



Village Institutes: The Pioneer of the Republic Revolution

They gathered strength by returning to the source called "the people."

A people's state was established in Anatolia.

It was necessary to return to our own resources for the educational system of this country.

İsmail Hakkı Tonguç 1939

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ABSTRACT

With the establishment of the new Turkish Republic, there were revolutions that created great changes in the social, cultural, economic and social structure. Many public institutions and organizations were established for the young Republic people who aimed to integrate these revolutions into the social structure. Village Institutes can be considered as the most important among these institutions. The establishment purpose of Village Institutes is to support economical, social and cultural development and to contribute to the maturation process of the republican revolutions. The young Republic's transition to a modern education system and the deep-rooted experience which was formed during this process is represented by the Village Institutes. The educational policies of the period and the efforts to raise a contemporary new generation is also reflected by these institutions. Village Institutes achieved a rather unprecedented success in the enlightenment process and in the field of education. They trained not only village teachers, but also health workers and professionals who would benefit the rural areas in many fields. In this article, we examined the contributions of the Village Institutes to social development, their philosophies, original educational processes and construction styles. The study was created using document analysis and literature review as research methods. We made evaluations and inferences based on the data obtained. We have demonstrated the contributions of the Village Institutes to the social development of the country and their leadership in modernization in their period.

Keywords: Institutes, village, education, social development, public revolution

INTRODUCTION

Within the first half of the 20th century, Turkey had successfully completed the struggle for two important events: after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, a national independent country was created, and many important revolutions were made to enlighten the people of the new Republic. The destruction and poverty caused by the war years were palpable in all areas of life; especially the educational activities had become impossible to conduct. From the first years of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the country's intellectuals attached great importance to education, modernization and economic development, and they knew that development had to start from the villages. In the early years of the Republic, the majority of the country's population lived in rural areas and they were deprived of many social services such as education and health. The development, which would focus on the rural areas, had to start from education, and the first move was initiated by educators such as Hasan Ali Yücel, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, H. Fikret Kanat, Reşit Galip, and Mustafa Necati, with the instructions of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

According to Türkoğlu; "The established new state had to have a unique, solid form of education that could spread the new developments and revolutions, and the Village Institutes were an indigenous educational and development mobilization that enabled the new state to flourish in a short time (1935-1946). It was a imperative to organize the education system of the young Republic and to ensure its development."

Keskin defines that period as follows: "During the Second World War, the majority of the people (83.4%) lived in villages. Literacy was low and feudal relations prevailed. The conditions were poor with a primitive agricultural technology and a closed market economy, so the young Republic was faced with a development reality labeled as "the country of villages and agriculture", and primary education had to be resolved first in order to achieve economic recovery. The majority of the people lived in villages and they lacked services such as water, electricity, transportation, education and health, and therefore the development had to start from the villages first. The most important tool to achieve civilization and innovation would be the proper education of the people. Political independence was attained, but if the people which are the internal dynamic were not educated, it would not be possible to settle the revolutions and gain full independence."

With a new understanding on the War of Independence, it was necessary to activate the source of the entire people. According to İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, the great educator who was brought to power by Saffet Arıkan, the problem was not the problem of education, but it was to radically change the life of primitive production. Mobilized from within, the people had to get rid of all forms of slavery. Especially the villages, where the majority of the population lived, had to be developed with a populist system. For the development of the country and to meet the social needs, it was necessary to establish an education system with a technical and productive infrastructure. In this process, Village Institutes were established for the following purpose: providing a proper education system, to expand production economically and technically, to organize the social movement and to create the necessary human resources for this.



Picture 1: İnönü, Yücel and Tonguç: They were a trio for the Institutes, Türkoğlu, P. Tonguç and Village Institutes (2004)



In the young Republic, where great deprivation and poverty was experienced under the severe conditions of the Second World War between 1935-1945, Instructor Courses were also included. And with great effort and care that covers a total of eleven years, an education system that would come a long way in a short time was established and implemented.

Keskin defines this period as follows: "According to the planning, the goal was to improve all villages that had no schools, teachers, health workers, midwives and agriculture experts until 1955 at the latest. A system based on "on-the-job training" was applied to other institutions as well during this period; regional schools, village schools, practice schools, High Village Institute were also included and great improvements were made. However, these institutions were closed in 1946 by excluding the "job" part from the training, and they became economically self-sufficient. In Turkey, they were very influential in education and training, culture and arts, and social and economic fields. They became development centers that affected the economic, social and cultural life of the regions. (Keskin 1998, s:8).

Contemporary education practices were applied in all of these village schools. Production was developed in areas such as vegetable growing, beekeeping, animal husbandry and fruit growing. Arts and crafts education was also supported. Folk songs, folk tales, traditions and lifestyles reflecting the cultural values of the society were also observed and recorded. In this process, The Village Institutes tried to eradicate the ignorance of the peasants; they tried in every way they can to modernize an illiterate society.

