

AN INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE VILLAGE NOVELS BY VILLAGE
INSTITUTE GRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyses the village novels written by Village Institute graduates in an intertextual context. Departing from the idea that the literary works of Institute graduates are representative examples of what is retrospectively called as the village literature tradition in Turkish history, this thesis examines 14 novels, written by the authors known as three peasants of the Turkish literature, who are Talip Apaydın, Fakir Baykurt, and Mahmut Makal, between 1950 and 1980. Particularly based on the theoretical framework developed by the Bakhtin Circle, the main concern of this thesis is to find out the way in which the village novels interacted with the socio-political atmosphere of Turkey and with their authors' political-ideological discourses. Therefore, this thesis examines the organization, content, and characters of the village novels and stands for approaching them in relational terms as much as possible. In other words, it searches for finding their connotations in Turkey's social, political and cultural history without restricting itself to the literary field. In line with its main objectives, this thesis proposes to consider the village novels under the influence of and the reciprocal relationship with the Turkish left in the sense that they succeed in going beyond classical Kemalist doctrines. Specifically, in regard to the village novels' claim of bringing the dominated and oppressed peasants' own life conditions and words to the literary field and make them heard by society, this thesis

claims that these novels remain loyal to this claim and bear a heteroglossic feature in their intertextual context.

Keywords: Village Novels, Intertextuality, Village Institutes, Peasantry, Turkish Left

ÖZ

KÖY ENSTİTÜLERİ MEZUNLARININ KÖY ROMANLARI ÜZERİNE METİNLERARASI BİR İNCELEME

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Bu tez Köy Enstitüleri'nden mezun olan yazarların köy romanlarını metinlerarası bir bağlamda incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Tez, Türkiye tarihinde geriye dönük bir biçimde “köy edebiyatı” olarak anılan geleneğin temsil edici eserlerinin Köy Enstitüleri'nden mezun olan yazarlar tarafından kaleme alındığı düşüncesinden hareketle, Türk edebiyatının “üç köylüsü” olarak bilinen Talip Apaydın, Fakir Baykurt ve Mahmut Makal tarafından 1950 ve 1980 arasında yazılmış 14 köy romanını incelemektedir. Bakhtin Çevresi tarafından geliştirilmiş kuramsal çerçeveye dayanan bu çalışmanın temel kaygısı, köy romanlarının Türkiye'nin sosyo-politik atmosferiyle ve kendi yazarlarının politik-ideolojik söylemleriyle girdiği diyalogu açığa çıkarmaktır. Dolayısıyla bu tez, köy romanlarının organizasyonunu, içeriğini ve bu romanlarda yaratılan karakterleri incelerken, bunlara mümkün olabildiğince ilişki bir biçimde yaklaşmayı amaçlamaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, romanların organizasyonunun, içeriğinin ve romanlarda yaratılan karakterlerin, Türkiye'nin toplumsal, siyasal ve kültürel tarihinde çağrıştırdıkları anlamları bulmaya çalışmaktadır. Amaçladığı noktalar çerçevesinde bu tez, köy romanlarının klasik Kemalist öğretilerin ötesine geçebilmelerini hesaba katarak, onları Türkiye solunun etkisi altında ve Türkiye soluyla girdikleri simbiyotik ilişki doğrultusunda düşünmeyi önermektedir. Köy romanlarının ezilen ve sömürülen köylülerin yaşam koşullarını ve bu koşulları ifade ediş biçimlerini edebi alana taşıma

ve onların toplum tarafından duyulmasını sağlama iddialarını göz önünde bulundurarak, romanların bu iddialara sadık kaldıklarını ve metinlerarası bağlamlarında heteroglosik bir özellik taşıdıklarını iddia etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Köy Romanları, Metinlerarasılık, Köy Enstitüleri, Köylülük, Türkiye Solu

Babam Bilâl Nartok'a,
Her şeyden evvel, beni hilesiz kucakladığı için..

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMP	Asiatic Mode of Production
DEV-GENÇ	Turkish Revolutionary Youth Federation (Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Federasyonu)
DP	Democrat Party
JP	Justice Party
MDD	National Democratic Revolution (Milli Demokratik Devrim)
RPP	Republican People's Party
TİP	Worker's Party of Turkey (Türkiye İşçi Partisi)
TÖDMF	National Federation of Teacher Associations of Turkey (Türkiye Öğretmen Dernekleri Milli Federasyonu)
TÖS	Teachers' Trade Union of Turkey (Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1- Objective of the Study

When Mahmut Makal wrote his first book, *Bizim Köy*, in 1950, it attracted the attention not only of Turkey's literary authorities, but of its politicians as well.¹ Makal was a graduate of one of the Village Institutes². In that period, after the Democrat Party (DP) had come to power and began the process of closing down the Village Institutes, the words and testimony of an institute graduate, and a village teacher as well, had important repercussions. Makal's book was a literary work, but at the same time it included a political critique. This book discussed the actual conditions of Turkey's villages and peasants, which were far from those targeted by the Republic nearly 30 years after its establishment. Therefore, as Yaşar Nabi Nayır argued, it needed to be read not only as a literary work, but also as “a report written for the sake of the development of the Turkish village, and the Turkish villager's attainment of his human rights” (quoted in Rathbun, 1972:17). In this context, it also constituted a warning for the state authorities.

¹ In the 1970 edition of the book, the last section, “İç ve Dış Basından Seçmeler,” presents the first comments of notable figures, from famous writers such as Nâzım Hikmet, Vâlâ Nureddin, and Sabahattin Eyübođlu to prominent journalists such as Nadir Nadi, Abdi İpekçi, and Çetin Altan and from politicians such as Samet Ağaođlu and Nihat Erim to well-known foreign press such as The Times and La Monde. This diversity reflects the novel's reception in different fields. For further detail, see Mahmut Makal, *Bizim Köy*, Ankara: Bizimköy Yayınları, 1970, pp.180-191.

² The Village Institutes were an educational project in Turkey between the late 1930s and the mid-1950s to transform the Turkish countryside by training teachers who would be sent to different village schools. Experimental studies for the institutes started in 1937 and schools under this name continued until 1954; nevertheless, the original phase of the institutes was operational between 1940 and 1946 when Hasan Ali Yücel was the minister of National Education and İsmail Hakkı Tonguç was the administrator for elementary education. More detailed information on the Village Institutes will be given in the following chapter.

Makal brought the social problems of the village into the literary field and was therefore perceived by many as the first time the village had entered into Turkish literature. However, Rathbun notes that there had been a village narrative in Turkish literature before Makal, but that it had never gained as much fame as Makal's work³:

It is often said that the Turkish villager, comprising the greater part of the Turkish society, was neglected by the literature until the attention was brought to bear on the literary possibilities of the village by Mahmut Makal's *Bizim Köy* in 1950. ... It is true that Mahmut Makal was the first known Turkish writer to portray the village as a villager. Since 1950, there have emerged from the village itself a number of writers who are chiefly concerned with the literary portrayal of the village. However, the 'neglect' of the village in the early Republic is not to be found in the literature, but rather in Turkish society itself (1972:13)⁴.

After several years, Fakir Baykurt and Talip Apaydın, also institute graduates, published their books, which paralleled *Bizim Köy* in content and motivation. However, their books took the form of novels. Even though *Bizim Köy* and the other authors' village novels were not enough to compensate for the social neglect Turkey's villages had suffered, they succeeded in drawing the attention of literary and political authorities, as well as a broader readership, to village issues. They gained significant popularity in the 1950s and 1960s, a period in which literature and the social sciences were closely connected (Naci, 1976; Kayalı, 2010; Timur, 2002). In addition to bringing village issues into the arena of recognized social problems, the village novels themselves took a place in Turkish history as a part of social reality.

³ The literary works focusing on village themes before Makal's *Bizim Köy* have been examined in various works. For an analysis of those written before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Nabizade Nazım's *Karabibik* and Ebubekir Hazım's *Küçük Paşa*, see Gündüz Akıncı (1961), *Türk Romanında Köye Doğru*, Ankara:Türk Tarih Kurumu. For a detailed analysis of those written in the early Republic, such as the works of Yakup Kadri, Sadri Ertem, Sabahattin Ali, Reşat Enis, and Memduh Şevket Esendal, see Carole Rathbun (1972), *The Village in the Turkish Novel and Short Story*, Paris:Mouton, pp.27-53. On the same issue, also see Asım Karaömerlioğlu (2006), *Orada Bir Köy Var Uzakta*, İstanbul:İletişim, pp.151-185.

⁴ For further detail on the literary works focusing on village themes between the 1950s and the 1980s, see Carole Rathbun (1972), *The Village in the Turkish Novel and Short Story*, Paris:Mouton, pp.53-74 and Ramazan Kaplan (1997), *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Romanında Köy*, Ankara:Akçağ, pp.132-556.

The village novels could not be boiled down to the novels of Village Institute graduates, because there were many famous authors, such as Yaşar Kemal, Kemal Tahir, Orhan Kemal – the three Kemals of Turkish literature -- who have been retroactively included in the village literature tradition due to their works focusing on village themes. However, this study does not concern all the authors who wrote village novels. Rather, it concentrates on the village novels written by institute graduates: Talip Apaydın, Fakir Baykurt, and Mahmut Makal – the three peasants of Turkish literature -- because these novels represent the typical examples of what is called the “village novel” or the “village literature tradition” (Timur, 2002:153). Furthermore, they played an important role in the process of making village literature popular in Turkey.

In terms of their social and political connotations, the village novels by village institute graduates always tended to overstep their literary boundaries. In the late 1950s, one of the institute graduate authors, Baykurt (1960:11), claimed that their novels would become “essential documents” over the next 30 years for those interested in social and political issues and those who felt themselves responsible for the country’s problems. Over time, the authors were no longer content to present village issues as simple social problems. Consequently, their novels took on a more political-ideological tone as the authors’ developed their leftist perspectives. Therefore, the village novels have always been identified with their political-ideological dimensions. On the one hand, they are rejected on the right as “the products of unwanted ideologies,” referring to socialism and communism, or as “propaganda” for these ideologies. On the other hand, the left has tended to see these novels as “one of the successes of the Village Institutes” and as “examples of socialist realism.” However, aside from this identification of these novels as political, the actual contours of their political-ideological connotations have yet to be examined in depth. Therefore, this study will take a closer look at the political and ideological dimensions of these novels by way of an intertextual reading. Rather than dismissing the characters and plot points of these novels as clichés, this study will adopt a relational approach to gain a better understanding of them.

Hence, this study will not stay within a strictly literary framework; rather, it will read these novels from the perspective of the point at which they go beyond their literary borders. Since the village novels always tend to overstep their literary bounds, it is essential for the purposes of this study to remain open to other fields. Therefore, the major focus of this study is the way in which the village novels interacted with the socio-political atmosphere of Turkey and with their authors' political-ideological discourses. To this end, several sub-issues will be addressed, such as the conditions out of which these novels emerged; how their authors' political and literary perceptions took shape within these conditions; how the people, objects, and ideas in these novels are categorized; who and what is included in this categorization; what traces of other texts can be found in these novels; and what social effects these novels had.

This study will first argue that these novels should be considered mainly in conjunction with the influence of the Turkish left and the opposition it mounted in the 1960s and 1970s. Taking the authors's political and intellectual sources -- i.e. their education in the Village Institutes under the influence of Kemalist ideology in the 1940s, their support for the Turkish left and their way of organization under the Teachers' Trade Union of Turkey (TÖS) in the 1960s onwards --into consideration, this study will try to show that the effect of the Turkish left on these novels is more dominant than that of classical Kemalist doctrines. Therefore, this study will highlight the relationship between the village novels and other, related, texts produced throughout the 1960s and later, i.e. the texts of the Worker's Party of Turkey (TİP), the texts of various figures of the Turkish left and the TÖS' own texts. This study will also argue that the novels are organized around a basic antagonistic relationship between the dominant bloc and the peasants and that their content is shaped by the production, distribution, and property relations in Turkish society. Finally, this thesis will suggest that these novels succeed in bringing the living conditions of the dominated and oppressed peasants into the literary field and that they bear a heteroglossic character in their intertextual context.

1.2- Research Method and Theoretical Framework

This study examines 14 novels⁵ written by Village Institute graduates and published between 1950 and 1980. In attempting to answer its primary questions, it will employ qualitative research methods. Specifically, since it tries to consider the village novels' narratives in the context of the period in which they were written as well as their narrators' political-ideological perspectives, this study will take the propositions of intertextual analysis as a part of narrative analysis into primary consideration.

Narrative analysis depends heavily on the narrative and its main problems deal with the relationships “between the story’s various passages; narrating and seeing, then and now; talking and acting; inside and outside of the story; and the words of the character and those of the narrator” (Herman and Vervaeck, 2001:8). Intertextual analysis takes the above-mentioned relationships and considers them in a “permutation of texts” together with several utterances from other texts as they intersect and neutralize one another (Kristeva quoted in Boje, 2001:75). For the objects of this study, the village novels, intertextuality reveals the socio-historical network that links them to other texts. It should also be acknowledged that the novels within this network are also “intertextual in terms of covert struggles for power that is dialogically embedded in its production, distribution and consumption” (Boje, 2001:75). Intertextual analysis is advanced by Kristeva (1986) and has its roots in the theories of Mihail Bakhtin. Thus, Bakhtin’s theory is essential for this study, not only for analyzing these novels, but also for situating them in their intertextual contexts. In addition, the theoretical frameworks developed by the Bakhtin Circle⁶, Kristeva,

⁵ As mentioned above, Makal’s *Bizim Köy* is not a novel but a compiled work of his “village notes.” Nevertheless, since it is accepted as a milestone of the village novels’ rise, it will be analyzed together with the other novels without any special method or consideration.

⁶ The Bakhtin Circle had several members, including Bakhtin, Volosinov and Medvedev. However, it is generally believed that the texts under the names of the other members belonged to Bakhtin, but could not be published under his own name due to the pressure on him in the Stalin era (Clark and

and Gramsci are employed throughout the study in order to determine the important relationships between these novels and other texts and to identify issues related to ideology and relations of power.

The tendency to confine literature to a definite theoretical area constitutes a prominent issue in literary discussions. Belge (1997:51) describes this tendency as “making literature academic.” It results in literature being treated as though it is separate from the problems of history. Eagleton (1996:170) highlights the same issue and states that “such ‘pure’ literary theory is an academic myth” because literature is extremely sensitive to the ideological structure of language and social ideologies. Therefore, the very attempt to ignore politics, history, and ideology while looking at literary works ends up mired in ideology. Literature is “decisive evidence of a particular form of social development of language” (Williams, 1977:53), so the ideological character of language and its relations with power are directly related to the connection between literature, ideology, and power.

Volosinov (1973) provides a useful analysis of the relationship between language and ideology. Using a two-pronged critique of individualistic subjectivism -- the singularization of language by associating it particularly with individual creativity -- and abstract objectivism -- the isolation of language by confining it to the linguistic system -- Volosinov develops an original Marxist theory of language that “neither denies agency nor assumes a reconstituted subject position” (Volosinov, 1973:8; Ives, 2004:61). His originality does not come from applying Marxist ideas to language, but from reconsidering the whole problem of language through a Marxist trajectory (Williams, 1977:35). His theory does not appeal to a division between the individual and the social, which are familiar separate categories and are considered mutually opposed in bourgeois perceptions (Williams, 1977:12). Rather, he disarticulates the subjective and objective implications of language and re-articulates it by bringing the individual and the social together in the sign (Morris, 2009:48-49).

Holquist, 1984:169). Nevertheless, the texts used in this study will be cited under the name of the author of record.

Language, for Volosinov, is not something static or merely related to a closed individual consciousness; rather, it is an activity based on a practical consciousness. The sign has its roots in the material, in the world outside individuals; however, it is not a fixed unit but “an active component of speech, modified and transformed in meaning by the variable social tones, valuations and connotations it condensed within itself in specific social conditions” (Eagleton, 1996:101). The individual consciousness is grounded in signs that are external to it and, in turn, participates in the process of giving meaning to these signs. Therefore, a sign has neither an objective, fixed meaning nor a subjective, arbitrary meaning; instead, it is “the very material medium of ideology” and itself a part of reality reflecting and refracting another reality outside itself. Volosinov explains:

Any ideological product is not only itself a part of a reality (natural or social), just as is any physical body, any instrument of production, or any product for consumption, it also, in contradistinction to these other phenomena, reflects and refracts another reality outside itself. Everything ideological possesses *meaning*: it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words, it is a *sign*. *Without signs, there is no ideology*. A physical body equals itself, so to speak; it does not signify anything but wholly coincides with its particular, given nature. In this case there is no question of ideology (1973:9).

As the sign does not equal itself, its meaning arises out of its connotations in addition to its denotations. Since the connotations of any sign vary according to the social valuations of conflicting classes and shift over the course of history, the “sign becomes an arena of class struggle” (Volosinov, 1973:23) and historical changes are latent within it. In this context, language is common to different classes, but it is necessarily heterogeneous because these classes bring their different orientations’ accents into language by way of the ideological notion of the sign. Thus, language itself becomes a heterogeneous, multiaccentual field of “ideological contention” and a site of class struggle, rather than a monolithic structure (Eagleton, 1996:102).

Like that of the Bakhtin Circle, Gramsci’s approach to language draws attention to its materiality. Gramsci states, “In language, there is no parthenogenesis,”

explaining: “Language is not given by the miracle of immaculate conception or divine gift of God and cannot regenerate spontaneously. Rather, the growth of language requires cross-fertilization” (Ives, 2004:55). Nevertheless, in this process of cross-fertilization, language does not serve as a transmitter of the ideas, intentions, and feelings of individuals -- if it did, it would no longer be material -- but constitutes a substantial element of social reality established through cross-fertilization. In other words, similar to Bakhtin’s conceptualization, language cannot be confined to inner processes, because it is not “within” individuals but “between” them in line with their ideological interventions (Eagleton, 1996:126).

Because of language’s necessary ideological dimension, it engages with relations of power. Ideology comprises people’s “modes of feelings, valuing, perceiving and believing” which are always in relation to “the maintenance and reproduction of social power” (Eagleton, 1996:13). Such a connection between language, ideology, and power is presented in the conceptualizations of both the Bakhtin Circle and Gramsci.

Although Bakhtin’s theory has been accused of weakness in terms of explaining language’s mobilization for the sake of dominant forces and its relation to power in the existing bourgeois order (Gardiner, 1992:177; Pechey, 1989:52), his discussion of centripetal and centrifugal forces in society is of significant value for discussions of social relations of power, in which language takes an important part. For Bakhtin, the unification and centralization of language always has a close relationship to sociopolitical and cultural centralization (Bakhtin, 2009:74-75). For Bakhtin, centripetal forces refer to official cultural practices that use a unified language and authoritative discourse, and are therefore monoglossic by nature. In contrast, centrifugal forces refer to popular cultural practices whose language is marked by ambiguity, openness, and transgression (Lachman, 1988:116) so that they bear many social and ideological contradictions, giving rise to their heteroglossic character. As long as centripetal forces try to stabilize social heteroglossia around a uniaccentual

language by destroying its multiaccentuality (Erdoğan, 1994:43) and to close it in a definite structure, they move through an authoritative hegemonic principle while centrifugal forces reflect an anti-hegemonic struggle (Brandist, 2000:85). Due to their experience of domination under Stalinism in Russia, the Bakhtin Circle tend to be suspicious of any attempt at consolidation, unification, and organization. Therefore, a unified national language, they suggest, can only obscure heteroglossia and social diversity (Ives, 2004:73).

