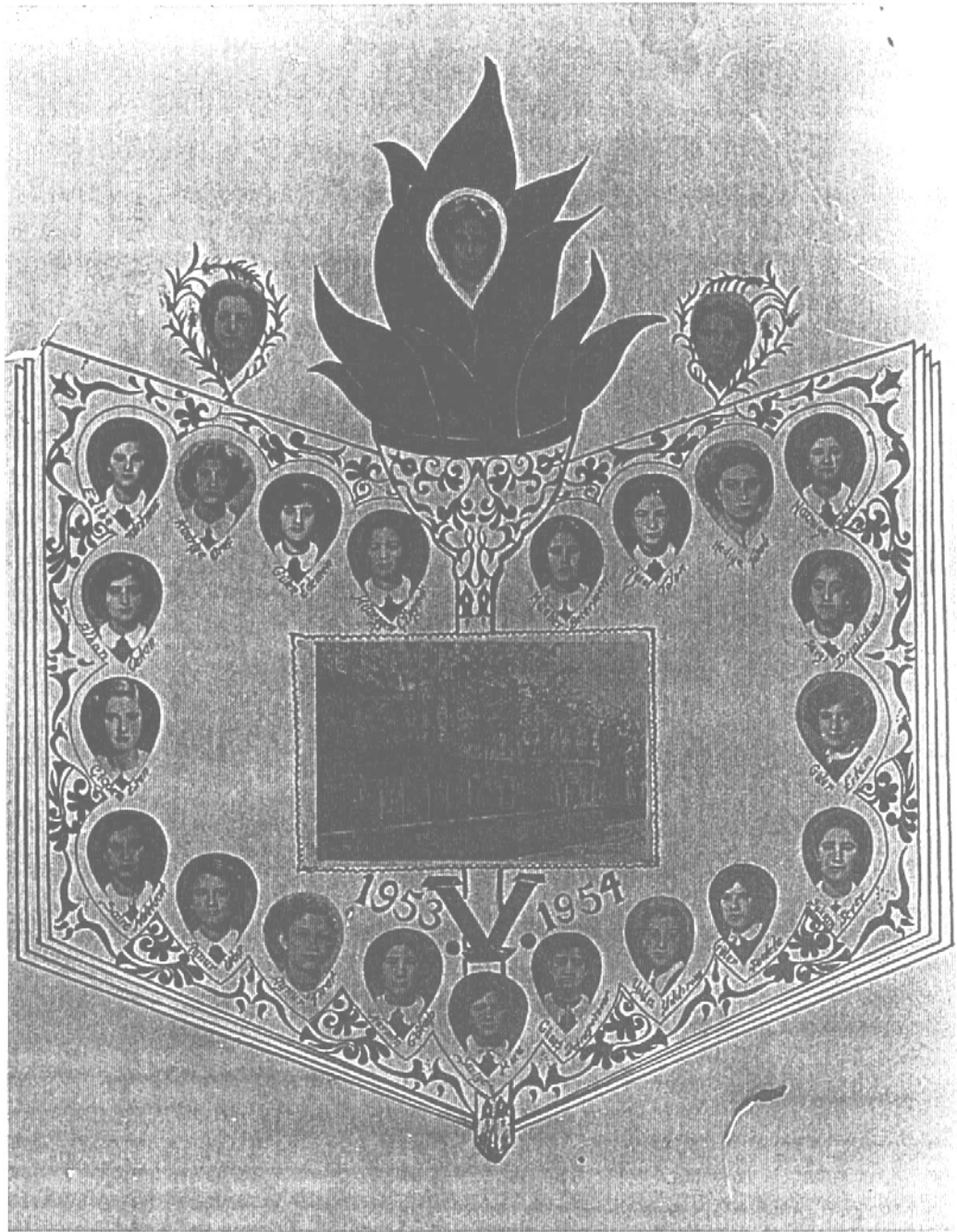
**MEKTEPTE** — Bir sene sonra Ellî mektepte. Beyaz yakalı, siyah öğrenci elbisesi içinde Ellî iyi ta.



**VE NİHAYET** — Mektep bitmiş tir. Tertemiz Türkçe konuşan, tahsili yerinde bir Türk kızının kar.

## BİR İNSAN YARATMA HİKÂİ

Yanyana gördüğün resim, mükemmel bir resmin kısa hikâyi gün bir masal ismi köylerine yayılmış, f pette mütevacı, ay Türk kadınının nele ceğini bu üç minin raftan daha iyi gö bir vesika olamaz. S yıllardan beri yapıt tal yuvası halindeki rinden gene aldığı k atının terkisinde ş yor. Elâzığ'daki mek riyor. Onlara en sic katini gösteriyor. l sadece yemekte ça kullanmaktan ibare öğretiyor. Okutuyo yor ve sonra da bu nelerini birer ışı l linde köylerine göp Kenardaki üç reş





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