The poor people, who suffered the heavy burden of the War of Independence, did not yet have the citizen quality to absorb the new democracy. More importantly, it was very difficult to provide service to rural areas. With the new Republic, the effort to serve the villages could only be possible by training intellectuals who understood the language of the rural people, and this was possible with the education of the youth living in rural areas. İ. Hakkı Tonguç, the pioneer of intellectuals who set off from this idea and conducted researches prepared a twenty-year plan by doing a serious village studies. He did his military service despite all the objections of the classical educators. He trained a group of young peasants as teachers. He also enabled these young people to work as trainers in the Village Institutes established before they became teachers.

After this process was completed, Village Institutes were finally opened with the law numbered 3803 on April 17, 1940; during the period of Hasan Ali Yücel's ministry of national education. The main purpose here was to raise new generations needed at all levels. From this point of view, these institutes were based on the "on-the-job training" and they were established in the middle of 8-10 villages, away from the city center to select village children. These institutions have played a major role in the development of the country as well as in the Turkish Education History, and they have trained many teachers. This system - which is based on 5 years of education after primary school-- would also train the healthcare personnel that the villages needed (Kapluhan 2012). However, after the Second World War, various political changes took place in the world and in our country, and as a result, attempts were made to wear down the current government and preparations were made for the transition to a multi-party order. With the change of government in 1946, the Village Institutes were attacked by false accusations and various methods. In 1947, Hasanoğlu High Village Institute, which trained teachers for the country was the first institute to be closed. On 27 January 1954, all the village institutes the driving force of modernization in Turkey, were closed and they were replaced with teacher training colleges. At this point, Village Institutes one of the most important works of the young Republic, is a



part of a system that can be a source for today's education and is still a research subject for many disciplines.

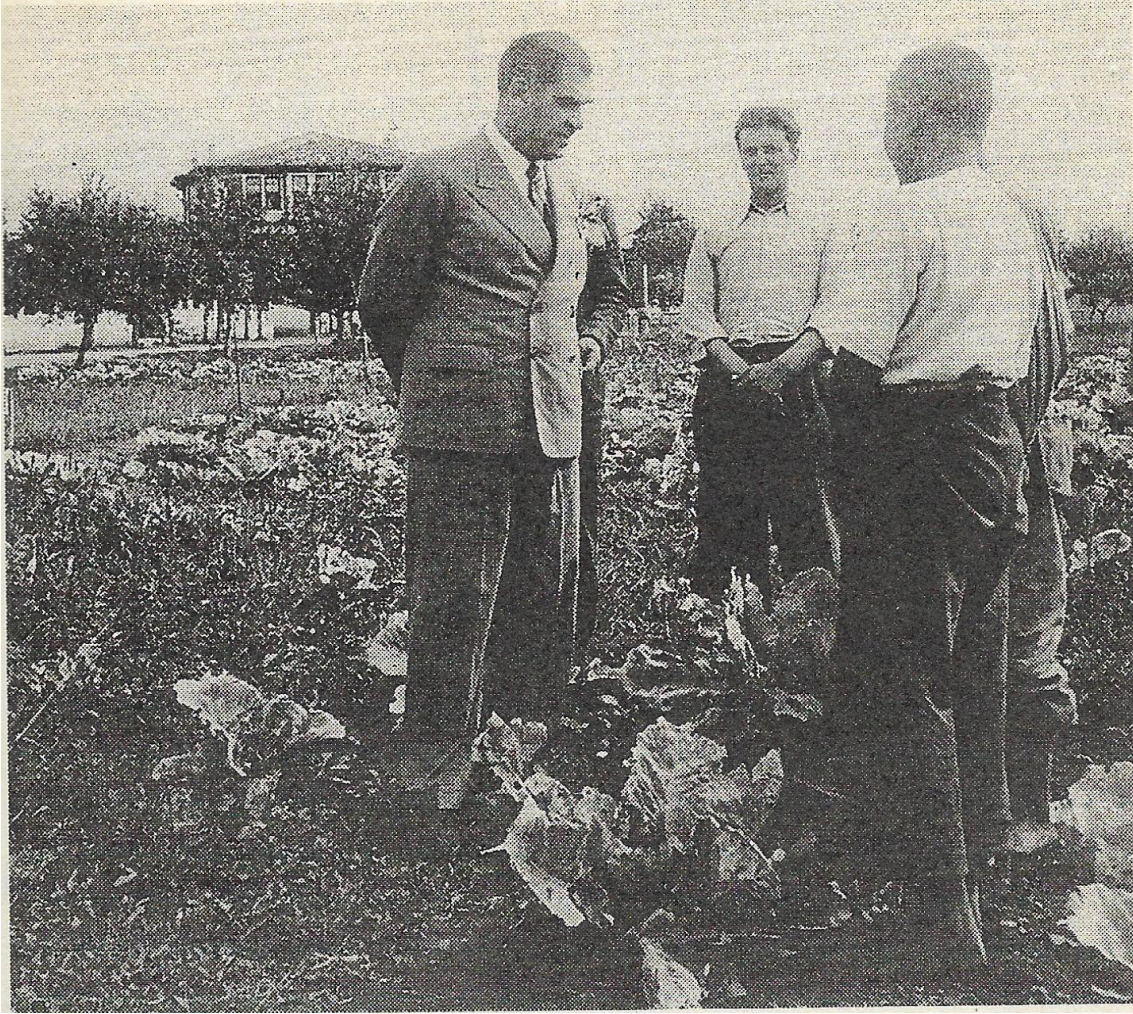
AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE SENSE OF VILLAGE INSTITUTES AND VILLAGES