Language's political dimensions are more obvious in Gramsci's approach; for him, the fact that language is historically constituted enables a transformation in its structure, allowing it to be employed for the purposes of an anti-hegemonic struggle. Living philology is an important part of Gramsci's concept of the philosophy of praxis and a close relationship between the masses and the leading party or group can, through this living philology, enable society to move together as a "collective man" (Gramsci quoted in Ives, 2004:10). Therefore, he is not opposed to a national "unifying" language; rather, he believes that language should be integrated. However, existing national languages underestimate the diversity in people's ordinary language and impose on this diversity a linguistic stratification that is closely connected to social hierarchization (Gardiner, 1992:186). Nevertheless, the logic of nation-states is predicated on the assumption of the unity of nations, in which the people's heterogeneous cultures gather "around a vision of common values, interests, community, tasks, sacrifices, and historical destiny" so that many gaps and discontinuities between the people and the nation-state are "rhetorically" sutured over (Beverley, 2001:51).

Therefore, it can be argued that both Bakhtin and Gramsci try to undo this suturing by focusing on the contradictory and spontaneous nature of popular cultural formations' and the ways in which they challenge official or hegemonic formations. For both, such an effort is indicative of what Kristeva (1986:111) depicts as "intertextuality." Kristeva builds her concept of intertextuality upon Bakhtin's

literary concept of “dialogism.” Dialogism, for Bakhtin, bears a meaning beyond dialogue as a verbal interaction or dual conversation and is specific not to language but to utterance, which necessarily assumes the Other. It is also picked up from and refers to other utterances (Erdoğan, 1994:43). As a dialectically derived concept, dialogism brings conflicting and intersecting situations into communication. Therefore, dialogue in the scope of dialogism is deprived of any “preset path.” As Morson (2010:93) argues, it “does not ‘unfold’, it ‘becomes’”. Its result is not already given but made in the process of exchange. The same conversational starting point can always lead to multiple continuations.” This kind of multiplicity, contradiction, and intersection is inherent to utterance. Hence, Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism pushes the limits of texts and disciplines, which have their own sign systems, to engage with other sign systems (Erdoğan, 1994:42). Kristeva calls this move intertextuality or, synonymously, transposition:

If one grants that every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality), one then understands that its 'place' of enunciation and its denoted 'object' are never single, complete and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. In this way polysemy can also be seen as the result of a semiotic polyvalence - an adherence to different sign-systems (1986:111).⁷

Bakhtin’s discussion on narrative matrices, as a literary example, and Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, as a political one, include and move among different sign systems. They can therefore be interpreted with the help of the concept of intertextuality.

Bakhtin’s discussion of “narrative matrices” focuses on social hierarchization. He argues that these matrices are built on the interrelations of ideas and objects; however, these are falsely established matrices partly because they create and preserve hierarchical links between such ideas and objects (Bakhtin, 1981:169).

⁷ The reason Kristeva feels compelled to use the terms ‘intertextuality’ and ‘transposition’ together is her complaint against the “banal” usage of intertextuality, referring to “the study of sources” (1986:111). However, the intertextuality which Kristeva intends to construct is grounded in the ‘articulation’ of different texts rather than ‘originating’ from the texts of the same sort.

Hence, they are organized in a way that is compatible with the dominant culture, but still carry the contradictions and gaps intrinsic to popular culture. On the other hand, Gramsci's concept of hegemony is grounded in popular cultural formations which articulate "the people's historical experiences, their practical consciousness, popular ideologies picked up from the past and items 'falling down' from the dominant culture in a complicated, interrelated, contradictory, fragmentary, heteroglossic and plural way" resembling a bag made of rags and bearing an intertextual dimension (Erdoğan, 1994:46). Thus, for Bakhtin, the false matrix built by the dominant classes must be destroyed and a new one that bears manifold diversity and living corporeality must be built in its place (1981:169). And, for Gramsci, the stitches of the bag of rages must be removed and it should be sewn again with other political discourses and a new popular consciousness, giving rise to the creation of the national-popular will (quoted in Erdoğan, 1994:46).

Therefore, every text (literary, political, epistemological, ethical, etc.) refers to a stabilization process in which it pulls itself toward certain borders; nevertheless, partially because of its intertextuality, it opens onto other texts from different areas. In this way, as seen in the approaches of Bakhtin and Gramsci, different areas communicate with each other and their disciplinary limits are blurred. Even though "each area has its own language, its own forms and devices for that language, and its own specific laws for the ideological refraction of a common reality" (Bakhtin and Medvedev, 2009:124), this does not indicate an absolute autonomy of language. Instead, for Bakhtin, language has only relative autonomy, because of "the fact that it could not be reduced to a mere reflex of social interests." However, as Eagleton explains, "[Gramsci] insisted that there was no language which was not caught up in definite social relationships, and that these social relationships were in turn part of broader political, ideological and economic systems" (Eagleton, 1996:102). Such an understanding is natural for Gramsci, who focuses on the inseparability of language from its political and social function (Gardiner, 1992:186). Therefore, because of this relative autonomy, texts always stray into other arenas.

The distinction between “fact” and “fiction” is one of the main issues to be looked at in the field of literature. Whereas non-artistic works are generally regarded as pertaining to facts, or the reality outside individuals, literature, as an artistic effort, is seen as marked by “fiction.” There is always a distance between fact and fiction; however, as long as non-artistic structures bear ideological notions, reality is reflected and refracted in them. And if literature is taken as a material element of social life, given that it is a part of a literary environment and thereby part of a socio-economic environment, any literary work’s fiction interacts with other non-artistic ideological structures. In this context, social discourses are transformed by fiction in such a way that their social origins, i.e. reflected and refracted parts, are not seen transparently and they again enter into an ideological process in fiction; that is, they are “doubly ideologized” (Glazener, 2001:156). Therefore, in addition to distance, there is also an interrelation between fact and fiction with regard to literary works and both are influenced by reality mutually. This interrelation and mutual influence gives literature its unique position in the totality of the ideological environment, which is the double refraction and reflection of reality. Bakhtin and Medvedev’s explanation of this double reflection and refraction is as follows:

The literary structure like every ideological structure, refracts the generating socioeconomic reality and does so in its own way. But, at the same time, in its ‘content’, literature reflects and refracts the reflections and refractions of other ideological spheres (ethics, epistemology, political doctrines, religion, etc.) That is, in its ‘content’ literature reflects the whole of the ideological horizon of which it is itself a part. (2009:128).

Within this ideological horizon, man and his life are subjected to literary representation and imbued with ideological values such as good, evil, truth, crime, duty, death, love, victory, and so on. In the process of reflecting and refracting these ideological values picked up from non-artistic ideological formations in its artistic structure, new forms of ideological intercourse are created within the unity of the literary work (Bakhtin and Medvedev, 2009:129). After such a double ideologization, each literary-artistic work brings two basic axes of human perception of everyday reality, time and space, together. Hence, they are not made up of a sequence of diegetic events and speech acts; rather, they construct their own

chronotope, which is “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships” (Bakhtin, 1981:84). Within a particular fictional framework, these two categories, time and space, are not “transcendental abstractions but forms of the most immediate reality” (Bemong and Borghart, 2010:4); in that context, the chronotope as a concrete whole represents particular worldviews and ideologies in itself.

All literary works and genres have a place in socio-economic historical scholarship; however, among them, Bakhtin gives an important place to the novel. The novel, for him, has more potential for containing a multiplicity of social discourses and other-voicedness within itself than any other genre, such as the epic, drama, or poetry. Whereas other genres tend to be monoglossic because of the clarity of the author’s voice and his inner world, the novel tends to be heteroglossic and dialogic due to the interrelation and contradiction of the various voices, including the author’s own, that it contains:

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. ... The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized). (Bakhtin, 1981:262-263)

Here, it is important to note that there is some ambiguity over whether Bakhtin regards the genre of the novel in general as dialogical, or only a certain kind of novel. Even though Bakhtin mentions this potential as a general feature of the novel, some of his studies on novels state that only one kind of novel -- the dialogic, heteroglossic, polyphonic novel -- has this characteristic. This confusion can be illuminated by looking more closely at his basic concepts.

As noted above, dialogism is a literary concept having no preset path and consisting of many contradictions and interrelations. It is closely related to Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia, whose primary categories are polyphony and carnivalization. Heteroglossia, in Bakhtin's conceptualization, is a "constituting condition for the possibility of independent consciousness in that any attempt to impose one unitary monologic discourse as the 'Truth' is relativized by its dialogic contact with another social discourse, another view of the world" (Morris, 2009:73). Bakhtin (1984:17) finds heteroglossia, polyphony, and dialogism in carnival life, in fact "carnival praxis", in medieval times. For Bakhtin, the carnival creates its chronotope whose basic categories are the marketplace and carnival time; therefore, carnival praxis as a deconstructive and reconstructive praxis should be considered with respect to this chronotope. It bears the tension between popular culture and official culture; nevertheless, in its special chronotope it leans toward the former by means of carnival laughter. Therefore, the carnival is a world of "topsy-turvy, of heteroglot exuberance, of ceaseless overrunning, and excess where all is mixed, hybrid, ritually degraded and defiled" (Stallybrass & White, 1986:8) and it shifts the action from top to bottom. The world which is filled with hierarchies over the dominated class turns upside down. Thus, it represents the destruction of hierarchy and a new picture of the world and reflects centrifugal inclinations promoting ambivalence, openness, transgression, and subversiveness (Bakhtin, 1981:187; Lachmann, 1988:116). Bakhtin sees the novels of Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, written in the period of the transition from Middle Ages to the Renaissance, as having the features of heteroglossia, carnivalesque, and dialogism. For him, Rabelais succeeded in including popular-cultural notions, i.e. the notions of "low" culture, in the novel, which hitherto belonged to high culture and was known as part of high literature. Furthermore, the novel in the Renaissance tended toward more heteroglossia and linkages with the social dimension. Therefore, Bakhtin finds in the novels' history "a subversive potential derived from its inscription, through its ancestry, with (lower-) class identity and class resistance" (Glazener, 2001:158).

On the other hand, the modern novel differed from the novel in the Renaissance by its dehistoricization, which came closer to the official discourse. However, this does not mean that the novel lost its potential for heteroglossia, polyphony, and the dialogic. Bakhtin's most famous examples of these concepts in modern novels came from Dostoyevsky. Dostoyevsky's works do not reflect the subversiveness or the obvious positioning against official or dominant culture of Rabelais; however, he "implicitly criticizes the laissez-faire relations among individuals in a market society by emphasizing the mutual constitution of selves and the grounding of subjectivity in ideologically significant languages." (Glazener, 2001:163). For that reason, Dostoyevsky's characters stand as ideologues "who interact with each other, who attempt to persuade each other, who represent certain values for each other" (Glazener, 2001:163). Since dialogism can be seen in different ways from the Renaissance novel to the modern novel, the novel's dialogic potential is in fact a historical potential which existed in the past, stands as a residue in its present organization, and can be seen again depending on the author's orchestration.

The author's orchestration brings different discourses together; in this respect, it plays a significant role in the novel. This orchestration brings together ideological horizon and artistic structure (Bakhtin, 2009:31). Bakhtin explains this by giving an example from Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*. The hero, Bazarov, is defined as a *raznochites*⁸ by socioeconomic historical scholarship; however, he symbolizes an ideological refraction "in the social consciousness of a definite social group, the liberal nobility to which Turgenev belonged" (Bakhtin, 2009:131). This does not mean that the novel remains within the borders of subjectivity or individuality or that this orchestration is intrinsically imbued with the author's own values. Rather, this orchestration still takes its social ties and social meaning through an ideological purview, because literary work is intertwined with signs that present "a point of convergence of individual consciousness with the social" (Morris, 2009:73) and that

⁸ "*Raznochites* is a name given given to a member of a new social class which began to appear around the end of eighteenth century in Russia in response to the development of capitalism. Their education divided them from their class origins: they were upwardly *declassé*." (Morris, 2009:131).

carry its external material links with its internal ones. In Bakhtin and Medvedev's words, such a literary situation refers to a simple dialectic:

Every literary phenomenon, like every other ideological phenomenon, is simultaneously determined from without (extrinsically) and from within (intrinsically). From within it is determined by literature itself, and from without by other spheres of social life. But, in being determined from within, the literary work is thereby determined externally also, for the literature which determines it is itself determined from without. And being determined from without, it thereby is determined from within, for internal factors determine it precisely as a literary work in its specificity and in connection with the whole literary situation, and not outside that situation. Thus, intrinsic turns out to be extrinsic, and the reverse. (2009:134)

Therefore, the meaning produced in the novel is neither a reflection of the author's own values or the novel's own fictional world nor a mere objective reflector of social reality. Instead, it is a social meaning which distances itself from reality, but compensates for this distance by becoming a part of social reality. Hence, the novel itself refers to a different social category and a part of social life; in this context, its place in social life and its effectiveness as a novel are "no less important than that of the social phenomenon it reflects" (Bakhtin and Medvedev, 2009:132).

1.3- The Literature on the Institute Graduates' Village Novels

Moran (1990:7) categorizes the novels written by the graduates of the Village Institutes as examples of what he calls the "Anatolian novel."⁹ He cites the important place of Makal's *Bizim Köy* as a breakthrough in Turkish literature with its "new focuses" on Anatolian realities such as the living conditions, backwardness, and poverty of Anatolian villages (Moran, 1990:15). Moran states that Makal's book narrates these realities starkly without exaggerating or romanticizing. This book's effect was felt on the village novels written over the next two decades. However,

⁹ Moran's classification "Anatolian novel" is a thematic concept consisting of novels focusing on an "unjust order" and its reflection in Anatolia in the period between 1950 and 1975. Since not all novels taking their subjects from an unjust order are related to village issues, he prefers to evaluate them as Anatolian novels, not as village novels. See Berna Moran (1990), *Türk Romanına Eleştirel Bir Bakış 2: Sabahattin Ali'den Yusuf Atılgan'a*, İstanbul:İletişim, pp.7-8.

Moran (1990:15) argues that this effect had positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, *Bizim Köy* showed that an existent and striking reality, with which the Turkish reader had not been sufficiently familiarized, could be successfully handled as a plot for a novel. On the other hand, this striking reality inspired the novelists to brood over this new novel material excessively. Moran suggests that it was a “trap” in terms of literature. The institute graduates, in particular, fell into this trap (Moran, 1990:15). For Moran, the institute graduates aimed to create plots that expressed the village reality they knew best -- i.e. the hard living conditions of the peasants and the poverty, inequality, and injustice of the village -- and to construct characters who were deprived of “individuality.” After a while, however, “the new became old” and the repetitions of the plots drove the authors to schematism (Moran, 1990:15).

Repetition and schematism constitute a common point of criticism leveled by critics against the village novels (Naci, 1976; Oktay, 1990; Kaplan, 1997; Cantek, 2001; Enginün, 2010; Çankaya, 2013). For Cantek (2001:195), the schematism in these novels is an “infertile dualism” between the good-hearted peasant and the ill-hearted *ağa*¹⁰ and between the idealist teacher and the exploitative *muhtar*. Therefore, he stresses that the “flat characters” of the novels were an inevitable result of such a dualism. Similar to Cantek, Oktay (1990:69) focuses on the “good” and “bad” groups in these novels. For Oktay, these groups are predetermined in the sense that the authors create them in line with their own views. Furthermore, Oktay argues that this kind of predetermined characterization and schematism restricts the reader’s freedom.

Among the critics who focus on the schematism and repetition in the village novels, some believe these “flaws” stem from the authors’ political motivations. For Naci (1976:128-130), the village novels’ schematism is a result of the authors’

¹⁰ “Ağa” is used for referring to the landowner or older brother in Turkish. In fact, it connotes feudal elements. Nevertheless, in regard that these novels were written in the process of capitalization in agriculture in which feudal relations came to resolution, it refers to a feudal residue more than a feudal element completely in the village novels. Therefore, it refers to the biglandowner in the form of a title of respect.

presumption of the unity of the literary and political fields. As Naci argues, such a presumption was not unique to these authors: considering the novel, the village, and the country's development in conjunction was common in the period when the village novels were written (1976:128). However, the problem, for Naci, does not lie in the relationship between literature and politics, but in transposing political issues directly onto the literary field. He emphasizes that the institute graduates' novels fail to recognize that literature should protect its specific features in its dialogue with the political field. Since the novel refers to the "individual," the novel should narrate the reality of the individual villager, not the village's social reality (Naci, 1981:469). For Naci (1976:131-2), the institute graduates approach the novel with the point of view of a social scientist, so that their works lay stress on the economic and social conditions of the village more than individual villagers. Therefore, these novels end up with characters who only exist for the sake of describing these socio-economic conditions and thereby fail to reach the level of true literary works (Naci, 1976:131).

Echoing Naci's critique, Enginün (2010:347) argues that the institute graduates interpret village realities in accordance with Marxist ideas and that, as a result of this, the peasants are not considered as individuals but are turned into "puppets" to depict a definite social structure. Similarly, after mentioning the authors' leftist tendencies, Çankaya (2013:61) states that the characters in these novels are seen as mouthpieces for conveying the authors' own ideas to the audience. Therefore, he argues, these novels could not present realistic images of villagers. Along the same lines, Kaplan (1997:560) states that the domination of political sentiments over artistic sensibilities in these novels gives rise to troublesome repetitions and instrumentalized, one-dimensional characters.

Ecevit describes the village novel as a politically colored genre that halted the advancement of Turkish literature for years (Ecevit quoted in Akçam, 2009:406). Noting the relationship between the village novels and socialist realism, she states that the village novel is a product of a literary perception in which the narration of

the individual's inner world is perceived as a kind of betrayal. Benk (2000:555) also mentions the village novels' ties with socialist realism. However, more than the absence of individuals' inner worlds in the novel, he focuses on the tension between the novels' plots and the target audience. For Benk, these novels target the peasants, the oppressed parts of society; however, the peasants do not read these novels. Therefore, they narrate the peasants' lives not to peasants, but to urbanites who do not know and cannot recognize these stories (Benk, 2000:556). According to Benk, particularly because of the distance between the subjects of the plots and the audience, the socialist realism of these novels turns into a "pseudo-socialism" (2000:558). Since the urban audience has difficulty identifying with their plots and reacts against them, the novels are marked by a defensive language (Benk, 2000:557). In that sense, "the village" becomes a trap for the authors and puts their socialist-realist claims at risk.

On the other hand, there are some critics who evaluate the village novels within or parallel to the framework of socialist-realism (Özkırımlı, 1991; Bayrak, 2000; Timur, 2002). For Özkırımlı (1991:122-4), the village novels mark a new epoch in the direction of socialist realism for Turkish literature because they present the village as a social problem by way of a village reality experienced first hand. Similarly, Bayrak (2000:63) states that although the early examples of the village novels bear a tendency toward observationalist realism, those after the 1960s are the true socialist realist works because they are written for the oppressed and exploited parts of society. The novels' presentation of the village life their authors experienced first hand and their support for the oppressed parts of society are acknowledged by Timur (2002:381-2), but he stresses that they do not perfectly fit socialist realism's framework, which arose under specific conditions, bearing specific features, in Soviet Russia. Nevertheless, what the village novels present is still a socialist-realist trajectory in terms of their organization and content.

Oktay (1990), Kayalı (2010), and Türkeş (2001) try to expand upon the political dimensions of the village novels. Oktay argues that although these novels are associated with their author's socialist views, their discourses interlace with the discourses of left Kemalists, which primarily emphasize populism, statism, and revolutionism (Oktay, 1990:71). For Oktay, the authors propose a social organization under the state which protects its ordinary citizens against the rich and powerful in the last instance so that they do not transgress the existing order no matter how much they may present themselves as being opposed to it. Similarly, Kayalı (2010:43) stresses that these novels never truly contradict the dominant literary and political discourse. For Kayalı, they are products of a Kemalist mentality and show socialist tendencies only when socialism is dominant among intellectuals. For this reason, Kayalı accuses these novels of going with the political flow. On the other hand, for Türkeş (2001:215), although these novels' discourses are products of Kemalist-populist ideology, they are clearly politicized in accordance with the authors' socialist tendencies. This, he says, contributed to the strengthening of the Turkish left in the literary field and of the relationship between literature and politics (Türkeş, 2001:226; 2007:1053). In that sense, he draws attention to the need for an intertextual reading of these works (Türkeş, 2001:213).

1.4- Outline of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. This introductory chapter has detailed the main objective of the thesis and its major and minor questions. In line with these objectives and the study's basic questions, the research methodology and the theoretical framework it has adopted were also presented. In addition, the existing literature on the village novels written by Village Institute graduates was examined.

In Chapter 2, the background and context of the village novels will be discussed. This chapter will examine the social, political, and cultural atmosphere of the country in which the village novels were written and in which their stories are set. This chapter will look at how the authors developed their political and literary ideas

within this atmosphere. Moreover, the literary debates of the period surrounding the novels and the place of the novels in the village literature tradition will also be discussed.

Chapter 3 will analyze the content and organization of the village novels on a general level. The main aim of this chapter will be to show what points come to the fore in their plots and how their organization can be understood based on passages from the novels. In this regard, the ways in which the characters are portrayed and what they represent will be examined in detail. Furthermore, the chapter will show how the characters establish relationships with each other and how they position themselves with respect to each other.

Chapter 4 will try to examine the village novels intertextually by bringing together the focal points of previous chapters. In this chapter, the main goal will be to clarify the political-ideological dimensions of the village novels. It will discuss the relationship between the authors' political-ideological stances and their portrayal of their characters and the relationship between these novels and the Turkish left. It will also examine how the village novels are connected to folk literature and socialist realism.

Finally, in Chapter 5, the results of the study as a whole will be reviewed and its findings will be summarized.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE VILLAGE NOVELS

This chapter aims to examine the social, political, and cultural conditions that gave rise to the village novels of the institute graduates and in which these novels were written. In addition to these circumstances, the ways in which authors interpreted them will be one of the main focal points of this chapter. Since the authors studied at the Village Institutes, the first section of the chapter will take a brief look at the developments that prepared the way for the foundation of the institutes and the logic behind them. The main focus of this section will be the populist-peasantist ideology of the new regime and the relatively varied forms it took over time. The second section will engage the authors' political ideas and their articulation in the political field. Since the authors' activities in the TÖS are essential to understanding their political stances with respect to social, political and cultural changes in the country, this section will primarily address their ideas with reference to the TÖS' texts. The final section of the chapter will concentrate on the authors' literary ideas and their articulation to the literary field. This section will examine their literary perceptions, their place in the village literature tradition, and the literary criticism of the period directed at their works.

2.1- Kemalism, Peasantism, and the Village Institutes

2.1.1- The Early Republican Period and the Principle of Populism

After the War of Independence, the new regime in Turkey aimed to construct a legalist-voluntarist nation and raise it to the level of modern civilization by leaving its Ottoman heritage behind and embracing positivism, scientism, and progress on the model of the Western-style nation-building process. To this end, the early

Republic adopted several reforms -- or revolutions, in its own terms -- from above in different areas of cultural life. These ranged from the closure of religious lodges to the adaptation of the Swiss civil code and from a new dress code to the changing of the alphabet. This early Republican period was closely connected to the so-called “six arrows,” or principles, of the Republican People’s Party (RPP), the party that founded the new regime under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal and the country’s sole party until the mid-1940s. These six principles of the RPP, republicanism, nationalism, populism, revolutionism, statism, and secularism, were also presented as the “principles of the new Turkish state.”¹¹

As one of these six principles, populism was noteworthy for being the source of the main ideas that gave rise to such experiments as the People’s Houses and the Village Institutes, which were marked by peasantist ideology. In fact, populism had been introduced even before the foundation of the Republic and the RPP. In the Programme of Populism, declared in 1920, this term was a defining feature of the new regime in terms of its presentation of itself as being synonymous with nationalism and anti-imperialism. Subsequently, Mustafa Kemal declared that the political party he was founding would take populism as a principle and stand for the people’s rights and welfare. In those years, populism was used in a solidarist-corporatist manner based on national-popular sovereignty. That is, it rejected the existence of classes and class conflicts in society and saw the people as the nation as a whole. Ahmad explains the Kemalist conception of the “people” in this way:

People implied the coalescing of the various social forces against the old order. The principal task of this collective was not merely to destroy the old society but to collaborate in the creation of a new one. Both tasks required total cohesion and unity among all the groups who made up the ‘people’ and there was no room for a conflict of interest amongst them. The Kemalists were thankful ‘that in our country our intellectuals, merchants, farmers and peasants, and officials are not members of different social groups. There are not

¹¹ For further details, see Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Dördüncü Büyük Kurultayı Görüşmeleri Tuzalması, Ankara, Ulus Basımevi, 1935, p.45.

even any deep economic differences among them. Everyone is a producer and of the people. (1993:82)

Kemalism, therefore, defined the people as an “unprivileged, classless, and integrated mass” and, as discussed by Karaömerlioğlu (2006:44), such a definition of the people was necessary for the Republic, which did not attribute the legal source of its sovereignty to any religious entity. Furthermore, this definition emphasizing a coalesced mass without any contradiction also marked and justified its reflection in the political plane with the single-party model (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:44)

By the 1930s, however, the national-popular definition of populism lost its emphasis in Kemalist discourse to some extent. Instead, it began to mean something along the lines of, “For the people, despite the people.” This tendency revealed the RPP’s consolidation of an authoritarian rule in which bureaucratic elites made decisions and applied them for the sake of the people independent of the people’s consent. Furthermore, the Kemalists’ collaboration with local notables and big landowners was a “tacit agreement to maintain, and even strengthen the status quo in the countryside” (Ahmad, 1993:76). In the 1930s, this authoritarian tendency was crystallized in the integration of the state and the Party (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:56). Given the closure of relatively autonomous societal organizations, such as the Turkish Hearths and the Turkish Women’s Association, and the establishment of new organizations under state supervision, it can be said that the new regime left no room for any opposition. The People’s Houses, as an institution paving the way for a theoretical -- not practical -- discussion of the principle of populism and for the intellectuals to act on the idea of “going to the people,” were established in this period under state supervision in the place of the Turkish Hearths in order to imbue the masses with the doctrines of the new ideology (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:48).

2.1.2- The People’s Houses and Peasantist Ideology

As a country in which peasants remained numerically predominant in the early years after its foundation (Tütengil, 1969:127) and which was undertaking a modernization

process aimed at creating a modern nation out of its rural population (Karpas, 1963:65), particularly in 1930s, Turkey had to confront its agrarian question. As a result of the wars that marked the final period of the Ottoman Empire, the national struggle, and the effects of the Great Depression of 1929, Turkey's peasants' conditions worsened compared to other parts of society. The new state's economy still depended on them, but its policies brought difficulties to their lives and did not change their conditions for the better. In the absence of an adequate land reform due to the alliance between the bureaucratic elites and landowners, the peasants remained oppressed and exploited by the local notables and big landowners. In this context, even though Kemalism perceived the nation as an integrated and classless mass, the majority of society could not think this way. Especially after the Free Party experience in 1930, popular discontent was noticed by the bureaucratic cadres. Given that the country was also attempting to implement statist policies to create a self-sufficient economy, it became necessary for the new regime to engage the people to dispel such discontent (Karaömerliođlu, 2006:52). However, this was not done through mass mobilization or actually taking people's demands and concerns into consideration. Rather, it was carried out by indoctrinating the people with the official ideology (Karpas, 1963:55).

This is the atmosphere in which the People's Houses were established in 1932. The general idea of the period was that there was a gap between the intellectuals and the people. The intellectuals in this period were regarded as apathetic toward the people and reluctant to spread the new regime's ideology to them. Much official discourse stressed that there should be no gap between the intellectuals and the people, or between cities and villages, and that it was necessary for intellectuals to mingle with the people and lower themselves to the people's level (Karaömerliođlu, 2006:59-60). In this way, the People's Houses would bridge the gap between the intellectuals and the people as well as the gap between cities and villages.

Because the People's Houses were a product of Kemalist populism and the majority of the people consisted of peasants, peasantism became an important constituent of populism in the single-party period (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:48). Peasant Branches were among the most important branches of the People's Houses. For the People's Houses, the cultural development of the peasants was the most important social and national mission. To fulfill this mission they would follow the way of "taking their knowledge down to the people" (Karpas, 1963:65).¹² In line with this aim, the Peasant Branches organized many village trips in order to close the geographic and intellectual distance between the intellectuals and the peasants. However, the Peasant Branches' mission was not limited to the cultural development of the peasants; rather, it was believed that by way of the village trips, in which the intellectuals learned authentic and folkloric traditions, national culture as a whole would be improved (Tütengil, 1969:11-2). Later, in 1939, the People's Rooms were established. These were aimed at reinforcing the relationship between intellectuals and the peasants. However, like the People's Houses, the administration of the People's Rooms was in the hands of the RPP and state officials. Thus, beyond reinforcing the relationship between the intellectuals and the peasants, they were designed as a kind of control mechanism (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:62).

Nevertheless, the People's Houses, with their Peasant Branches and People's Rooms, proved unable to meet their targets. This was unsurprising given the "for the people, despite the people" attitude that marked Kemalist populism in the 1930s (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:81). First of all, since the People's Houses did not go beyond acting as official institutions of the state and were subject to its bureaucratic mentality, their activities never took the people's living standards or demands into consideration. They adopted an elitist approach that tried to establish relations with peasants from above (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:48). Therefore, they did not manage to touch people's lives. For instance, the members of the People's Houses were not ordinary citizens or peasants, but regional government officials, intellectuals,

¹² Karaömerlioğlu (2006:60) defines such an importance given to cultural development of the peasants and a belief in the development of the country by way of cultural development as syndromes common to most of Third World intellectuals.

landowners, and elites (Karpas, 1963:65). Secondly, any creative attempts at local development or criticisms against the People's Houses were suppressed or refused by the institutions' bureaucracy. The People's Houses functioned independently of the people's decisions, as if they were parts of a social engineering project in which the people were the objects of this project and the members of the People's Houses were the engineers (Karaömerliođlu, 2006:63). Thirdly, in the village trips of the Peasant Branches and in the activities of the People's Rooms, "the inefficiency and inefficacy of those who would guide the reforms in the countryside" and "their distaste for the rural life and peasantry" were felt by the peasants (Rathbun, 1972:14). For instance, members of the People's Houses went to the villages just like foreign tourists or travelers who go to explore the countryside of Africa (Kirby quoted in Karaömerliođlu, 2006:63). Similarly, Tütengil (1969:93) suggests that the village trips had the air of a picnic, rather than a serious attempt to learn the issues faced by villages.

In general, these factors increased peasants' suspicion toward urban officials, rather than creating sympathy for them. In this context, as Karpas (1963:61) argues, the experience of the People's Houses did not bridge the gap between the intellectuals and the people; rather, it deepened the divide. Thus, the interest in the village as an ideological, political, and cultural subject remained limited to "the cliché of the villager as the 'real master' of the country and lip-service to the need for reform" (Rathbun, 1972:15). In spite of a vast "know-your-village" program, the villages were still neglected in terms of their harsh social and economic realities (Karpas, 1963:61).

Nevertheless, the People's Houses experience helped to create a peasantist discourse among the intellectuals of the period. Examples of this discourse can be found in *Ülkii (Ülkii Halkevleri Mecmuası)*, the journal of the People's Houses. This journal revealed that the peasantist discourse was adopted not only by intellectuals who were known as peasantists but also by state officials, journalists, and academicians. This introduced some ambiguity into the peasantist discourse as a result of the ambiguity of the Kemalist populist mentality. Nevertheless, looking at the discourses of the

best-known peasantists, such as Nusret Kemal Köymen, İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, and Sait Aydoslu, it is possible to find some common tendencies in the peasantist discourse.

One of these common themes was an emphasis on the contradiction between cities and villages, rather than between different segments of society. This meant taking a stance marked by prejudice against urbanization and, implicitly, industrialization and Westernization, for the sake of exalting the village life and the peasants (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:66). The main reason for the peasantists' hostility towards urbanization was that it was seen as the primary source of "*social illnesses*" such as unemployment, freeloading, and class conflict (Köymen, 1964:12). Their prejudice against industrialization and, closely connected to this, Westernization, stemmed from their hostility towards urbanization.

However, because the peasantist discourse was a product of Kemalist ideology, it was not possible to stand firmly against industrialization and Westernization. Instead, they accepted the necessity of a national industry, but with the caveat that it should not be like Western industrialization. This meant that the industrialization process should adopt technological development without distorting the traditional production relations in the villages and without displacing the peasants (Aydoslu quoted in Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:67). On this issue, Köymen proposed the idea of "peasantist industry," in which a combination of agriculture and industry would be pursued for "the benefit of an elevation and revitalization of the nation" (Jongerden, 2004:6; Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:79). Nevertheless, their solutions and development plans for villages were always marked by urbanization, industrialization, and Westernization. For instance, a few years later, Köymen proposed the establishment of "peasant inns" in cities to educate peasants in these places (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:81). Similarly, the peasantists consistently argued that the country's goal had to be reaching the level of modern civilization, so their analyses always tended to fall back on the Western approach to modernization and industrialization (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:75).

The second common theme in the peasantist discourse was the exaltation of village life and the peasantry. On the one hand, the peasantists saw peasants as the fundamental element of the Turkish nation and national development because they were “pure,” “honorable” and “reasonable,” and “open to change” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:69)¹³. Similarly, the village economy was exalted because at its core lay not money, but “happiness.” For the peasantists, in contrast to the degenerate urban economy, which was marked by alienated production based on waged labor, the village economy was still self-sufficient and based on honesty and confidence (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:72).

However, the peasantists' views of the peasants and their way of life, i.e. their subsistence economy, were obviously contradictory. Although they attributed some positive features to the peasants, such as purity and honor, they also viewed them as “ignorant” and “backward” at the same time (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:80). Similarly, whereas they described the village economy as an “economy of happiness” and regarded its traditional features as worthy of protection, they accepted that the peasants were backward not only culturally, but also in economic terms. Thus, the peasantists located the essence of the people in the peasantry and therefore depicted peasantism as a national practice. However, they also believed that this national practice should improve the peasants' wrong ways of living and their economic and cultural backwardness (Köymen quoted in Jongerden, 2004:11)

The last significant commonality that marked the peasantist discourse was the education problem in rural areas. Neither social structures nor production relations in

¹³ It is worth mentioning this point together with the nationalist emphasis of the peasantists. Given that the peasantists defined their nationalism with a special reference to culture, their attribution of a fixed essence to the people's culture also led to ethnocentric tendencies. Whether racist tendencies developed within the Houses or not was a controversial issue. However, the pioneers of peasantism at times distanced themselves from such racism (Karaömerlioğlu, 2011:71). Although they recognized the persistence of such ethnic communities as Circassians, Kurds, and Arabs as a problem for the establishment of the nation, they believed these differences should be dissolved in a new Turkish identity (Jongerden, 2004:15), rather than eliminating them entirely. In those times, supporters of the Houses movement such as Nusret Kemal Otyam talked about the nation as a human body, with the Houses as of capillary in which venous blood was replaced with arterial blood (1934:6). In spite of the significant emphasis on Turkishness, being Turkish was not taken as a sufficient condition in itself for the envisioned nation.

the villages were responsible for the underdevelopment of the villages; instead, a lack of education was the most important cause (Karaömerlioğlu, 2011:76). Therefore, the peasantist discourse placed a great deal of stress on the education problem at the expense of problems in the realm of production relations.

Since the People's Houses' mentality focused on cultural development of the peasantry as a path to national development and did not interrogate economic issues such as village production relations, they believed cultural development could be achieved through education. They suggested that development should be pursued without displacing the peasants from their villages and that education in the villages had to be suitable for rural conditions, making it different from urban education. The channels of this process were the village teachers, who had to be chosen from among the villages because urban people, as experience had shown, were reluctant to live in rural areas. Despite this emphasis on education, a comprehensive educational program did not start in the period when the People's Houses were active. However, the peasantist focus on rural education played a major role in the establishment of the Village Institutes. In fact, except for this role in the establishment of the institutes, peasantism amounted to little more than discourse (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:48).

2.1.3- The Village Institutes

The Village Institutes (1940-1946) should be considered in conjunction with the Kemalist ideology into which they were born and by which they were ultimately closed down. Like the People's Houses, the institutes were also a product of the populist-peasantist ideology of the RPP. However, they are generally regarded as a historical experience that resulted in political-ideological polarization (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:87; Nartok, 1990:1).

As mentioned above, education was brought to the fore in the peasantist discourse particularly in terms of the cultural backwardness of the peasantry in the mid-1930s. In those years, of 40,000 villages, 35,000 did not yet have village schools (Ergün, 2008:70). However, the problem of rural education was not limited to the cultural

dimension. In the same period, the country also suffered from a shortage of skilled labor, especially in its rural areas. Consequently, work became the focal point of education (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:94).