In order to modernize the young Republic, efforts such as rural settlements, agricultural organizations in such regions, adapting the production method of the villagers to contemporary conditions of the day, and increasing the quality of life were implemented first hand by the state. In the ideological approach of the Republic, which is based on enlightenment and aiming at a holistic national development-- the principle of populism is the main starting point. In this respect, the village-oriented activities carried out by the government can be considered as a type of populism that is directed towards the village and village problems. In this context it can be said that, the idea of People's Houses, which was developed to reach the public, was reflected in the rural areas thanks to the Village Institutes. Both projects aimed to achieve a mentality transformation in the social and cultural areas.

Başaran, in his work called "The Freedom Action Village Institutes" describes the realization of these educational institutions as follows: "The phrase 'Village Institute' was a new educational term. It meant transforming the activities that would realize the intended life style into an educational environment, with the guidance of science. The aim was not to popularize literacy, to bring schools to all villages, or to train new types of teachers. Continuing the closed village economy was not at all the main purpose, as some thought. The main purpose, within the possibilities provided by historical conditions, was to raise awareness of the working productive people, to make them a political power, to oppose the exploitation order, and to transform the change into an accelerating action; an act of liberation (Başaran 2003 s:16).

In line with these purposes, after various investigations and studies were carried out, our country was divided into twenty-one regions and the foundations of the Village Institutes were laid according to the production dynamics of each region. Undoubtedly, what needs to be mentioned is that İsmail Hakkı Tonguç was the founding father and chief architect of the Village Institutes in this process. Another important name in this breakthrough process is Hasan Ali Yücel; the minister of national education at the time. During the setup process, Tonguç wanted the institutes to be unlike traditional schools. He wanted the students to be educated with modern methods that improved their feelings, thoughts and personalities. According to Tonguç: "Unless favorable conditions are prepared and people's hearts are earned at the root level and they are treated with love and sincerity, not only education *cannot* be reformed, the daily simple tasks cannot be carried out at all".

Tonguç's aim was to improve the incompatibility between the intellectuals of the Ottoman bourgeois and the rural people by modernizing the conditions and using new educational forms suitable for pedagogical forms. At this stage, Tonguç's understanding of Westernization prevailed. Children from the villages, out of the people, would be educated, raised and sent back to the villages within the educational institutions designed, and thus the society would be enlightened. This situation is very important in terms of the founding philosophy of Village Institutes.



Picture 2: Hasan Ali Yücel with Students at the Institute, Türkoğlu, P. Tonguç and Village Institutes (2004)