The first experiments in rural education were the “village training courses” (1937), which aimed at adult technical education, i.e. education based on rural conditions, focusing on agriculture and husbandry (Ergün, 2008:73). When this experiment proved successful, İsmet İnönü, who succeeded M. Kemal Atatürk as president, asked Hasan Ali Yücel, the minister of national education at the time, to formulate a more comprehensive project of rural education (Ekmekçi, 1976:49). As a result, the Village Institutes were designed as an educational project for training peasant children as village teachers who would be capable of solving the basic cultural and technical problems of Turkey’s villages. Furthermore, with this project “[T]he government tried to improve the lot of the peasant through education, hoping that in the general enlightenment would transform the backwardness of rural Anatolia” (Ahmad, 1993:76).

At this point it will be useful to look at the ideas of İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, who was known as the mastermind of the Village Institutes. Tonguç, who held the position of general director for elementary education between 1935 and 1946, was one of the well-known peasantists writing for *Ülkü*. However, his peasantism was marked by an anti-intellectualism that prioritized “work” over “abstract knowledge” (Karaömerlioğlu, 2011:94-5). Tonguç acknowledged the gap between the intellectuals and the peasants. However, he believed that this gap was a remnant of the Ottoman period. He defined Ottoman intellectuals, particularly Tanzimat intellectuals, as “semi-intellectuals” because they were not familiar with social realities, i.e. village realities, in a society in which the majority were villagers, and because they lacked the energy to go and learn these realities (Tonguç, 1947:89). He used the term “bookish intellectuals” to refer to those who failed to free themselves from the bureaucratic chains and mentality of the Ottoman period and who tried to educate the peasants only through their “bookish knowledge” (Tonguç, 1947:91-4).

Nevertheless, Tonguç believed that the new order had the potential to change the picture. Like other peasantists, he thought the development of the country was dependent on village development and that, consequently, education tailored to village conditions was essential. For Tonguç, “hands” and “work” were the two primary creative and revolutionary levers of the new order (Kansu, 1976:72). An efficient and functional form of village education could be achieved through “work,” he argued, because the peasants were accustomed to learning by doing rather than learning from books (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:94). Thus, in his conceptualization, the main principle of the “regeneration of the village from inside” was summarized as “education within work, by means of work, and for work.”

The Village Institutes largely functioned in line with Tonguç’s ideas. First of all, the regeneration of the village from inside required mobilizing the village’s own resources. These institutions not only trained peasant children as village teachers but also called every member of the village to duty. For example, the institutes were built through labor-intensive methods and every peasant in the village had to work on the construction of the institute buildings for at least 20 days. When necessary, they were also obliged to find or provide land for the institutes (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:92). Secondly, there was a special emphasis on “work” and “production”; “learning by doing” was the methodology of these institutions (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:94). Thirdly, these institutions were not only technical vocational schools, but also encouraged peasant children in terms of intellectual production (Arman, 1976:9). With comprehensive libraries and disciplined reading and writing hours, these institutions aimed to improve peasant children’s cultural skills. Finally, the functioning of the institutes was based on “self-government” and “self-sufficiency,” which created a non-hierarchical and more democratic educational system (Gedikoğlu, 1971:240; Güner, 1980:22; Nartok, 1990:46).¹⁴

¹⁴ Aytemur (2007:109) stresses that the democratic character retrospectively attributed to education in the institutes was due to the fact that the institutes were active when there was not a significant discussion of democracy on Turkey’s agenda. For further detail, see Aytemur, N. (2009). *The Populism of the Village Institutes: A Contradictory Expression of Kemalist Populism*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). METU, Ankara, Turkey.

These features of the institutes set them apart from the earlier experiments of the new Republic, such as the People's Houses. They were more peasant-oriented and more suitable to village conditions. In this way, they seemed to herald an order that was contradictory to the bureaucratic hierarchy of the new regime (Arman, 1976:9). Tongu's peasant origins and his awareness of the significant place of work in rural society led to a "realistic-materialistic" approach, in contrast to the People's Houses' "romantic-idealistic" conceptualization of rural areas and peasants. In order to help the peasants leave behind their cultural and economic backwardness, the institutes proposed a method that mobilized the village's own resources, unlike Kemalist peasantism, which promoted village development from outside – or, more accurately, from above.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that neither the logic behind the Village Institutes' establishment nor their actual functioning was totally opposed to the Kemalist-populist mentality. In the first place, while the institutes sought to empower peasants to develop and transform their own villages through education, they bore an ideological dimension that aimed to imbue peasant children with Kemalist ideology, which they would then pass on to other villagers by way of educated village teachers (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:96-7). Secondly, they shared the peasantist focus on development without displacing peasants from their villages, as well as the fear of peasant proletarianization. The institutes were conceived as a measure to attach peasants to the land and thereby prevent proletarianization among the peasantry and class conflict in society (Timur, 2008:210). Thirdly, the institutes' focus on "work" and "production" in education implicitly attributed the backwardness of the peasantry to natural difficulties rather than social relations of production (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:100-1). Therefore, one of the institutes' primary goals was to create peasants equipped with the technical means to cope with natural difficulties (Ekmekçi, 1976:65). In this context, the peasant who would be appointed to teach in various villages would contribute to rural production by teaching productive methods to other peasants while simultaneously teaching them about basic cultural issues. Because of these parallels with Kemalist ideology, Karaömerlioğlu (2006:111)

argues that the Village Institutes were the first instance of a successful transformation of Kemalist populism from propaganda to practice.

Later, when the conservative group within the RPP became organized under the Democratic Party (DP), it began to call the Village Institutes into question (Ahmad, 1993:83). At the same time, the institutes become an indicator of political-ideological polarization. Due to the institutes' educational principles, such as collective production, self-government, self sufficiency, and the equality of female and male children in education, the graduates of these institutes grew more self-confident, better able to express themselves, more progressive in terms of their perspectives on life, and more open-minded (Karaömerlioğlu, 111-112). On the one hand, such a situation was not well received by the DP opposition. Since its members consisted of landowners, they saw the institute graduates, who would be appointed as teachers in different villages, as a threat to their dominance in rural areas. Thus, the institutes were depicted as "dens of communism" by this opposition group (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:114). On the other hand, for the same reasons, the RPP began to doubt whether the graduates would support their own party (Arman, 1976:11). Therefore, during the transition to a multi-party regime, the RPP did not take the risk of supporting the institutes amidst the defamation campaign against them (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:116).

It may be argued that this political-ideological polarization continued even after the Village Institutes were closed down. While they were identified with "undesirable ideologies" (a phrase used to denote socialism and communism) by right-wing and conservative groups, left-Kemalists perceived them as "the peak of real Kemalism" (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:87). There were also differing opinions about the institutes among the broader Turkish left. For instance, whereas Kemal Tahir believed that the Institutes were fascist institutions through which the single-party regime tried to spread its ideology (Tahir quoted in Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:87), figures like Behice Boran and Mihri Belli viewed them in a more positive manner. For Belli (1976:102),

the institutes represented the progressive efforts of a reactionary order in terms of both the conditions of their establishment and their actual functioning. Nevertheless, he argued that in the last instance they were superstructural institutions, i.e. the institutions of the Ministry of National Education, so that revolution could not be realized by way of school. Boran (1976:104) argued that regarding the village teacher as a guiding figure for the village society was a progressive idea, but that the village teacher, as a member of a superstructural institution, i.e. the Ministry of National Education, was not sufficient for social development as a whole.

2.2- The Political Field and the Institute Graduate Authors

2.2.1- The Authors' Political Ideas

The period that saw the rise of the DP opposition and the RPP's decision to close down the Village Institutes coincided with the authors' appointments to various villages as village teachers. The authors began to produce their literary works in this period and their political stances were crystallized with respect to the socio-political developments of the post-1945 years. Therefore, in addition to their literary works, their political stances should be analyzed in conjunction with the political atmosphere of those years.

It is necessary to recall that these years also coincided with the post-war period, in which Turkey confronted the need to proceed to a parliamentary political form and to undertake development strategies like other less-developed countries in that world conjuncture (Keyder, 1987:3). It was in this context that the DP came to the power. One of this party's main arguments was that the new state under the leadership of the RPP had not penetrated rural society and that it had taken a domineering approach in its policies (Yalman, 2004:55). Therefore, in addition to the DP's populist discourse, its economic policies prioritizing rural issues and rural development (with US support), and its anti-statist approach were also put on Turkey's agenda (Keyder, 1987:3; Ahmad, 1993:115). From that time to the 1980s, rural issues within the framework of development remained on the country's agenda. However, approaches

to these issues took relatively different forms. For instance, the Justice Party (JP), which was prominent in the 1960s and 1970s as a descendant of the DP, tried to make the rural sector a part of the process of capital accumulation through import-substitution industrialization (Ahmad, 1993:153). The RPP under Bülent Ecevit, on the other hand, gave importance to rural development by proposing the “village-town project” in the 1970s.

In the beginning, the DP opposition’s criticism of the RPP and that of Makal’s *Bizim Köy* overlapped significantly. Both of them critiqued the arbitrary character of the RPP’s policies and its failure to engage with the people’s desires.⁵ Moreover, Apaydın (2012:10) writes of this period that he found the DP’s ideas about the country’s problems and its criticisms of the RPP reasonable. However, he adds that while the DP was attacking the RPP’s “wrongs” it also attempted to demolish the party’s positive contributions. Particularly after the DP came to power and changed the content of the Village Institutes (i.e. turning them into simple teacher training schools by changing their curriculum) and amidst employment discrimination against the graduates of these institutions, the authors came out clearly against the DP and its social and economic policies.

Particularly after the military intervention of May 27, 1960, which paved the way for the reconstruction of state-civil society relations, and within the framework of the 1961 Constitution, which allowed those who remained outside the power bloc in the country to be organized under economic and political organizations (Yalman, 2004:56-7), political-ideological polarization between the right and the left became crystallized in the country. From that time on, the authors consistently sided with the left. Starting with their support for the TİP, established in 1961, and particularly in their organization as teachers in the mid-1960s, they established a close and reciprocal relationship with the Turkish left. Therefore, in addition to their Village Institute experience, in which they were imbued with Kemalist ideology, the Turkish left in the 1960s constituted another source of their political-ideological views.

In the institutes, in Apaydın's words, these authors "opened their eyes to the world" and "learned from where the world came and to where it goes, and who remained under pressure" (Apaydın, 2002:92). They were educated as village teachers according to Kemalist modernist principles in the institutes in order to bring modern technical and cultural knowledge to Anatolian villages. However, their political understanding went beyond classical Kemalist doctrine.

First of all, their institute experience offered them technical and cultural opportunities of which they had previously been deprived and this resulted in a clarification of class encounters for them (Timur, 2008:213). They perceived "a yawning gap between their past and present lives" and this led them to ask who had created such a division (Bayrak, 2000:327). This kind of questioning did not remain an internal matter for these authors, but instead led to an external critique of the dominant forces in society by means of their novels criticizing the social order and through their organization under the TÖS.

Secondly, these authors' experiences of collective production and collective life in the institutes pushed them toward progressive and leftist movements rather than individualistic approaches (Kaçmaz, 1976:107-8; Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:112). Thirdly, the closure of the institutes, employment discrimination against institute graduates, and political pressure against their literary works led them to a more radical point of view and ultimately to organizing for political struggle. Hence, in addition to being known as village novelists by the 1950s, they took their place in the conjuncture of the 1960s as organized teachers by way of the TÖS. When these authors joined the National Federation of Teacher Associations of Turkey (TÖDMF) as board members, their radicalization was felt within the federation (Koç, 2012:27). Because they came to regard the TÖDMF as insufficient for their aims, they looked for a different way of organizing as teachers (Kaplan, 2002:165). Based on the 1961 Constitution, which guaranteed the right to organize in the public sector, they established the TÖS in 1965. The TÖS differed from the TÖDMF in its anti-imperialism and its position of supporting not only teachers, but also the working masses (Koç, 2012:28-30). However, these authors' political approach cannot be

considered separately from the left-wing political movements of the 1960s, because they established dialogue with leftist parties and organizations in those years. Their practices affected and were affected by these parties and organizations.

These authors' dialogue with the Turkish left can be examined in two ways. The first is to look at their personal relations with leftist parties and organizations. An early and explicit example of this was their relationship with the Turkish Workers' Party (TİP). The authors participated in the election campaign of the TİP in the mid-1960s. For instance, Makal addressed workers, peasants, teachers, and intellectuals in one of the TİP's radio speeches in 1965:

Biz, Türkiye İşçi Partisi olarak, her doğan çocuğun Amerika'ya binlerce lira borçla doğduğu ve işleri arap saçına döndürülmüş ülkemizi bağımsız ve kaynakları kendi insanına yönelmiş aydınlık bir Türkiye haline getirmek istiyoruz. ... Kel Ali'den, Kör Mehmet'ten ihtiyar kurul üyesi mi olur; köylü, işçi meclise mi girer diyenlere karşı, Türkiye İşçi Partisi meclise girecek ve ... [h]alk, aydın, kol emekçisi, kafa emekçisi ayrımını ortadan kaldıracaktır. Hep birlikte uyanmak zorundayız. Ana meselelere gönül indirmeyenlerin elindeki bu bozuk düzen böyle gidemez, haberiniz olsun!..¹⁵
(1965:67-73)

Like Makal, other authors such as Baykurt and Apaydın also came to be known for their support for the TİP. As will be discussed in detail in the fourth chapter, Baykurt assisted a peasant who came to Ankara to give a radio speech on behalf of the TİP. Apaydın, at the time, was regarded as an ardent advocate of the TİP by the Nationalist Teacher's Association, which was an opponent of the TİP.¹⁶

A second way of exploring the dialogue between these authors and the Turkish left is to look at the TÖS's own texts on the political debates of the period. In these texts, the authors' contribution is clear, as they were TÖS administrators. However, rather

¹⁵ As the Workers Party of Turkey, we want to turn our country, where every child is born in debt to the US and confused, into an independent and contemporary Turkey capable of using its resources for its own people. ... Against those who say "Could Kel Ali and Kör Mehmet be a selectman?" and "Could workers and peasants enter the parliament?", the Workers Party of Turkey will enter the parliament and eliminate discrimination between the people and the educated and between manual and intellectual labor. We have to be awakened all together. This corrupt order, which is in the hands of those who are not interested in the basic problems of the country, cannot go on, you should know!

¹⁶ The president of this association, Selâhattin Arkan, wrote a book about the TÖS titled *TÖS Dosyası*. For his accusation against Apaydın, see Selâhattin Arkan, 1973, *TÖS Dosyası*, Ankara: Töre-Devlet Yayınları, p. 9.

than proposing alternative political routes or taking definite positions, their ideas were aimed at ongoing debates among the different wings of the Turkish left in the 1960s, from libertarian socialism to the non-capitalist mode of development and from the leadership of energetic forces to the necessity of integrating with the people. Although the TÖS was a teachers' trade union, it was always perceived as a political organization because of its administrators' political ties. It was eventually accused of ideological activities and engaging in politics by the military commission of March 12, 1971. Baykurt, the president of the TÖS, was jailed pending trial by this commission.

The TÖS emphasized the need for revolution to take place not just in the political realm, but also in pedagogy and it saw its own duties in the way of revolution falling within the latter (Baykurt, 1994:82). Revolution, for the TÖS, meant a "workers' and peasants' government in power" (Baykurt, 1994:78). The pedagogical dimension was to be brought about through revolutionary education. In other words, the TÖS was not one of the pioneers of the revolutionary struggle, but one of its subsidiary powers:

Örgütlenmiş öğretmen gücünün ulusal kurtuluş ve kalkınma eyleminde 'öncülük' rolü oynadığı, oynayacağı görüşü doğru değildir. Öncülük, politik örgütlerin, yani partilerin görevidir. Hiçbir sendikanın iktidara geldiğini, yabancıları yurttan attığını, köklü reformları yaparak antidemokratik engelleri ortadan kaldırdığını, kalkınmayı başardığını bilmiyoruz. Bu eylemleri siyasal partiler halinde örgütlenmiş halk başarmıştır. Sendikalar bu eyleme, bilinç ve eğitim katkısı yapmak suretiyle yardımcı olabilirler ¹⁷ (from TÖS declarations quoted in Koç, 2012:39).

For this reason, as a subsidiary force, the TÖS published a "Revolutionary Solidarity Proclamation," in which it called for revolutionary solidarity among its members and stressed the need to work together with revolutionary forces (1969:1-11). The proclamation ended with the slogan, "Long live the revolutionary struggle of the

¹⁷ The idea that organized teachers play the leading role in national liberation and development is not true. Pioneering is the duty of political organizations, namely parties. We have seen that trade unions are not able to come to power, remove enemies from the country, eliminate undemocratic barriers by making radical reforms, and manage development. The people who are organized under political parties have managed these things. Trade unions can help these actions by means of educating the people and imbuing them with consciousness.

peoples and the teachers of Turkey. Long live a fully independent and really democratic Turkey"¹⁸ (1969:17). However, it also stressed that the alliance between the TÖS and these revolutionary forces should remain within the bounds of the law (Koç, 2012:40). The slogans of the Turkish left in this period were frequently used in the TÖS's texts and the organization placed strong emphasis on debates within the left.

While the TÖS defended socialism, it stressed that socialism should be libertarian, democratic and based upon the free will of the people (Baykurt, 1994:153). As in the TÖS's position on solidarity with revolutionary forces, it argued that socialism should be achieved through legal avenues because the current constitution did not preclude a democratic version of socialism. In the TÖS' declarations, this issue was explained as follows:

Sosyalizme açık olan Anayasamıza tahammül edemeyenler; 'Türkiye sosyalist olacaktır' dendiği zaman boş yere telaş ediyorlar. Dünyanın hali meydandadır. Yalnız Türkiye değil, bütün dünya sosyalist olacaktır. Baharın ucunun yaz olması gibi, dönemini yaşamış, bunalıma girmiş kapitalizmin de ardı sosyalizmdir. Bu tarih emrini ülkemizde bütün devrimci güçler, tam bağımsızlık ve milletin egemenliği ilkelerine bağlı kalmak suretiyle yerine getireceklerdir¹⁹ (quoted in Koç, 2012:108).

The TÖS argued that socialism should not be based upon force, but should be reached through the participation of the working masses; in this regard, its position differed from communism or the dictatorship of the proletariat (Baykurt, 1994:154-115). In this way, the TÖS' perception of socialism paralleled Aybar's conceptualization of libertarian socialism in terms of associating socialism with participatory democracy and its focus on full independence.²⁰

¹⁸ "Yaşasın Türkiye halklarının ve Türkiye öğretmenlerinin devrimci savaşı. Yaşasın tam bağımsız ve gerçekten demokratik Türkiye."

¹⁹ Those who cannot tolerate our constitution, which is open to socialism, vainly worry when it is said that "Turkey will be a socialist country." As the end of spring is summer, socialism follows capitalism, which lived its period and stagnated. All the revolutionary forces depending on the principles of full independence and national sovereignty will perform this command of history in our country.

²⁰ For Aybar's concept of libertarian socialism and its main focuses, see Aylin Özman, Mehmet Ali Aybar. (Ed. Murat Gültekin) In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 8*. İstanbul: İletişim, pp. 386-387.

The TÖS also participated in discussions of Turkey's developmental path, proposing the non-capitalist mode of development as the most suitable route for Turkey (Koç, 2012:108), like the YÖN movement. Baykurt, in an article in the TÖS' journal, wrote:

Sıkıntı içindeki geniş kitleler, daha iyi bir üretim, yönetim ve yaşama biçiminin savaşını veriyorlar. Kimsenin kimseyi sömürmediği, herkesin iş, emek, ilaç, okuma, barınak, dinlenme ve eğlenme olanağı bulabildiği mutlu bir düzen. Buna ulaşmak için kapitalist olmayan bir kalkınma yolu²¹ (quoted in Koç, 2012:108).

The YÖN movement's influence on the TÖS was particularly visible in the latter's advocacy of combining Kemalism and socialism, reaching the level of contemporary civilization, and attributing an important role to intellectuals in the process of revolution.²² Parallel with the ideas of Avcıoğlu and Berkes²³, the TÖS' declarations argued that adhering to Kemalist objectives and carrying through Kemalism's uncompleted reforms, such as the land reform, would be compatible with socialism and had the potential to bring Turkey to the level of contemporary civilization (Baykurt, 1994:34). Along the way, it suggested, in addition to necessary economic changes, the problem of education and question of the role of intellectuals were critical issues.

The MDD's²⁴ emphasis on the peasantry, as a crucial part of a national alliance due to the fact that it comprised a majority of the population (Babuş, 2003:47), can also

²¹ Masses in distress make an effort for better production, administration, and living conditions. For a happy order in which no one exploits one another and everyone can find the possibility of jobs, labor, medicine, studying, shelter, rest and fun. To achieve this, a non-capitalist way of development is needed.

²² For YÖN's ideas, see Gökhan Atılğan, Yön-Devrim Hareketi, (Ed. Murat Gültekin) In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 8*. İstanbul: İletişim, pp. 598-599.

²³ In one of the TÖS's brochures, Baykurt recommends Avcıoğlu's *Türkiye'nin Düzeni* and Berkes' *200 Yıldır Neden Kalkınamıyoruz*. See Fakir Baykurt, 1969, Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası Eğitim El Kitabı 1: Öğretmenin Uyandırma Görevi, Ankara:TÖS, p.24.

²⁴ "National Democratic Revolution", abbreviated MDD, was one of tendencies within the TİP. This movement stood for the idea that a national democratic revolution was more compatible with Turkey's structure than a socialist revolution.

be found in the TÖS's texts, particularly because of its administrators' rural origins. Furthermore, the concept of "energetic forces" employed by the YÖN and the MDD was used in some of the TÖS's declarations. Despite perceiving military forces as progressive due to their role in the War of Independence and the 1960 military intervention, the authors prioritized the role of the people over the military forces' possible interventions with the tension between taking their decisions seriously and awakening them in order for them to take true decisions. This led to the idea of going to the people again and revising the Kemalist principle of populism in a way similar to that proposed by Ecevit. Therefore, in order to prevent such a polarization, it was necessary to integrate with the masses, as Ecevit argued. Even though the TÖS's revision of the populist principle did not include a definite political path such as "make the people for RPP, make the RPP for the people"²⁵, it could be argued that its concern for "awakening the people" was for the people and should have been undertaken together with the people, similar to Ecevit's understanding²⁶.

2.2.2- The Authors' Political Practice

The authors did not merely express their ideas on debates withing the Turkish left in the 1960s by way of the TÖS' declarations. They also organized and participated in mass meetings. Therefore, their contribution to the political field did not remain at an intellectual level; rather, they used and supported leftist methods of organization in practice. More importantly, the relationship between the organized teachers and leftist organizations (especially youth organizations) became symbiotic in terms of providing mutual support in the field of struggle.

²⁵ The Turkish expression of this phrase is "Halkı CHP'leştirmek, CHP'yi halklaştırmak." For Ecevit's interpretation of Kemalist principles and his discourse on transforming the RPP from the state's party to the people's party, see Necmi Erdoğan, 1998, *Demokratik Soldan Devrimci Yol'a: 1970'lerde Sol popülizm Üzerine Notlar*, *Birikim*, 78, pp.28-29; Özkan Ağaş, *Ortanın Solu: İsmet İnönü'den Bülent Ecevit'e*, (Ed. Murat Gültekin) In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 8*. İstanbul: İletişim, p.205.

²⁶ Ecevit argued "for a policy of working with the people rather than for the sake of them." This was the focal point of his opposition within the RPP. He urged the party to abandon its elitist notions. See Feroz Ahmad, 1993, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, London:Routledge, p.157.

One example of this activity was the massive demonstrations organized by the TÖS in the period between 1965 and 1971, under the leadership of Baykurt. The “Büyük Eğitim Yürüyüşü” in February 1969 and “Büyük Öğretmen Boykotu” in December 1969, in particular, had significant repercussions in the political field. Baykurt describes the second half of the 1960s as follows:

O yıllar Türkiye'nin devinimli yılları. İşçilerin ‘partilerüstü sendika’ anlayışını aşırp ‘sınıf sendikacılığına’ yöneldiği, toprak reformunun gecikmesinden ötürü köylülerin ağa topraklarına el koyduğu yıllar.. Üniversite gençliği halktaki uyanışa destek veriyor. Öğretmenlerin özlük ve meslek sorunlarını halkın sorunlarıyla birlikte açıklama eğilimi artıyor²⁷ (1994:9).

In line with the TÖS’s main arguments mentioned above, the TÖS’s demonstrations and boycotts were not limited to teachers’ problems; instead, they were presented as a part of an anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggle. This encouraged leftist organizations, especially Revolutionary Youth (DEV-GENÇ), to participate in these demonstrations and also gave support to boycotts by university students refusing to attend classes (Babuş, 2003:37). In addition, DEV-GENÇ supported the TÖS not only in general meetings, but also with regard to local issues. For instance, after the “Kayseri Incidents,” in which reactionary forces invaded the TÖS’ General Congress in Kayseri in 1969, DEV-GENÇ distributed leaflets in villages where it was working to mobilize peasants, arguing that, “The main target of the pressure on teachers was their effort to enlighten the peasantry and society as a whole.” (Babuş, 2003:162). As an additional example, after the Ministry of National Education decided in 1970 to close the İvriz Teacher Education School, which had previously been a Village Institute, DEV-GENÇ actively cooperated with the TÖS to protest the ministry’s decision in the region (Babuş, 2003:169).

The authors also supported DEV-GENÇ, by means of the TÖS, in its effort to establish “peasant unions” in the villages as well as revolutionary youth movements in large cities. In the late 1960s, leftist youth movements started to work in the

²⁷ Those years were Turkey's moving years, when the workers moved from supra-political trade unionism to class-based trade unionism, the peasants occupied the lands of big landowners due to the delay of land reform... University youth supported the awakening of the people. The teachers tended to explain their professional and personal problems with the people’s problems.

villages to mobilize the peasantry against exploitation. Their efforts were not specifically limited to the peasantry; rather, going to the peasantry was a part of their struggle aimed at allying with all exploited classes and social groups (Babuş, 2003:41). In those times, the village novels, written not only by institute graduates, but also by other authors, had a significant impact on youth involved in such activities (Türkeş, 2001:220).

The youth movements sought to organize "producer meetings" ("*üretici mitingleri*") and "land occupations" ("*toprak işgalleri*") because the peasantry was under the pressure of the state, which undervalued their products, resulting in the domination of moneylenders and big landowners, who directly seized the peasantry's labor (Babuş, 2003:145). In line with this goal, young university students under DEV-GENÇ went to various villages and successfully organized producer meetings and land occupations. Meanwhile, the TÖS also established close relations with the peasants by means of its branches and it did not hesitate to help DEV-GENÇ in its attempts to communicate with the peasantry. Babuş describes the situation as follows:

1960'lı yıllarda tüm illerde ve ilçelerin çoğunda şubesi bulunan Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası (TÖS) köy eylemlerinin en büyük destekçisiydi. Köy çalışmalarına katılmak üzere bir bölgeye giden devrimciler en evvel o yerin TÖS lokaline gidip gerekli ilişkileri kurarak çalışmaya başlıyorlardı. TÖS üyesi öğretmenlerin birçoğu bölgelerindeki köy eylemlerinin gerçekleştirilmesinde görev alıyorlardı. Köy gezilerinin birçoğuna onlar da katılıyorlar ve köylerin yapısı hakkında bilgi veriyorlardı. Köylerdeki çalışmalara rehberlik etmek, devrimcilerin konaklama, ulaşım, haberleşme ve bazen yeme içme gibi gereksinmelerini karşılamak TÖS üyesi devrimci öğretmenlerin sağladıkları en önemli katkılardı. Her an açığa alınma, sürgün edilme gibi tehlikelere rağmen, devrimci öğretmenlerin bu çalışmalara katılması dönemin ayrı bir özelliği ve güzelliği²⁸ (2003:55).

²⁸ The TÖS, whose branches were active in all cities and most of the provinces, was the strongest supporter of the village meetings. Those who went to a region to participate in village issues started their works first by visiting the local TÖS branch and establishing the necessary relations through it. Many teachers of the TÖS took charge in the preparation processes of the village meetings in their region by participating in the village trips and informing the revolutionary youth about the village structure. Guiding them in the village and providing them with accommodation, transportation, communication, and even food and drink were the most important contributions of revolutionary teachers under the TÖS. Despite the dangers such as reassignment and suspension, the revolutionary teachers' support for these meetings was a special feature of that period.

One of the most significant land occupations occurred in Elmalı, a village in the Mediterranean region, thanks to DEV-GENÇ's efforts (Babuş, 2003:144). After this occupation the peasants in Göllüce and Atalan in the Aegean Region occupied the land of the big landowners. The TÖS explicitly supported these kinds of movements and Baykurt himself visited the region where the occupations occurred. In the TÖS's working report in 1969, this issue was addressed as follows:

Göllüce ve Atalan köyleri, daha önce Elmalı'da ve başka yerlerde görülenlere benzer olaylar yaşadılar. Bu köylülerin, bıçak kemiğe geldikten sonra giriştikleri toprak işgallerinde, kendileriyle konunun eğitime olan ilgisinden dolayı ilgi kurduk. Ayrıca Genel Başkanımız, İzmir Şubesi yöneticilerimizi de alarak köyü ziyaret etti. Köy muhtarı ve halkıyla, köyde çalışmakta olan öğretmenlerle görüştü. Haklı davalarında öğretmenlerimizin kendileriyle birlikte olduğunu belirtti²⁹ (quoted in Koç, 2012:46).

In one of his speeches, Baykurt also mentioned the TÖS's support for the revolutionary youth's efforts to establish peasant unions: "It is necessary to improve the relations of revolutionary teachers with other trade unions, the people and especially the peasants and workers. Our members support the establishment of the peasant unions"³⁰ (quoted in Koç, 2012:46). It was for this reason that the TÖS was accused of working as an illegal organization with strong ties to DEV-GENÇ by the military court of 1971 (Baykurt, 1994:119). However, Baykurt denied this claim, suggesting that the TÖS had not established a relationship with DEV-GENÇ in particular, but that it supported all revolutionary youth movements that attempted to address the problems of society. In his words:

[H]angi örgütten olursa olsun, ... psikolojik, pedagojik anlayış gözönünde bulundurularak TÖS Genel Merkezi'ne gelen gençlerle görüşülmüş, çağırdıkları toplantılara bu anlayış gözönünde bulundurularak gidilmiştir. Askeri Savcı bizim sadece Dev-Genç'le ilişkimiz üzerinde durmuş, öbür

²⁹ Göllüce and Atalan villages experience similar events which were seen previously in Elmalı village and other places. After the peasants manage to occupy lands, we contacted them for educational purposes. In addition, our president, taking our managers at the İzmir branch with him, visited the villages. He met with the *muhtar*, the teachers in the village, and the peasants. He stated that the teachers stood with the peasants in their justifiable legal act.

³⁰ "Öğretmenlerin öbür sendikalarla, halkla, özellikle işçi ve köylülerle ilişkisini artırmak gerekir. Köylü Birlikleri'nin kurulmasına üyelerimiz yardımcı oluyor."

gençlik örgütleriyle ilişkilerimiz üzerinde durmamıştır³¹ (Baykurt, 1994:146).

The TÖS' support for other leftist youth movements accelerated in 1968, especially for those with an anti-imperialist focus. The teachers of the TÖS declared that the youth were on the right path and that they had to be understood by the authorities (K09, 2012:103). For instance, after protests against the arrival of the US Navy Sixth Fleet in İstanbul, Baykurt mentioned the organization's support for these movements in his speeches:

Türk ekonomisinden eğitimine kadar her alanda Amerikan çıkarlarını kollamak için ikide bir kıyılarımıza yanaşan o katil filoyu istemiyoruz. Emperyalizmin tamamına karşı çıkıyoruz, karşı çıkan bir gençlik yetiştiriyoruz. Sömürgecilik kırılmadıkça, ulusumuzun kalkınmasına ve kurtulmasına olanak göremiyoruz (quoted in Koç, 2012:87).

Toplumda zinde güçlerin çekirdeğini teşkil eden gençler, emperyalizme karşı savaş halindedirler. Üniversitelerden işyerlerine kadar gençlerin yoğunlaştığı bütün çevrelerde antiemperyalist toplu direnmenin en güzel ve en canlı örneklerini görüyor ve ulusal varlığımız için bunu çok önemli bir dayanak sayıyoruz (quoted in Koç, 2012:106).³²

The TÖS' support for other leftist youth movements accelerated in 1968, especially for those with an anti-imperialist focus. The teachers of the TÖS declared that the youth were on the right path and that they had to be understood by the authorities (Koç, 2012:103). Because of the TÖS's relations with leftist youth organizations and peasants, the defendants in the TÖS's trial included not only teachers, but also university students and peasants (Baykurt, 1994:10). The military court also accused the TÖS, TİP, DİSK and DEV-GENÇ of establishing an illegal organization named Revolutionary Power (DEV-GÜÇ) to overthrow the regime (Baykurt, 1994:118).

³¹ In accordance with psychological and pedagogical purposes, we met with youth who came to the TÖS office regardless of which organization they supported. In addition, we went to their meetings to which they called us regarding the same purposes. The military prosecutor dwells merely on our relations with DEV-GENÇ, but he does not mention our relations with other youth organizations.

³² We do not want that killer fleet, which draws up alongside our shores to protect the US' interests in all areas, from Turkish economy to education. We stand against imperialism as a whole and bring up the youth along the same lines. Unless imperialism is destroyed, it is not possible for our nation to progress or develop.

The youth, who constitute the core of energetic forces in society, are at war against imperialism. From universities to businesses, in the whole environment where youth come together, we see the most beautiful and brightest examples of anti-imperialist collective action, and we consider this a very important resource for our national existence.

2.2.3- The Authors as Intellectuals: The People’s Teachers

The role of intellectuals in culture and politics was a prominent issue for the authors of the village novels. As both authors and teachers of the country, they defended the idea that being an intellectual required a “social” dimension. They criticized intellectuals who drifted away from the people, trying instead to create a different kind of intellectual who would stand by the people.

The TÖS was an important venue for the authors to express their ideas on such issues, as it prided itself on being the organization of teachers who regarded the people’s problems as their own. It was a teachers’ trade union, but its concerns were not limited to teachers’ problems. Instead, it aspired to address all the problems of Turkish society on the grounds that teachers constituted an organic part of society and their problems could not be considered separately from those of the people. As Baykurt wrote:

TÖS bir sendikadır. Bir öğretmen sendikası. Olaylara, yaşama bir öğretmen sendikası olarak bakar. TÖS’ün sorumluluğu öğretmen ve meslek sorunlarının çözümlenmesine çalışmaktır. Fakat öğretmen ve meslek sorunları halkın sorunlarından ayrı düşünülemez.... Mevcut kanunlar içinde, düzen değişikliğinin bir siyasi yanı vardır. Bunu halkın kendisi ve partileri yürütecektir. Biz öğretmenlere düşen ise, bu değişikliğin pedagojik yanındır. Değişmeyi sağlayacak insanın kafasında değişiklik bilincini yaratmak ve yaymaktır bizim görevimiz. ... TÖS içinde, ‘Biz yalnız kendi çıkarımıza bakarız; halk sorunu, düzen sorunu bizi ilgilendirmez!’ diyen tek öğretmen yoktur...³³ (1994:81).

In this way, the authors as organized teachers re-defined the teaching profession, placing it within the scope of “education for revolution,” and took sides with society’s lower-class strata, as stated in the TÖS’ declarations:

³³ The TÖS is a trade union, a teachers’ trade union. It looks at events and life as a teachers’ trade union. The TÖS’ responsibility is to try to solve teachers’ problems... However, these problems cannot be separated from the people’s problems. Within the current legislation, the change of the order has a political dimension. The people themselves and political parties will conduct this dimension. The pedagogical dimension, on the other hand, falls to us, as we are teachers. Our mission is to create and disseminate consciousness, which will pave the way for this change. ... There is not even a single teacher saying, “We only look out for our own interests. The people’s problems and that of the current order do not concern us,” within the TÖS...

Sınıflı bir toplumda ve dünyada kimden yana olduğumuzu saptamak bizim için zor değildir. Biz işçiden, işsizden ve köylüden yanayız. Bunun için de devrimciyiz. Devrimci olmanın ilk koşulu budur. Biz öğretmeniz, devlet memuruyuz, ama egemen sınıfların uşağı ve çocuk avutucusu değiliz³⁴ (quoted in Koç, 2012:104).

In this context, they were not “teaching machines” (Baykurt, 1994:63), but instead bore a pedagogical duty to imbue children and others who had been kept in ignorance with “political consciousness” and thereby enable them to rid themselves of exploitation and oppression (Baykurt, 1994:151-2). Therefore, they intended to transform school teaching into social teaching by being the people’s teachers, as Apaydın explains:

Derin uykulara dalmış, sonuna kadar ezilip sömürülmüş halkımızın haklarını savunmak gerekiyordu. Boynumuzun borcuydu bu. Halkın öğretmeni olmak çok boyutlu bir işti. Önümüze gelen çocuklara sadece okuma yazma öğretmekle halkın yaşamı değişmiyordu. Onların ve tüm köylünün gözünü açmak, onları bilinçli yurttaşlar düzeyine getirmek gerçek öğretmenin göreviydi³⁵ (2002:92).

In this way, they expressed their effort to become “intellectuals of the subaltern social groups” in order for them to “be capable of opposing and transforming the existing social order” similar to Gramsci’s organic intellectuals (Forgacs, 2000:300).

For these authors, being the people’s teachers in the scope of revolutionary education could not be applied in a technical way from above, but required integration with the people. However, the authors’ ideas on the proper relationship with the people blended the Kemalist peasantist motto of “going to the people” with left-populist and popular-democratic aspirations. One of the TÖS’ declarations explains:

Bizim halkla ilişkilerimizin temel amacı, bir eğitim ilişkisi, bir uyandırma ilişkisidir. Biz görevimizi bir tek sözcüğe indirgeyecek kadar sadeleştirmiş bulunuyoruz: Uyandırmak.