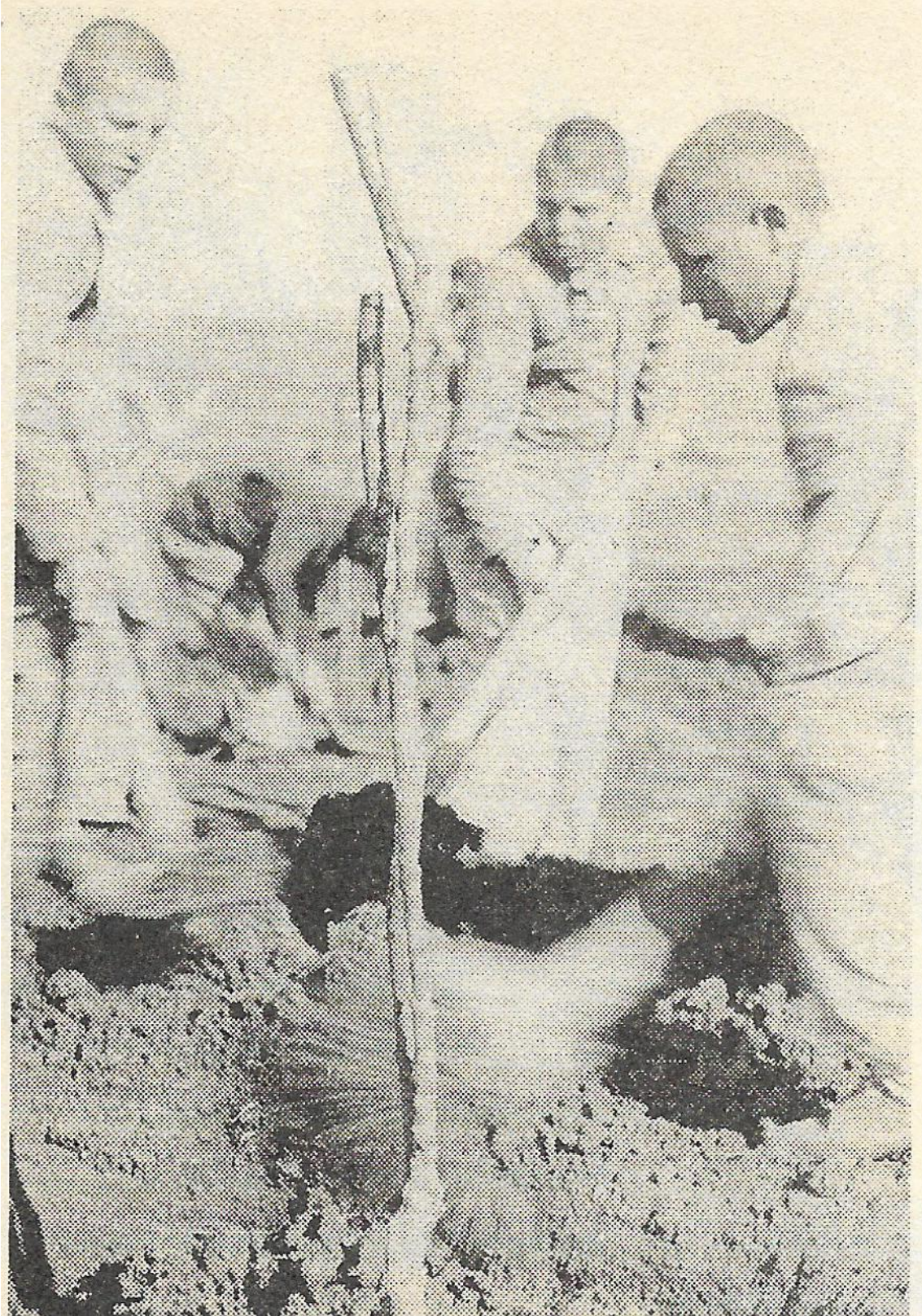
In the education system envisaged by Tonguç, there would be the following duties: Non-contemporary conditions must be tackled and in the absence of modern conditions, education must make up for this absence; Old generations who oppose modern living conditions should be attacked; Intellectual foundations of civilization should be taught to students; The people's heritage must be valued without any transformation; All necessary technical and vocational training should be provided in modern learning conditions; Graduates should not only fill their job fields with the vocational education they receive; they must be brought to the level where they can self-establish the economy; All necessary research should be done on the spiritual, cultural, psychological, sociological and pedagogical aspects of all these tasks (Türkoğlu, 2004, p. 85).



Picture 3: Çifteler Village Institute Students Milking Türkoğlu, P. Tonguç and Village Institutes (2004)

In these institutions which were established under the above conditions, there would be areas of interest not only to lead a personal life but also to add value to the humanity. Başaran describes the education in these institutes under the title of "continuous education" as follows: Village institutes are a regional institution. Each institute is established in a suitable place in an education district consisting of 3-5 provinces. It is established on an area of 600-1000 decares and it is a self-sufficient business with what it produces. It accommodates male and female students which are selected from villages. With on-the-job training, they are trained as teachers, health workers, craftsmen (blacksmith, builder, carpenter, etc.) according to their skills (Başaran, 2003, p.31).

Institutes based on the principle of applied education are shaped according to the conditions and requirements of their environment. In addition to teachers working in fields such as art, culture and agriculture, self-sacrificing and experienced master trainers who accepted volunteer work were also employed in these institutions. In the implementation process, especially well-trained masters have an important place with their production-based training approaches. With the cooperation of arts and crafts, the construction of these institutes was also carried out.



Picture 4: Studies of Agriculture Lesson, Türkoğlu, P. Tonguç and Village Institutes (2004)



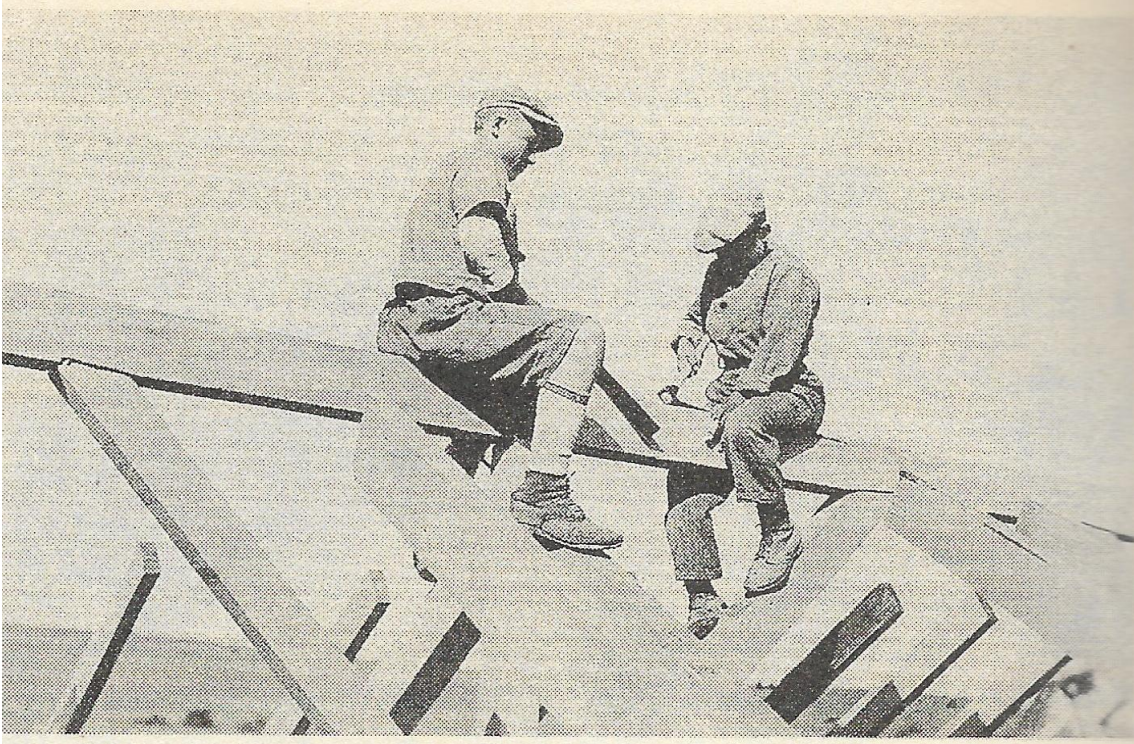
In particular, these educational policies were based on three things as a requirement of the agricultural economy: secularization, citizenship, and educating the villager and providing him with a profession. Training teachers for the village, based on the new ideas of the republican period and on Atatürk's educational mobilization, forms the basis of village institute policies. The concept of "national upbringing" is a basic concept and an important approach in the education policies of the Republic period. (Kapluhan 2012). In the light of all these principles, expenses should be avoided whenever possible in the construction of schools. For this reason, the construction of the Village Institutes was carried out by communal-work method and the most important examples of production, sharing and solidarity were exhibited.

Kapluhan describes this process as follows; "The teachers and students worked together in the construction of the school buildings and they showed the best aspects of helping each other among the Institutes. It is very important that the students not only helped the villagers in their work, but they did it as fun and turned the who work into a village festival. This spirit of cooperation also followed a simple economic rule: saving money by utilizing the workforce. Land and agricultural tools were provided to teachers and the teachers remained in the village where they worked and set an example for the villagers and helped the villagers with matters related to agriculture; all these ideas are were very useful." (Kapluhan 2012).

Thanks to these practices, economic development was achieved for villages and villagers. The students managed their daily lives and school together and they grasped being an individual through their practices in life. Village Institutes were built in areas far from the city centers, but they met their own needs with their own production. For example; they established their own production cooperatives, they did agricultural production, they even produced their own electricity. Therefore, these buildings, each was built in accordance with their functions as an architectural complex are the most important educational buildings of the period. Their production processes can be considered as on of the biggest symbols of labor.

BUILDING PROCESS OF VILLAGE INSTITUTES

The institutes were built with a communal-work method in accordance with the geographical conditions and local characteristics of the regions where they were located. The construction process of these structures and the learning process of traditional crafts based on the master-apprentice relationship are similar to each other. The institute buildings were built by teams of masters and students working in collaboration, using traditional construction techniques. During the construction process, they used local building materials such as wood, stone, brick and mudbrick, which were mostly procured from the local environment. In this process, students learned how to dig a foundation pit, quench lime, make mortar and plaster, and they acquired skills in masonry, carpentry, metal craftsmanship, and weaving. They made production using the knowledge they learned about both the construction processes and the organization of life.

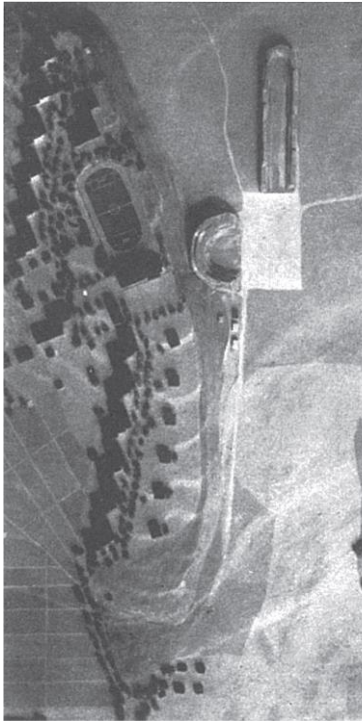


Picture 5: Graduate students working in the carpentry business, Türkoğlu, P. Tonguç and Village Institutes (2004)