³⁴ In a class society, it is not difficult for us to determine with whom we take sides. We side with workers, the unemployed masses, and the peasants. This is why we are revolutionists. It is the first condition for being a revolutionist. We are teachers, public servants, but not the instruments or babysitters of the dominant classes.

³⁵ It is necessary for us to defend the rights of the people, who have sunk into a deep sleep, exploited, despised till the end. It is our duty. Being the people’s teachers is a multidimensional job. As long as we just teach children how to read and write, the people’s life does not change. To open their eyes, including the peasants, and bring them to the level of conscious citizens is the duty of the real teacher.

Biz, ‘halk, her istediğini yapabilse bile, uyandırılmadıkça ne istediğini bilemez!’ diyoruz. Uyandırma görevimizi devrimci yönde tam olarak yapıp başardığımız zaman halk, bizim eski ceketimize muhtaç olmayacak³⁶ (quoted in Koç, 2012:43).

Thus, they claimed that they were using education as a tool to awaken the people and transform society (Koç, 2012:40). To this end, they made a distinction between “ABC schooling” and “revolutionary education,” similar to Gramsci’s differentiation between “instruction” and “education.” Gramsci argues, “For instruction to be wholly distinct from education, the pupil would have to be pure passivity, a ‘mechanical receiver’ of abstract notions” (2000:312-313). The authors’ main arguments on education adopted almost the same logic. For instance, Baykurt complained that the educational system imbued the people with passivity:

[B]ugüne kadar uygulanan eğitim ... türlü bakımlardan sakat, eksik, yanlış, yoz bir eğitimidir. Halka sırtı dönük, ulusallık yanı zayıf, uyuşturucu bir eğitimidir. Yararlı değil, zararlıdır. Bu eğitimin ‘Alfabe’si bile ‘Uyu uyu yat uyu’ cümlesiyle başlatılmıştır. ... Bütün devletlerin nüfusları ve başkentleri, dünyanın en yüksek ve en çukur yerleri, en geniş ve en uzun akarsuları, ölmüş Divan Edebiyatının nazım türleri, bu edebiyatın vezinleri, failâtün failâtün failün’leri bugünkü insana ne kazandırır, topluma ne katar? ... Geçtiğimiz dönemde Bakanlık, öğretmenlerin yalnızca ve ısrarla ... ABC öğretmesini, yurt sorunlarına ve yönetimine dokunmaktan kaçınmalarını ... söylemiştir³⁷ (1994:62-63).

Baykurt likens this passive educational system to *Divan* literature due to its distance from the people and its existence as a form of pleasure for the higher classes. More importantly, the contemporary educational system -- ABC schooling -- existed for the sake of the rich and deprived the poor of the means to change their lives. It is in this regard that the authors wrote of what Gramsci referred to as “vertical levels of

³⁶ Our relationship with the people is based on education. We simplify our task with a single word: Awakening. Even though the people do whatever they want, they don’t know what they want as long as they are not awakened. When we achieve entirely our duty of awakening them in a revolutionary sense, the people will not need our old jackets.

³⁷ The education that has been implemented so far, ... in many ways, is defective, false, and corrupt. It is an education with its back to the people, dulling and weak in terms of nationalism. It is not useful but harmful. Even the alphabet of this education starts with this sentence: “Sleep sleep, go to bed, sleep”. ... The states’ populations and capitals, the tallest and the deepest locations in the world, the longest and the widest rivers, the dead verses of *Divan* literature, its “*failâtün failâtün failün*”: What are the benefits of all of these for the people? What do they bring for society? Recently, the ministry insistently ... has stated that teachers must simply teach “ABCs,” and they must avoid mentioning the country’s problems or addressing its management.

schooling” in his *Prison Notebooks* (2000:305). For instance, Apaydin states that the child of a *bey* became a *bey* while the child of a shepherd became a shepherd within the contemporary educational system (2012:243). In other words, he complained that the existing social hierarchies between the rich and the poor were protected by the educational system, precisely the opposite of how he thought the system ought to function. Similarly, Baykurt states that “inequality is the characteristic of Turkish education” (1994:56). He also mentioned this issue in his defense before the military court: “Please consider that the peasants, who constitute 76 percent of the total population statistically, do not know how to read or write in today's world, and consider that their children will remain uneducated like them; even if they go to an insufficient primary school, they can't go further. Without a miracle, they cannot access higher education. You, judges, could you tolerate this situation for your own children?”³⁸ (Baykurt, 1994:55).

Like Apaydin and Baykurt, Makal also regarded the vertical structuring of education as a fundamental issue. He criticized the state, arguing that, beyond its economic policies, even its educational policies were for the sake of the bourgeoisie and landowners: "Apart from opening new schools for children of the people, they have even provided the children of big capitalists, the children of the exploiters of the people, with ample opportunities: It has been determined that it is the big traders, building contractors, land owners, and politics tycoons who send their children here by colluding to present themselves as poor"³⁹ (Makal, 1965: 69).

For these authors, the effort to awaken the people required not only educating them, but also transforming the teachers' mentality. For instance, the TÖS opened branches

³⁸ “Matematik büyüklüğü genel nüfusa oranla %76 olan köylü halktan herhangi birinin bugünkü dünyada okuma yazma bilmediğini, çocuklarının da kendisi gibi cahil kalacağını, yarım yurum bir ilkokul yüzü görse bile daha ilerisine gidemeyeceğini, bir mucize olmaz ise yüksek öğrenime asla çıkamayacağını lütfen bir düşünün; siz yargıçlar, kendi çocuklarınız için bu duruma katlanabilir misiniz?”

³⁹ "Bırakın halk çocuklarına yeni okullar açmalarını, eldeki imkanları bile büyük sermayedarların, yani halk sömürücülerinin çocuklarına kullanmışlardır: Danışıklı döğüşle fukara ilmühaberi alıp çocuklarını buraya verenlerin, büyük tüccar, müteaahit ve toprak ağası ve siyaset kodamanları olduğu tespit edilmiştir."

in almost every region of Turkey, covering many districts and villages. The teachers communicated with the people through these branches. However, they tried to establish reciprocal communication as far as possible. In a speech at one of the general meetings of the TÖS, Baykurt stated, "*Lokalcilik* ('branchism') will be abandoned, the signs saying 'members only' on our doors will come down. Each member will bring a guest to our Region Meetings from among the workers and peasants, one from each together with himself. We will not just talk among ourselves. We will make the problems of the people our own problems."⁴⁰ In one of his articles in the TÖS journal he repeated, "The people should visit our branches. And we should hurry to the coffee houses of the people"⁴¹ (quoted in Koç, 2012:44-45). This stance was precisely the opposite of the city clubs ("*şehir kulüpleri*"), which were closed to the public and often had signs reading "members only" on their doors.

More importantly, the authors' efforts were opposed to the classical intellectual mentality, which did not bother integrating itself with the people. Thus, they made it a point to distinguish themselves from the "classical intellectuals." For instance, in his memoir Apaydın defined this kind of intellectual as the classical literate figures who separated themselves from the people:

Merkez ilköğretim müfettişliğine bağlı olarak çalışacağım anlaşıldı. Ondan talimat almak için gidip çalıştım. Pek şık giyinmişti, eli yüzü bakımlı bir arkadaştı. Bizden de öyle olmamızı isteyecekti herhalde. Otoriter görünmeye çalışıyordu. Halktan uzak klasik okumuşların tipik bir örneği idi⁴² (2012:26).

He also accused his colleagues of not feeling any responsibility for the people: "They were not reading. Their interest was always concerned with their own problems.

⁴⁰ "Lokalcilik kalkacak, kapılarımızdaki 'üye olmayanlar giremez' levhaları incek. Bölge toplantılarımıza gelirken her üye yanında köylüden, işçiden birer konuk getirecek. Kendi kendimize konuşmayı sorunları halka mal edeceğiz."

⁴¹ "Lokallerimize halk gelmeli. Ve biz halkın kahvesine koşarak gitmeliyiz."

⁴² "It has been understood that I would work under the primary education inspector. I went and tried to get an order from him. He was dressed very elegantly. He was a well-kept friend. I guess he would want same thing from us. He was trying to seem authoritarian. He was a typical example of the classic literate who is far from the people."

They did not feel any kind of responsibility for the people"⁴³ (Apaydın, 2012:96). Similarly, Makal's book *Halktan Ayır Düşenler* (1965) gives a significant place to this issue. In the book's eponymous article, Makal provides an example of this kind of intellectual:

Karşımdaki adam, kendisini, memleketin bir numaralı halk eğitimcisi sayıyordu. Bunu, yabancılardan aldığı telgrafları göstererek kuvvetlendirimeğe çalışıyordu. Halk eğitimi konusunda yazdığı kitapları, broşürleri çantasından çıkarıp gösteriyordu. ... Bu arada Pakistan'dan getirdiği fotoğraflara dikkati çekmeye çalıştı. ... [B]ir yer sofrasında yemek yiyen köylü aile üzerinde fazlaca durdu. Aynı tabağa kaşıklarını daldırıp çıkararak köylüleri, 'ne hoş değil mi, çok eskiden bizim köylüler de bu hayatı yaşarlardı. ...' diyerek tanıttı... Tutumuna bakılırsa, Pakistan'dan getirdiği fotoğraflarda saptanmış durum, özlediği durumdu. Bu durumun bizde de mevcut olduğunu anlatamıyorduk. ... Bir gün, Ankara'nın ... 'Dikmen' köyüne gezi yapmayı düşündük. Bu halk eğitimcisi hocayı (aynı zamanda Talim Terbiye Kurumundaydı) da çağırdık. Vakti olmadığını söyleyip gelmedi⁴⁴ (Makal, 1965:77-78)

With these words, Makal highlights the contradiction between these intellectuals' romanticization of the peasants and their disdain towards them. Baykurt (1994:43) also points out this contradiction, accusing these intellectuals of being "true reactionaries" and "boulevard intellectuals" because they insult the people by standing idle and avoid doing anything to change the people's lives. The real intellectuals, on the other hand, are those who stand by the people, struggling for them at the risk of being suppressed.

⁴³ "Okumuyorlardı. İlgileri beğenileri hep kendi sorunlarına çevrikti. Halka karşı herhangi bir sorumluluk duymuyorlardı."

⁴⁴ The man in front of me counted himself as the best educator of the people in the country. He was trying to make it stronger by showing telegraphs that he received from foreigners. He was showing books, leaflets he wrote about the education of the people by taking them out from his bag... Meanwhile, he tried to point out photographs that he brought from Pakistan... For a quite long time, he talked about a villager family who eat their meals on a table on the floor. He introduced villagers dipping in and out their spoons into the same dish by saying 'How nice it is, isn't it?', Our villager used to live this life beforehand...'. According to his attitude, the situation detected in the photograph was the situation that he missed. We were not able to tell him that this situation also existed in our country... One day, we thought to travel to ... Dikmen village in Ankara. We invited this educator of the people, too (he was also on the Board of Education and Discipline (*Talim Terbiye Kurumu*)). He did not come, saying that he did not have time.

2.3- The Literary Field and The Authors

2.3.1- The Authors' Literary Attitudes

Two major literary tendencies marked Turkish literature before the rise to popularity of village literature. The roots of both went back to the late Ottoman Empire, but they survived until the 1950s (Moran, 1990:13). The first tendency was toward westernization and modernization in literature and its main efforts were aimed at separating the language of art from daily language (Parla, 2011:3-4). Consequently, the characters in novels marked by this tendency were not defined socially; rather, they were seen as isolated from society. In other words, this tendency did not give importance to the Anatolian masses or their traditional features and values; instead, it portrayed effeminate men and bovarist women marked by indulgence or despair, respectively (Gürbilek, 2004:21-45). The second literary tendency was known as the current of national literature. Its narratives took their subjects from Anatolia and the Anatolian masses. However, national values permeated this current, as Anatolian values were extolled, romanticized, and idealized. Because the majority of Anatolia's population consisted of peasants, village life had a role in this national literature. However, it was treated pastorally, romanticizing and idealizing not only the Turkish villager, but the entirety of village life (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:266). Therefore, this current acknowledged neither the production relations nor the harsh realities of the village. When the bad conditions of the peasants were mentioned, it was to call the intellectuals to duty, rather than to criticize state policies or production relations. Hence, the current of national literature looked at social relations through the eyes of the official ideology (Koçak quoted in Moran, 1990:12)⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ Dividing the literature before the 1950s into these two tendencies does not mean that there were no literary works focusing on social problems in this period. There were a few novels which addressed relations of exploitation and poverty, such as *Çıkrıklar Durunca* (1931) written by Sadri Ertem, *Sokakta Harp Var* (1932) written by Kemal Ahmet, *Çıplaklar* (1936) and *Köyün Yolu* (1938) written by Refik Ahmet Sevensil, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf* (1937) written by Sabahattin Ali. For further detail, see Ömer Türkeş (2007), *Solun Romanı*, (Eds. Tanıl Bora & Murat Gültekin) In *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce Cilt 8*. İstanbul: İletişim, pp. 1052-1073.

Makal's *Bizim Köy*, published in 1950, also took up village issues, but it adopted a different approach in terms of its style and content compared to previous village narratives (Rathbun, 1972:16). Makal was frequently asked after the book was published why he included all the harsh realities of village life. In fact, the willingness to write about such issues can be traced back to Makal's education in the Village Institutes, which encouraged students to write about everything related to life in their villages (Bayrak, 2000:62). The students' works were published regularly in the Journal of the Village Institutes (*Köy Enstitüleri Dergisi*). Thus, Makal's work was part of the education he received in these institutes.

Baykurt and Apaydın also received such an education, but they applied it to the novel form. Therefore, their early novels attempted to identify social problems and demonstrate them to society. In that context, the goal of literature for them was to fulfill the duty of being a mirror reflecting social realities as they were. Toward the middle of the 1960s, they moved from the idea of "identifying social problems" to that of "leading society to address social problems" (Bayrak, 2000:65); in this way, literature for them was not only a "mirror" for reflecting social realities but also a "tool" for the struggle to confront a corrupt order (Apaydın et al., 1971:13).

In the political atmosphere of the 1960s, which saw an increase in social and political polarization and the rise of the leftist opposition, these authors took a stand against the existing order and thought of themselves as "fighters" in a "social struggle" against that order (Baykurt quoted in Bayrak, 2000:232). For the authors, there were two dimensions to this social struggle: "education for revolution" and "literature for revolution." In addition to being the people's teachers, the authors believed that writing the people's real stories as well as stories capable of leading society toward a progressive and revolutionary stage were complementary parts of their struggle, as well as their responsibility. In this regard, Baykurt states that, "Although we do not expect a large-scale progressive leap from literature, literature has duty and responsibility to help make this progressive leap a reality. We want to fulfil this

responsibility as writers"⁴⁶ (Baykurt quoted in Bayrak, 2000:232). For this reason, the authors thought of literature in terms of its responsibility to the laboring classes of society (i.e. workers and peasants) who produced life and had the ability to change it. They called this kind of literature "guided literature" ("*güdümlü edebiyat*") or "literature for revolution."

On the one hand, guided literature was not neutral in the face of social polarization; rather, it took a stand with the laboring classes (Apaydın et al, 1971:4). The authors knew the peasants' way of life, witnessed its difficulties, and experienced the oppression of dominant forces over the peasants. Thus, by adopting a realist attitude they attempted to convey what they knew, witnessed, and experienced through their literary works. They believed that such an approach brought the peasants' stories to the literary field from the perspective of the peasants themselves and that this formed part of their responsibility to the laboring classes as peasant intellectuals. However, writing about the realities of the village was not solely for the sake of the peasantry, but for the whole of society: To tell the peasants' story was to inform society about the lives of the majority (Baykurt quoted in Bayrak, 2000:232).

On the other hand, these author's focus on guided literature was also a reaction to those writers who did not address social issues in literature. For instance, Baykurt implicitly criticized those who did not take any responsibility for the people in their literary work, contrasting such authors with the writers of guided literature: "Guided literature which takes responsibility is not shame. What constitutes shame is irresponsibility"⁴⁷ (Baykurt quoted in Bayrak, 2000:236). Similarly, Makal advocated guided literature against literature that romanticized village life by leaving out its difficulties, which he called "rose-warbler literature" ("*gül-bülbül edebiyatı*") (1965:22). He also contrasted it with other literary approaches that neglected social problems, arguing: "My understanding of art is that art is guided. Namely, while

⁴⁶ "Yalnız başına edebiyattan büyük çapta bir yönlendirme beklememekle birlikte, bu yönlendirmenin olabilmesi için edebiyatın da görevi, sorumluluğu vardır. Birer kalem sahibi olarak bu sorumluluğu yerine getirmek istiyoruz."

⁴⁷ "Bir edebiyatın güdümlü olması, yani bir sorumluluk yüklenmesi ayıp değildir. Ayıp olan sorumsuzluktur."

Turkish society is hungry, bare, and complaining about being illiterate, I will not support making artworks that bring festivity to bourgeois houses by playing with words"⁴⁸ (Makal quoted in Bayrak, 2000:326).

What these authors called guided literature or literature for revolution had two main sources. As the authors themselves frequently noted, the first was Turkish folk literature. They claimed that the folk literature tradition contained a tenacious struggle against the dominant forces of society. In the TÖS' declaration of "Literature for Revolution" the authors stated:

Bizim geçmişimizde, ezen sınıfın edebiyatına, biçimlerine ve diline karşı, ezilen halk, kendi dilinde, kendine özgü biçimlerle ayrı bir halk edebiyatı geliştirmiştir. Hattâ Karagöz, egemen sınıfın dışardan alarak öykündüğü sözcük ve kalıplarla alay etmiştir.

...

'Ballar balını buldum, balım yağma olsun' diyen bir Yunus'umuz; 'Ferman Padişahın, dağlar bizimdir' diyen bir Dadaloğlumuz; halkı ezen beylere 'Çıkıp şu dağlara yaslanmalıdır.' diye gürleyen bir Köroğlu'muz; 'Kalkın canlar bir olalım, yoksulun hakkın alalım' diyen ve bu uğurda canını veren bir Pir Sultan Abdal'ımız vardır.⁴⁹ (Apaydın et al, 1971:7)

The influence of the above-mentioned figures on these authors can be seen in the references the authors make to them in their novels. These writers' emphasis on making their characters speak in their own everyday language was also rooted in the folk literature tradition. For these authors, this everyday language did not damage the national language or imply any kind of marginal nationalist stance. Rather, it was for the sake of real national values, because literature for revolution was aimed at

⁴⁸ "Sanat anlayışım, sanatın güdümlü olmasıdır. Yani, Türk toplumu aç ve çıplak ve de bilgisizlikten tam anlamıyla inlerken, Osmanlıcılık, Amerikancılık, sözcük oyunları yaparak burjuva evlerine şenlik getiren yapıtların oluşturulmamasından yanayım."