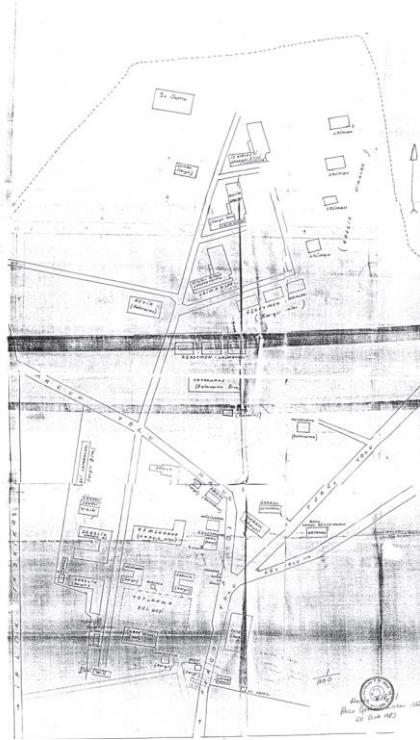
Kapluhan evaluates the participation of students in this construction process as follows: "When we examined the programs of Village Institutes, we saw that those who prepared the programs perceived the students as adults, not as children, because while preparing the institute programs, it was ensured that the teacher candidate had the following characteristics; able to read, think, speak and write, able to look at events critically, be productive, acquire manual skills, be interested in fine arts, work with others, be free and participatory citizen, grasp and adopt the essence of revolutions and spread them around, learn by doing and living. (Kapluhan 2012)

In this process based on communal-work method, students' first practical training was provided in a master-apprentice relationship while the sustainability of indigenous crafts was ensured. The plans, which were prepared according to the regional characteristics, were built jointly according to the functions and needs of the institute. With their classrooms, workshops, dining hall, dormitory, library music and sports halls, infirmary, agricultural areas, gardens and vineyards, these were living educational villages.

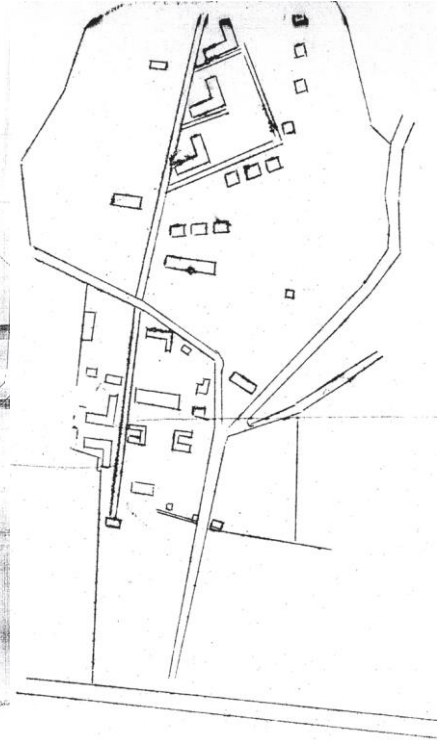
Türkoğlu describes this period as follows; "The work during the establishment period was very diverse. Each Institute had separate jobs. Especially in the first days, there seemed to be no job without priority. All of them had to be started and done. Shelters (dormitory, dining hall, laundry room, bathroom, etc.) had to be built as soon as possible. Units such as classrooms, workshops, laboratories, libraries, music rooms, etc. were also of high priority. Construction of roads and sidewalks, drying of swamps, afforestation, bringing water from afar by digging waterways, building warehouses, establishing a power plant, cultivating agricultural areas, beautifying buildings, etc, those were the top priority projects of the foundation years. Students did these works together and they learned the knowledge and skills of each field they worked together (Türkoğlu, 2004, p. 221).



Picture 6 Aksu Village
Institute Model



Picture 7 Aksu Village
Institute Site Plan



Picture 8. Aksu Village
Institute Campus

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture
Journal Issue: 34 Page 140

The Village Institutes were built according to the architectural characteristics of the regions they are located in, their future functions, the state ownership of the chosen location, the availability of fertile lands in the vicinity, the provinces or districts in the vicinity, and the distance to the railway and road. In addition, the suitability of the selected area for human health conditions was also investigated; necessary measures were taken to ensure that the air and water were clean. At certain times, the dormant structures in the vicinity, such as barracks or schools, formed the core of the Village Institutes. Before the construction, they would examine the traditional construction techniques of their region and make use of systems of those buildings.

The spatial characteristics of the buildings were determined by the job training to be held at the institute. The buildings where the training would be carried out were designed considering the number of students the building can hold as well as the type of education such as agriculture, beekeeping, cutting, carpentry, garden, vineyard works. Architectural competitions were organized by the Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Primary Education for the buildings to be built in the region determined for the institutes. According to Keskin, architectural competitions that were held for Village Institutes can be defined as the first major competition series in Turkey. These competitions started on May 13, 1940 with the grand competition for the first twelve Village Institutes. The competitions continued with the competition held for Hasanoğlu Village Institute in Ankara on 23 May 1941, but ended with the national architecture competition held for Sivas Yıldızeli and Konya-İvriz Village Institutes on June 5, 1943. The first competitions covered the village institutions in the following cities: Antalya-Aksu, Samsun (Ladik)-Akpınar, Malatya-Akçadağ,

Trabzon-Beyköprü, Balıkesir-Savaştepe, Kocaeli-Arifiye, Isparta-Gönen, Kayseri-Pazarören, Kastamonu-Gölköy, Adana-Düzici, Kırklareli-Kepirtepe, Eskişehir-Çifteler



Picture 9: Gönen Village Institute Site Plan (by Architect Kaptan Yılmaz, Gönen Vocational School Archive)

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture
Journal Issue: 34 Pages. 146

With this competition method, the architects who won the competition would recognize the local area where the institute will be established; they learned about the climate of the region, the traditional architectural features, construction materials observed in the vicinity, and the operations of the institute. At that time, twenty-one Village Institutes had been opened, but no competition was organized for the institutions of Cilavuz, Dicle, Ernis, Kızılcıllu, Ortaklar and Pulur. After the opening of the Hasanoğlu High Village Institute building branch and the appointment of Master Architect Mualla Eyüboğlu as the head of the institution, the projects started to be produced here (Keskin, Kahya 2017, p.138). One of the most important conditions stated in the architectural competition guide was the following: the architect who will work in the region where the institute will be established must stay in this region for a while.



Picture 10: Gonen Village Institute; existing structures (Gönen Vocational School Archive)
Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture
Journal Issue: 34 Pages. 146

According to the functioning of the institute, they would create a requirement program and start the construction process accordingly. For example; teacher lodgings, dormitories, dining halls, kitchens, classrooms, infirmary, workshops, carpentry shop, barn, poultry,

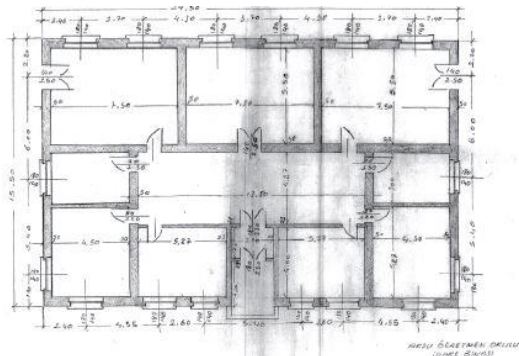
bakery, theater halls, music halls, and playgrounds were organized according to the training needs of the institute.

Table 1. Architects and the Village Institutes they designed * MA: Master Architect

The Architect	The Village Institute Designed
MA* Asım Mutlu	Aksu ve Gölköy
MA Celal Biçer	Gönen
MA Emin Onat- Leman Tomsu	Kepirtepe ve Çifteler
MA Mualla Eyüpoğlu Anhegger- Ahsen Yapaner	Pazarören
MA Ahsen Yapaner	Akçadağ ve Beşikdüzü
MA Recai Akçay	Düziçi ve Arifiye
MA Tahir Tuğ	Savaştepe
MA Leyla A. Turgut	Ladik Akpınar
MA Kemal Ahmet Aru - Orhan Arda -Adnan Kuruyazıcı	Hasanoğlu Yüksek
MA Mualla Eyüpoğlu Anhegger	Ortaklar

Source: Keskin, Y. (1998), taken from the article "Parade to the Village Institutes as Revolutionary Architecture on the 75th Anniversary of the Republic". Architecture Magazine, Chamber of Architects Pub. Issue: 284 p.13

The construction process of the institutes took place during the Second World War, and so the young Republic was in great poverty, and it was not possible for the Ministry of Education to allocate sufficient funds for these buildings that had been built in a short period of time. In this process, the communal-work method of the villages was applied, "construction teams" were formed, and the structures were completed in a short time with the support of the other institutes. Construction teams consisted of one teacher and 15-20 students, and these numbers were increased or decreased based on the need.



Picture 11. Aksu Village Institute Administration Building Plan

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture Journal Issue: 34 Pages.143



Picture 12. Aksu Village Institute Administration Building Facade

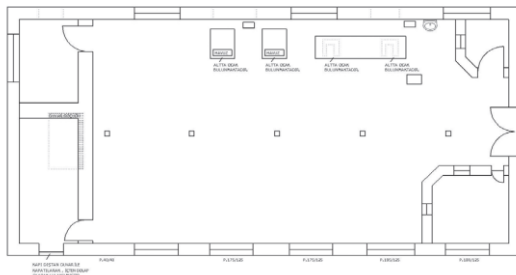


Picture 13. Aksu Village Institute Painting Workshop

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture Journal Issue: 34 Pages.144