⁴⁹ In our past, against the literature and language of the oppressing class, oppressed people in their own language, in their own forms, created a folk literature. Even Karagöz mocked the words and patterns of the ruling class.

....

We have our Yunus saying 'I found honey of honeys, let my honey be booty'. We have our Dadaloğlu saying 'the Firman is the Padishah's, the mountains are ours'. We have our Köroğlu roaring 'Gotta go up and leaning against those mountains' against the *beys* who oppress the people. We have our Pir Sultan Abdal saying 'Stand up loved ones, let's be one, let's take the right of the poor' and dying for the sake of this.

integration with the people, which could only be accomplished by protecting the people's own language and transforming the language of the prevailing literature to equalize these two languages. As the authors' wrote:

Devrim için Edebiyat ... halkın dilini kullanmaya çalışır[,] ... yabancılaşma, yozlaşma, belirtisi olan yabancı sözcüklerin kullanılmasına kesinlikle karşı çıkar. Emekçi halkın bilinçlenme aracı olan dili arılaştırmaya önem verir. Bu hiçbir zaman aşırı ulusçuluk anlamına gelmez. Ulusların kendi kaderlerini tayin hakları ilkesinin içeriğine uygun düşer. Devrim için Edebiyat, ezilmiş kitlelerin dil ve edebiyatının gelişmesine yardım eder. Burjuvaya karşı yürütülecek eleştiriyi her ulusun kendi dilinde yaymak zorunluluğu dillerin eşitliğini gerektirir⁵⁰ (Apaydın et al, 1971:7).

This point, and especially the focus on the right of nations to self-determination, reflected an international perspective. Indeed, their second literary source was the socialist realism that marked literature in Soviet Russia. In the 1960s, realist influences, a tendency that included socialist realist influences were merged with the village literature tradition in Turkey (Naci, 1976:126). In such an atmosphere, the authors declared that they wrote their literary works in line with socialist realism. For them, socialist realism meant:

Toplumcu gerçekçilikte ... yazar, emekçi sınıfın toplumcu düzeninin amaçlarıyla temelde anlaşmış durumdadır. Yazarın seçtiği görüş açısı, toplumsal gelişmelerle uyumludur. Toplumcu gerçekçilikte bugün ile birlikte hem geçmiş, hem de gelecek vardır. Toplumcu yazar, emekçi sınıfında kapitalizmi yenecek, sınıfsız bir toplumu ve onun üretim güçlerini geliştirecek, insan kişiliğini özgürlüğe kavuşturacak başlıca kaynağını görür. Büyüme süreci içinde bulunan toplumcu düzenle kendi arasındaki uyumluluğu kurar, egemen burjuva sınıfı ile bağlarını koparır. Bu sınıfı ve bu sınıfın düzenini emekçi sınıfın ülküsü açısından korkusuzca eleştirir. Toplumcu gerçekçilik, gerçeği devrimci oluşumun

⁵⁰ Literature for revolution... tries to use the language of the people[,]... , it definitely opposes using foreigners' words, which is a symptom of alienation and corruption. It gives importance to purifying language, which is the tool of working people to become conscious. It never means ultra-nationalism. It is in accordance with the principle of the self-determination of nations. Literature for revolution helps the improvement of language and the creation of a literature of the oppressed masses. The necessity of spreading the criticism to be carried out against the bourgeoisie requires the equality of languages.

içinde, gerçek olarak betimlemeye dayanır⁵¹ (Apaydın et all, 1971:6).

Since socialist realism brought the past, present and future together, the authors believed that this approach gave them the opportunity to combine folk literature, an important part of the history of Turkish literature, with the present and future to create a literature that was able to lead society on a revolutionary path. Within the realm of socialist realism, they highlighted the class character of literature by drawing attention to the relationship between the bourgeois order and literature:

Burjuvazi bilimi, tekniği, edebiyatı emekçi halkı sömürmek için kullanmaktadır. ... Burjuva toplum düzeninin edebiyat akımları ... toplumu değiştirmeyi amaç edinmemiştir. ... Burjuva düzeni, emekçilere, işine geldiği kadar kültür verir. ... Burjuva düzeninde özgür edebiyat denilen edebiyat, mutlu azınlığın isteklerine boyun eğer⁵² (Apaydın et all, 1971:4).

As indicated by Baykurt's analogy between Divan literature and the prevailing contemporary literature, highlighting their separation from the people and the way they address society's upper classes (Baykurt, 1969:2), the village novels written by the Village Institute graduates aimed to address not the happy few, but the majority of society, the working classes. Their goal was to transform the literary field for the sake of this majority.

2.3.2- The Village Literature Tradition

Having explained the literary perspective of these authors who graduated from the Village Institutes, it is necessary to look at their place in the "village literature tradition." This tradition was not actually recognized by the authors themselves;

⁵¹ In socialist realism... The author is in a position which is compatible with the aims of the socialist order of the working class in principle. The point of view that the author has chosen is in accordance with social developments. The past and the future are together with the present in socialist realism. The socialist author sees the working class as the main source for defeating capitalism, creating a society without class and improving its productive forces, and uniting human personality with freedom. He establishes harmony between himself and the socialist order in the process and breaks his ties with the ruling bourgeois class. He criticizes this class and its order without fear from the perspective of the working class. Socialist realism relies on describing reality within a revolutionary process.

⁵² The bourgeoisie uses science, technology, and literature to exploit working people. ... the Bourgeois currents of literature ... have not aimed to change society. ... The bourgeois order gives culture to workers as much as it wishes. ... So-called free literature in bourgeois order is subjugated to the demands of the happy few.

rather, it is retrospectively used to refer to literary works that addressed peasant stories or village issues, primarily those from the 1950s and 1960s. The novels of the “Three Kemals” (Kemal Tahir, Yaşar Kemal, and Orhan Kemal) and the “Three Peasants” (Fakir Baykurt, Talip Apaydın, and Mahmut Makal) are generally included within this “tradition.” However, despite its reputation as a tradition, it cannot be considered a homogenous one in which the authors are united around definite literary principles. There are differences within this tradition in terms of approaches to the novel within the context of realism and significant diversity in terms of plot building.

All authors mentioned above were leftists who claimed to adopt a realist approach in their novels. However, their interpretations of realism vary. The differences in their understandings of realism can be seen in their discussion of whether it is possible to distinguish between the “city novel” and the “village novel.” This question was discussed by these authors in a panel on “the village novel.”⁵³ In this panel, Kemal Tahir argued that novels could not be classified as ‘village novels’ or ‘city novels’ because the novel is an ability and quality in and of itself. In Kemal Tahir’s words:

Bence, romancı, romancılığı varlığında taşıyor, yani köy olsun, şehir olsun, konulara romancı olarak yaşıyor, romancı olarak da yaşınca roman yapmasın olmaz. Roman yapar. Kabiliyeti miktarınca yapar. Zaten işin başlangıçta ayrılması yanlış. Köy romancısı, şehir romancısı diye romancı olmaz. Eğer köyden yetişenler köyü, şehirden yetişenler şehiri yazacaklarsa bu, doğrudan doğruya hatıra yazmak olur, roman yazmak olmaz. Roman ayrı bir keyfiyet... Romancı o adamdır ki, gidip on dakika gördüğü yerden eski hazırlıklariyle, kültürüyle bir roman çıkarır⁵⁴ (1960:8).

⁵³ This panel was held in 1959 and its transcription was published as a book in 1960. For the book, see *Beş Romancı Köy Romanı Üzerine Tartışıyor* (1960) İstanbul:Düşün Yayınları. Among the authors known as village novelists, only Yaşar Kemal did not attend the panel.

⁵⁴ I think the novelist sustains his novelist features in his existence. Whether the themes are related to city or village, he approaches these themes as a novelist. Thus, it is impossible for a novelist not to write a novel. He writes a novel. He does so in accordance with his ability. Indeed, the separation between city and village is wrong in terms of literature from the very beginning. There is no such thing as village novelist or city novelist. If those who grow up in the city write about the city and those in the village write about the village then they are not writing novels, but memoirs. The novel is something else... The novelist is a man who writes a novel with his culture and old provision by getting inspiration from a place he has seen for only ten minutes.

Thus, for Kemal Tahir, the novelist has the ability to reflect situations in a realist manner even if he does not personally know the life he is narrating in the novel. This is how he could maintain that he knew peasants better than his fellow villager authors even though he had never seen any village and knew village life only through the peasants whom he had met in prison (1960:38).

On the other hand, other authors claimed that there was no definite village novel genre, but that the village novel was a concept related to its author's own experiences. In other words, the concept of the village novel is related to the author's experience of village life and his knowledge of the village environment and villagers themselves. Thus, a novel is seen as a village novel as a result of the author's own experiences. All these authors, other than Kemal Tahir, grew up in villages. Their experiences were formed by village life. Therefore, they argued that realism required the author to narrate what he knows thoroughly. For Baykurt, for instance, writing about village issues was almost an imperative, not a choice; even if he wanted to write a novel about city life, he could not do it (1960:8). He argued that it was possible for any author to write a novel about a village, but that a novel related to village life written by a fellow villager would be more successful in terms of realism. Speaking for institute graduates, Baykurt suggested:

Biz, köylü çocukları, ilk çocukluk devresini köyde geçirdik. Altbilinç malzemesi köy malzemesiyle dolu olduğundan, eğer kültürümüz de kuvvetli ise, yazacağımız roman, köyü görmeden köy romanı yazarların romanlarından daha iyi olacak kanısındayım, nazari olarak... .. [Köy görmeden köyü yazmak] biraz da, zannımca edebiyat numarasıdır. Yani bir takım edebiyat oyunları... Yazar biraz duyarak, altbilincinden gelerek, iliklerinden, kemiklerinden duyarak yazarsa, o zaman, gerçekçi romandan beklenen fayda ortaya çıkmış olur⁵⁵ (1960:11).

Like most of the other authors, Orhan Kemal knew village life personally. In his childhood, he observed the exploitation of the peasantry. In addition, when he came to the cities to work in different professions, he saw that the peasants who migrated

⁵⁵ We, as villager children, spent the first period of childhood in the village. Our sub-consciousness is full of village material. If or culture is strong enough, I am of the opinion that our novels would be relatively better than those who write village novels without seeing a village... .. [Writing about the village without seeing it], in my opinion, is somehow a trick of literature. Namely, a series of literary tricks.... If an author writes by feeling, by drawing from his sub-consciousness, from his marrow, then the benefit expected from a realist novel can be realized.

to the cities were still confronted with open exploitation (1960:4-5). Therefore, he tried to reflect the social problems he witnessed in his novels, arguing that realist authors should observe social problems in their social environment and that a realist approach to literature should focus on these problems. For Orhan Kemal, social reality is not exactly reproduced in the novel; rather, it is subjected to alteration. Nevertheless, the author's testimony plays an important role in giving the novel its realist feature in this process of alteration (1960:50). In this way, the realist approaches of Orhan Kemal and the institute bear some similarity in terms of conveying testimony and emphasizing social problems in their novels. However, Yaşar Kemal, another author who took inspiration from his observations and experiences of village life, is not content with this reality in the sense of actual social problems and their reflection in the novel. He therefore transforms this reality into another reality (Moran, 1990:78). Rather than regarding the realist stance as limited to the author's ability to reflect or critique actual social problems, in Yaşar Kemal's realism the social reality of the past interacts with and sheds light on that of the present.

There was also debate among these authors over the proper subject matter of the novel. Kemal Tahir argued that rather than the author's environment, observations, or experiences; the core of the novel is the "human being." But, for him, putting the human being at the center of the novel does not mean telling the story of his ordinary life. Instead, the novel should be fictionalized based on the tragedy of the human being, the condition about which he obsesses (1960:13-15). Therefore, he suggests that the novel is not written to narrate the ordinary human condition; instead, it should transcend this ordinariness (1960:13). He argues that the ordinary conditions, social environment, and general appearance of the village or any other place are subjects of sociology, not of novels and they are suitable for an article, not a novel (1960:36). For him, there is no need to narrate these issues over the course of 200 pages, because they can be written about in three pages (1960:35). Furthermore, if the author emphasizes the ordinary conditions of village life through his own observations and experiences, this is still not to write a novel, but a memoir (1960:8).

The other authors, in contrast, supported the writing of ordinary people's stories and daily lives in novels. For them, the defect of earlier Turkish novels was their failure to tell the stories of ordinary people. For example, Orhan Kemal argued that he wrote village novels because he regarded exploitation as the core of the social problems from which ordinary people suffered most (1960:4). Since he saw the novel as a form of struggle, it was necessary to narrate the lives of ordinary people and give them guidance (1960:86). Like Orhan Kemal, the institute graduates always regarded the novel as part of their struggle to bring ordinary peasants' stories to the literary field. Yaşar Kemal also regarded the novel as a form of struggle and a site to narrate the stories of ordinary people, but in his novels the struggle becomes an "insurgency" and ordinariness creates a sense of "compulsion." Although each of his main characters is treated as an exceptional hero, he emphasizes that these are ordinary people who draw inspiration from the folk tradition (Kemal quoted in Seyhan, 2014:141). These characters are also "compelled men" ("*mecbur adamlar*") who revolt against the existing order because they cannot do otherwise (Seyhan, 2014:135).

In terms of the plots of these novels, Taner Timur (2002:153-4) divides the village literature tradition into three groups. The first group of novels start with the reality of the village, but eventually reach a national sociological conclusion. Most of the novels of Orhan Kemal, Yaşar Kemal and Kemal Tahir are included in in this group. Orhan Kemal's novels generally start with the province of Çukurova, where the capitalist transformation of agriculture was particularly visible in the years his novels were written. He narrates the two-way movement that marked the working classes in the 1950s and 1960s (Timur, 2002:164-5). While he focuses on peasants who come to the cities to work in factories in his *Bereketli Topraklar Üzerinde*, he turns his attention to an artisan family that is obliged to move to a rural area to work in his *Eskici ve Oğulları*. Thus, his subject matter goes beyond peasants in their villages; instead, he writes about those who are obliged to leave their homes and shuttle back and forth between rural and urban areas in a country that has not managed to carry out an adequate land reform or advanced industrialization (Naci, 1981:348).

Yaşar Kemal's novels also deal with Çukurova and the peasants' conditions in the region in the face of an alliance between the landowners and the bureaucracy amidst a transformation in relations of production. Although his novels take a small village as their starting point, they gradually reveal the social stratification and social transformation of the wider country (Timur, 2002:167). For instance, *İnce Memed* narrates its hero's struggle and insurgency against a semi-feudal order in which the peasants are exploited by tribes with close ties to the bureaucracy in the early years of the Republic. Similarly, *Akgasazın Ağaları*, which is a series consisting of *Demirciler Çarşısı Cinayeti* and *Yusufoğulları Yusuf*, begins by narrating peasants' oppressive conditions under Turkmen tribes in a semi-feudal order, but it continues with the oppression of the next generation, the descendants of these tribes, based on capitalist accumulation. On the other hand, his *Dağın Öte Yüzü* trilogy, which included *Orta Direk*, *Yer Demir Gök Bakır*, and *Ölmez Otu*, focuses on peasants' exploitation under an alliance between *muhtars* and moneylenders in the DP period. Nevertheless, the background of his novels is always formed by the peasants' vital problems, which have not changed for centuries: their dependency on natural conditions, their fear of hunger, and their nostalgia for the days of fertile crops (Moran, 1990:78). Drawing inspiration from insurgent figures in the folk tradition, i.e. the compelled men of history, Yaşar Kemal always searches for a contemporary insurrection by interlacing contemporary issues with traditional insurrections (Öngören quoted in Timur, 2002:168).

Kemal Tahir's novels, too, address social and economic changes in Ottoman-Turkish history, but they do not concentrate on a specific region to reflect these changes. Since Kemal Tahir thinks of villages as intertwined with cities in Turkey, his novels related to villages choose places where cities are not so different from villages, such as Çorum, Çankırı and Kırşehir. In his novels *Yediçınar Yaylası*, *Köyün Kamburu* and *Büyük Mal*, he focuses on these villages' social relations and historical changes. The general trajectory of these novels can be summarized as follows: Capitalist relations of production begin to dominate, urbanization accelerates, and national consciousness and national identity take the place of community consciousness in the village (Timur, 2002:189). However, Kemal Tahir is particularly known for novels in

which he tries to affirm his theses on history and social issues. Thus, his intellectual insights on Ottoman-Turkish history are conveyed by way of his novels (Moran, 1990:130-1). For instance, *Bozkırdaki Çekirdek* took the Village Institute experience as its subject, but in a fictionalized manner that reflected his ideas on the institutes, as explained above. Similarly, he wrote *Rahmet Yolları Kesti* in order to counter the portrayal of banditry in Yaşar Kemal's work. For Kemal Tahir, bandits should not be presented as an antidote to social-economic deprivation. Rather than being a "hero" for the poor, they are "victims" of an exploitative social-economic order (Seyhan, 2014:143-4).

The novels in the second category also focus on particular villages, but take their subjects from previous historical periods. Historical novels such as Yaşar Kemal's *Ağrı Dagi Efsanesi* and Kemal Tahir's *Devlet Ana* can be placed in this group.⁵⁶ These novels' narratives are limited to the Ottoman period. In line with Yaşar Kemal's ideas on the novel and the topics on which he focused, *Ağrı Dagi Efsanesi* took as its subject the people's resistance against a feudal ruler. In *Devlet Ana*, on the other hand, Kemal Tahir implements his idea that history should be approached from a Marxist perspective by bringing the discussion of the Asiatic Mode of Production (AMP) to the forefront (Moran, 1990:130). He tries to show that Eastern societies have undergone different historical development from that of Western societies. More importantly, for him, the main difference in the case of Ottoman Turkish history stems from a powerful state tradition. Thus, he narrates the process from the establishment of the Ottoman Empire to its Westernization in accordance with his own theses about this transformation (Timur, 2002:218-9).

Finally, the third group of novels stays within the scope of a certain village and examine it sociologically. These novels constitute the most common and representative trend within the village literature tradition (Timur, 2002:153). This group includes institute graduates' novels that take central Anatolian villages as their

⁵⁶ Although Kemal Tahir is known for his historical novels, Taner Timur (2002:216) argues that only *Devlet Ana* can be properly classified as a historical novel. In addition, after 1980, Talip Apaydın tried to write the novel *Vatan Dediler* about the War of Independence, attempting to narrate those years through the eyes of the people (Apaydın, 2012:158).

subject and present the actual conditions of the peasants and the social hierarchy in the village with respect to general production and distribution relations in the country. As will be discussed in detail in the third chapter, rather than starting with social stratification at the village level and expanding to include that of the country as a whole, as Yaşar Kemal does, these novels start with the social stratification and hierarchy of the country and present the village in the novel as a “sample” of this stratification and hierarchy. Secondly, although the narratives cross village lines in some situations and mention macro-level changes, such as the capitalist transformation of agriculture, the focus placed on their effects on peasants’ lives is limited compared to that of Orhan Kemal. For instance, villagers who are obliged to migrate to cities as a result of the capitalist transformation of agriculture are mentioned in these novels; however, the narration is established through those who stay in the villages. Finally, even though these novels obviously reflect the authors’ own ideas, these authors, unlike Kemal Tahir, do not go so far as to attempt to affirm their own historical theses through their novels.