Figure 14. Aksu Village Institute Dormitory Building

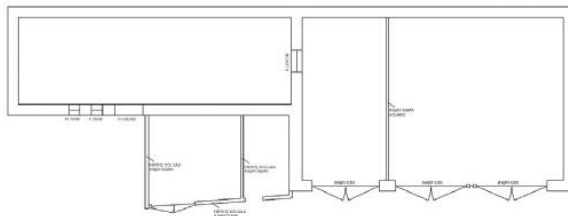


Picture 15 Gönen Village Institute
Blacksmithing Workshop Plan

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture
Journal Issue: 34 Pages.150



Picture 16. Gönen Village Institute Building
Blacksmithing Workshop



Picture 17 Plan of Gönen Village Institute
Carpenter's Workshop

Source: Çetin, S., Kahya, A., (2017) Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture
Journal Issue: 34 Pages.150



Picture 18. Gönen Village Institute Building
Carpenter's Workshop

Türkoğlu explains this process as follows: "The master craftsmen who worked on the institutes according to local characteristics were selected from the close vicinity. These specialized local craftsmen were recruited to the Institute, and they were teaching their art to the teachers and students. For example, they were working on the modernization of adobe; an old construction material of Anatolia.

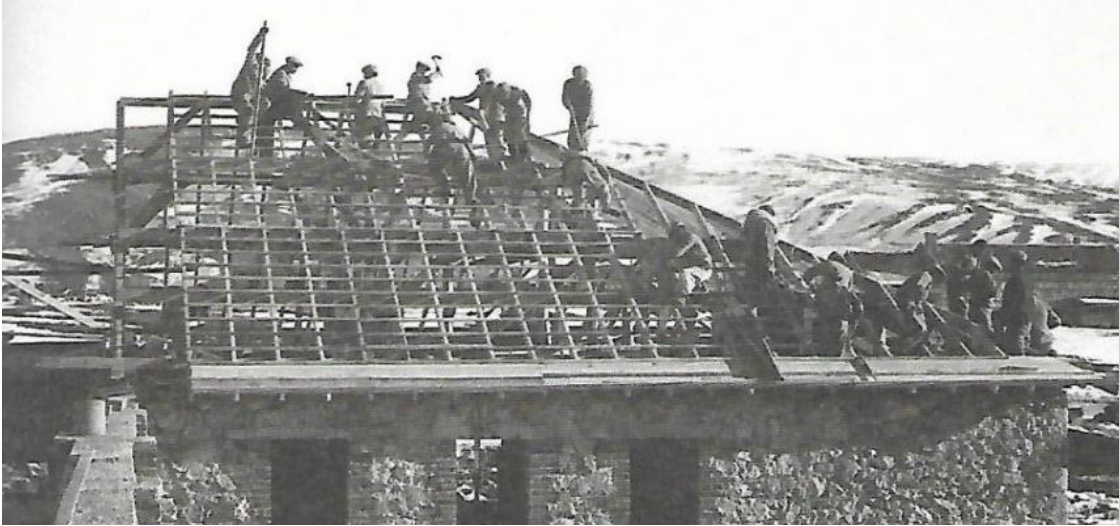


Figure 19: Construction process based on the collaboration of Hasanoğlu High Village Institute (Güneri, 2014)

Source: Karakul Ö. (2019), Carrying the Philosophy of Village Institutes to the Future, "Village Institutes as Models for Craft Education in Faculties of Architecture and Fine Arts", Rating Academy Publications. P. 278, Canakkale

"All of the woodwork, such as doors, windows, cabinets, tables, bookshelves, teaching tools and other various furniture were made within the Institute; for example, bookshelves given to village teachers were created in these workshops" (Türkoğlu, 2004, p. 242).

Constructors teams not only contributed to the construction process, but also conveyed information about daily life to the students with the social relationships they gained in the region. In the process of rebuilding modern Turkey; the country gained countless environment-specific architectural structures from that period. While the buildings were being built, the architectural features, local materials and construction techniques of the region were re-tried and re-applied again. Within the process of the spatial and social organization of the young Republic, Village Institutes certainly have a privileged place. Architectural competitions, the synergy between the local cultures and modernism, cooperation between institutes, construction methods/techniques applied, teaching these techniques to students by master instructors, learning the traditional crafts... all of these are a part of the concept of "sustainability in architecture", which is widely discussed today.

CONCLUSION

Village Institutes made great contributions in areas such as education, health, social, cultural and economic areas within the young Republic in a very short period of time. Village Institutes, which were institutionalized immediately and which constantly renewed themselves, are still a matter of debate for many disciplines today. Teachers who were trained according to this model have also been very successful in many fields such as art and literature. Today, all over the world and in our country, education systems are frequently discussed; no surprise there, because the education is the most important indicator of a country's development level. For this reason, it has become more and more important to remember --and remind of-- the Village Institutes and to reconsider the strong relationship between quality education and development.

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