2.3.3- Literary Debates about the Village Novels

After the village novels written by institute graduates became popular, they took their place in literary debates and polemics. Kayalı (2010:42) argues that most intellectuals of the period appreciated and praised these novels. It is certainly true that, when the institute graduates’ novels were first published, they received much praise. Many intellectuals, such as Yaşar Nabi Nayır, Cavit Orhan Tütengil, Cevat Geray, and Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, believed that these authors and their novels would breathe new life into Turkish literature. However, looking at the literary debates and polemics of this period, it is also possible to see well-known intellectuals and literary authorities directing significant opposition and criticism against these novels. These criticisms generally revolved around two interwoven issues. The first was the novels’ quality as novels and the intellectual backgrounds of the authors (in terms of their ability to write novels). The second was the question of just how realist or socialist realist the novels were.

Peyami Safa, a conservative intellectual and literary authority of the period, strongly criticized the institute graduates' novels. Like Kemal Tahir, Peyami Safa (1972:58-59) argued that the main focus of the novel should be on the human; however, he lamented that this was not the case in Turkish literature. For him, the problem of Turkish literature at that time was that it looked at human beings without seeing them. He suggests that the human is a universal reality for the novel and should not be monopolized to tell the stories of İstanbul's elite or Anatolian villagers (Safa, 1972:43). Consequently, there is no way to designate novels as village novels or city novels, because there is no such distinction in world literature (1972:42). He cites examples from world literature such as Dostoyevsky, Flaubert, Maupassant, Balzac and Zola and argues that none of these authors can be classified as village novelists or city novelists. Therefore, he argues, the institute graduates' motive for writing village novels was not literary, but political. By using the peasants and their stories, these novels served as a form of class propaganda. He also argued that the subjects of these novels bore no relation to social reality:

Bu köy romanlarının hep köylüyü mazlum, kaymakamı ve ağayı zalim gösteren sistemli telkinlerine dikkat edilirse, sosyal gerçekle alâkaları olmadığı ve gizli bir maksadın tesirinde veya emrinde olduğu anlaşılır. Her köylü melek olmadığı gibi her kaymakam⁵⁷ da şeytan değildir. İnsan ruhunu ve karakterlerini bu kadar kaba şemalar içinde donduran bir cemiyet ve dünya anlayışının geçikle ve roman sanatıyla alakası pek azdır. Bu telkin propaganda edebiyatına girer ve hedefi edebi değil, siyasîdir⁵⁸ (Safa, 1972:43)

Peyami Safa suggested that the political attitude of these novels and their authors had their origins in two interlinked sources: The first was “the current of going to the people,” while the second was “leftist ideologies” (Safa, 1972:76-77). On the former, Safa states, “Türkiye’de yarım yüzyıldan beri gelişen ‘halka doğru’ akımı, halka doğru gitmenin seviyesizliğe, dil ve düşünce fakirliğine, yavanlığa ve âdiliğe doğru

⁵⁷ “*Kaymakam*” refers to the governor of an administrative division of a country or province.

⁵⁸ It would be understood that these village novels are not related to any kind of social reality and serve or are under the command of an *arrière-pensée*, when we consider their systematic suggestions that always focuses on the oppressed peasants, cruel *kaymakams* and big landowners. As every peasant is not an angel, every *kaymakam* is not evil either. A sort of perception of society and the world that freezes the human soul and characters in rogue schemas has no concern with social reality or the art of the novel. Such suggestions of these novels refer to propaganda, having not literary but political aims.

gitmek demek olduğunu anlayamadı.” (1972:76). Thus, as a result of this trend, literature becomes “peasantized.” This peasantization of literature is evident in the everyday spoken language in which these novels are written:

[İ]nsan ruhunun en yüksek ifadesi olan edebiyatı köyleştirmek, derinliksiz ve çok defa pis ve tiksindirici konuşmalarıyla bir bataklık seviyesine indirmek ancak düşmanca maksatlara yarayan bir harekettir. Okuyanı saf köylüden de nefret ettirmektedir. Dünyada böyle bir tertipli ve sahte realizm yoktur⁵⁹ (Safa, 1972:44).

Peyami Safa expands upon this focus on “organized and pseudo realism” in another article, making his accusations more explicit. In this article, he links together the use of everyday spoken language in writing, “going to the people,” and leftist ideologies. He accuses those who educated the authors of these novels and those who published their works of being agents of leftist ideologies. He describes the authors, who at the time were relatively young, as innocent victims under the command of these agents:

Nesirde konuşur gibiliğin felâketlerinden biri de, genç yazarlarda özel ifade kabiliyetini, şahsî üslubu ve yaratma imkânlarını yok etmesidir. Daima halk deyimlerine, argoya, basmakaliba sarılan bu yazarların hepsi, bir kalemden çıkmış gibi aynı stereokipe ifade kalıbı içinde kalıyorlar. Yazılarında metotlu düşünce, ihtimallere saygı, ihtiyati kavrayış ve derinlik olmadığı gibi, sırf artistik heyecan ifadesi bakımından ayrılık ve orjinallik de yoktur. Bu yavanlığı, nesiller arasındaki uçurumu açmak için solcu bir ideolojinin gizli direktiflerine göre yayan, hüviyetleri bizlerce mâlûm ajanlar ve dergileri istisna edilirse, genç yazarları mazur görmemek imkânı yoktur. Bunlar yarım yüzyıldan beri sürüp gelen bir soysuzlaşma akımının, halka doğru gitme şeklinde, hemen her hükûmetçe de desteklenerek dil ve edebiyat öğretimi programlarının bugünkü berbat duruma getirilmesi vâkiasının masum kurbanlarıdır⁶⁰ (Safa, 1972:77)

⁵⁹ Literature is the highest expression of the human soul. Therefore, peasantizing literature and taking it down to the level of the marsh with shallow, dirty, and disgusting speech serves hostile purposes. It makes the readers hate the pure villager. There is no such organized and fake realism in the world.

⁶⁰ Conversational style in prose causes disaster in the sense that it destroys the author’s opportunity to create his own personal style and special ability of expression. All of these authors fling themselves into daily idioms and slang so that they stay within the same stereotypical expressions as if they write the same things. As there have never been methodological thinking, respect for possibilities, precautionary conception in their works, there has not been any kind of separation or originality in terms of their artistic excitement. Excluding the spies, who spread this exiguousness by following a left ideology’s secret instructions to open the gap between generations -- as we have known --, and their journals, there is no possibility not to excuse young writers. They are innocent victims of the flow of degeneration named as going to the people that has been supported by almost all governments

Peyami Safa describes these innocent victims as “semi-intellectuals” and “pseudo-intellectuals” in a manner that calls the authors’ education into question.⁶¹ According to him, the authors are stuck between two intellectual deficiencies, lacking knowledge of both intellectual issues and political principles. In his own words:

Yarı münevver, çeyrek münevver, sözde münevver denilen bir ukala tipi vardır. Az ve fena okur: göz gezdirir. ... Anafikirleri yoktur. Devrimcilik, ilerencilik dedikleri belirsiz bir temayüle bağlanıp giderler. Ne devrimciliğin çeşitleri hakkında bilgileri, ne mana ihtilatlarını önleyen bir tercihleri vardır. Fikir meselelerini mahalle kahvesi edasıyla yazmalarının sebebi, bu davayı kaba, düzlek ve yanlış anlamalarındandır. Dillerde çıkan bir tek fikir yazısını dikkatle okumamış oldukları, ilim ve fikir diliyle halk dili arasındaki farkı idrak etmemiş olmalarından da bellidir⁶² (Safa quoted in Benk, 2000:497-498).⁶³

Peyami Safa was not the only critic to refer to the institute graduates as semi-intellectuals or to accuse them of intellectual deficiency. Necati Cumalı took a similar approach. He criticized education in the Village Institutes and dismissed their graduates as a “semi-intellectual crowd” (1960:83). He also argued that the novel could not take the village as its subject in the case of Turkey. In response, Makal (1965:22) suggested that Cumalı’s criticisms of those who wrote about village issues were a result of his relationship with the president and the political authorities: “Necati Cumalı propounded that ‘a novel doesn’t come up from village’ on his way back from Paris. This sentence may be related to the softness of his character.

for a half-century for the sake of bringing literature education programs to their current awful situation.

⁶¹ In contrast to Tonguç’s usage, the term “semi-intellectual,” which describes those who are not interested in the realities of the majority, Safa uses this term to refer to the institute graduates’ cultural flaws.

⁶² There is a kind of intellectual called a semi-intellectual, a quarter-intellectual, or a pseudo-intellectual interchangeably. They read little and badly: look over. ... They do not have the main idea. They go behind an unclear propensity called revolutionism and progressivism. They neither have any idea about different sorts of revolutionism nor preferences prevent meaning complications. The reason why they express their ideas in the manner of coffee house speech is their rude, straight and false understanding of the world of ideas. They do not read even one single text on ideas. Their lack in intellectual terms is also apparent on the grounds that they do not realize the difference between the language of science and philosophy and the language of the people.

⁶³ Peyami Safa’s criticism of young authors who focused on village issues resulted in a polemic between him and Adnan Benk. See Adnan Benk (2000), *Eleştiri Yazıları*, Cilt 2, Peyami Safa’nın Bir Yazısı Münasebetiyle Fecri Kâzîp Gurubî Sahih, İstanbul:Doğan, pp:497-499.

Indeed, the president of the period has sent you to Paris and you have not come up against those who write for solving the country's problems and showing the village with its negative realities. No way!"⁶⁴

Nurullah Ataç was another figure who critiqued the style and content of the village novels. It is obvious that Ataç's criticisms were aimed at novels written by institute graduates. However, they were not limited to them. Ataç criticized all drawing attention to village issues in the literary field. One reason behind Ataç's hostility to these novels was that they focused on what he considered an unproductive subject: the peasants, or the majority of society. Ataç explains his stance on the masses via the contradictory characters of Prospero and Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. He likens the intellectuals of society to Prospero, while associating the majority with Caliban (Ataç, 2003:202). According to him, the majority bears Caliban's features, such as illiteracy, incapability, and a lack of creativity. On the other hand, the intellectuals, who are the few, the happy few -- in terms borrowed from Stendhal -- resemble Prospero in terms of their ability to create and enlighten society by seeing what no one else sees. Just like Prospero, the intellectuals do these things by isolating themselves from society and looking at their inner worlds, not by focusing on the majority, focusing on Caliban (Ataç, 2003:208). Thus, no literary or artistic effort should look to the majority for inspiration. Ataç went so far as to describe the literary works of institute graduates as "dung-smelling works" ("tezek kokan romanlar/şiiirler") (Ataç quoted in Bayrak, 2000:369). He also stated frankly, "I like neither the village nor village literature," (Ataç quoted in Baykurt, 1976:50) and, "To be honest, I do not read these works. I cannot, because I cannot get any pleasure from these shapeless writings" (Ataç, 2003:204). He complained about intellectuals taking up village issues after they had become prominent in literature:

Ne yazık ki ... günümüzün düşünce adamları da, dörüterleri de Caliban'ı pek seviyorlar, kendileri Caliban'a ışık tutacaklarına, ışığı Caliban'da arıyorlar. Bak, dörüt alanında bile aydınlar Caliban'a sevgiyle, umutla bakıyorlar. Güzelliğin kaynağı da ondaymış, ancak o bilirmiş güzelliği

⁶⁴ "... 'Köyden roman çıkmaz' sözünü Necati Cumalı ortaya atmıştı, bir Paris dönüşü. Belki bu söz bir karakterin yumuşaklığı ile ilgiliydi. Öyle ya, Devrin Cumhurbaşkanı seni Paris'e yollasın, sen de onların memlekette hiçbir şeyi halletmediği üstüne yazı yazanlara, köyü kötü gösterenlere çatma, olur mu bu!"

yaratmasını. Bunun için bir köy sevgisi aldı yürüdü aydınlarımızda, dilleri köylünün diline benziyecek, köylere işlemiş tilciklerin kökü aranmayacak, hepsi benimsenecek, doğru kullanılıyorsa da, yanlış kullanılıyorsa da atılmıyacak. Yalnız köylünün değil, kentlerde de ilerlememiş takımın, ayaktakımının diline özenilecek⁶⁵ (Ataç, 2003:203).

Furthermore, because of their focuses on the peasants and lower classes, Ataç argues that each of these intellectuals is a Caliban as well (2003:210). Unlike Peyami Safa, Ataç does not fault the authors for taking ideological stances in their work. Rather, he cites examples such as Stendhal and Balzac and argues that taking a political-ideological stance does not necessarily lower the quality of a literary work. For him, the flaws of these works are not related to their authors' political-ideological stances, but to their intellectual abilities. Although he does not condemn institute graduates as semi-intellectuals or pseudo-intellectuals, as Necati Cumalı and Peyami Safa had done, he considers them intellectually deficient. For instance, his polemic with Sebahattin Eyüboğlu, who supported the Village Institutes and the works of institute graduates, focused on this deficiency. In this debate Ataç argued, “[Eyüboğlu] wishes for an intellectual who is satisfied with less information, regards himself as elevated and begins to warn those around him ... like the village teacher”⁶⁶ (Ataç, 2003:223). In line with Ataç's comparison of true intellectuals to Prospero, the kind of intellectual Eyüboğlu defends cannot even be accepted as an intellectual. Therefore, for Ataç, the village teacher cannot be glorified in real life or in novels (2003:238). In addition, in the years when the novel, the village, and the development of the country were being discussed in conjunction (Naci, 1976:128), Ataç argued that writing about the village or writing for the peasants as if they contributed to the development of country was a useless effort. For example, in his polemic with Tahsin Yücel, who defended village novels' stories, he argued:

⁶⁵ Unfortunately, today's thinkers and artists like Caliban so much. They search for the light in Caliban instead providing light for Caliban. Even in the field of art, intellectuals see Caliban as lovely and hopeful. For them, the source of beauty is in him and just he knows how to create beauty. So, a village love occurs in intellectuals in the sense that their language resembles the villager's language; they adopt all of the villagers' words as they are rather than searching their origins and true usages. Indeed, they imitate not only the villager's language but also that of the low strata in cities.

⁶⁶ “Onun dilediği gerçek aydın, az bir bilgiyle yetinecek, kendini yükselmiş sayacak, başlayacak çevresini uyarmağa... Köy öğretmeni gibi.”

Our storytellers always tell the stories of the villagers and their way of living. Furthermore, they think that they will benefit from the villagers. If they really want to help the villagers, they should tell them about the cities and the supremacy of city life.⁶⁷ (Ataç, 2000:195)

Ataç also criticized literary works based on the village and the development of the country for merely looking at the physical hunger and poverty of the peasants and assuming responsibility for solving these problems while ignoring the intellectual hunger and poverty of the peasants (Ataç, 2003:204). Beyond village novels, Ataç thinks that the village itself should be abolished entirely. Particularly because of this intellectual hunger and poverty, for Ataç it is not possible to find any inspiration for literary works in the village.

One of the best-known polemics on village literature took place between Atilla İlhan and Fakir Baykurt. Atilla İlhan's criticisms directly targeted the novels written by institute graduates. It may be suggested that his attack was the most pejorative of all the critiques directed at these novels. Atilla İlhan referred to the authors who graduated from the Village Institutes as "Bizim Köy novelists," accusing them of always writing about the same issues in the same style and form. He suggested that they had left their villages a long time ago, but still told the stories of the old villages of their childhood:

Köyden çıkalı 25 sene olmuş, on beşinci kitabında hâlâ o 25 sene önceki köy... Hani o köyü, o kasabayı anlatırken, değişik bir anlatımla gelse, yüreğim yanmayacak, en ilkel anlatım, en alışılmış konum! Tek özelliği ne oluyor o zaman, Türk köylüsü ya da kasabalısının 'neler çektiğini' göstermesi öyle mi? Ezber ettik birader! ... Biraz da roman yazın⁶⁸ (İlhan, 1975c).

As is obvious in these comments, Atilla İlhan does not regard these works as novels. Furthermore, he suggests that the village novels fail to stay within a socialist-realist

⁶⁷ Hikayecilerimiz boyuna köyleri, köylülerin yaşayışlarını anlatıyorlar, bununla da köylüye bir yararlıkları dokunacağını sanıyorlar. Köylüye gerçekten iyilik yapmak istiyorlarsa ona şehirleri, şehirlerdeki yaşayış üstünlüğünü anlatsınlar.

⁶⁸ It has been 25 years since he got out of the village. But, in his 25th book, it is still the same village. If he chooses to use a different way to tell the story of that village, I might be convinced. Nevertheless, it is the most primitive telling and the most common position. So, what is its unique feature, then? It is to show from what the Turkish peasant suffer, isn't it? We memorize it man! ... Write some novels.

framework; rather, they are based upon a primitive naturalism and can be considered populist novels (İlhan, 1975). He claims that these novels offer neither a socialist perspective nor a literary aesthetic. Therefore, his opposition to these novels is not based on their focus on village issues, but on their failure to live up to their authors' own socialist-realistic goals. He argues:

Elbette, romanları değerlendirirken konularına göre 'tasnif' yapmayız, elbette, estetik öğelerine dikkat ederiz; ama biz demiştik ki bu 'bizim köy romancıları'nda bir kere bu estetik kaygı hiç yoktur, o kadar yoktur ki birinin romanına ötekisinden pasaj aktarsanız kimse fark etmez; ikincisi, üretici köylünün ağa ile çelişkisinden çok, eğitim ordusunun neferi enstitülü öğretmenin çevresindeki düşman ve imamın tayfası köylülerle savaşı anlatılmıştır, bu da bu romanların kökenini sosyalist olmaktan çıkarır, CHP dikta dönemi halkçılığına oturtur⁶⁹ (İlhan, 1975a).

By the "CHP's dictatorial period," Attila İlhan refers to the government of İsmet İnönü, which he regards as dictatorial, in contrast to the period of Atatürk, which he characterizes as anti-imperialist. Despite the institute graduates' criticism of İnönü due to his role in the closure of the institutes, Attila İlhan describes them as "İnönü Kemalists." He accuses these writers of falsely presenting themselves as socialist authors for years and sees himself as tearing off their masks. In two articles, titled "*Fakir-i pür-taksir'in açık itirafı*" and "*İlâhi Fakir-i pür-taksir!...*", he not only humiliates Fakir Baykurt by playing with his name, but also attempts to give these authors a lesson on socialism through references to Marxist and socialist classics. Furthermore, he finishes his articles by challenging them on theoretical grounds by openly asking them "theoretical exam questions". He tries to show how their treatment of peasants as socialist agents contradicts the critiques of the peasantry found in Marxist classics. He uses the Marxist concepts of base and superstructure to form the concept of a "personal base and superstructure." According to him, peasants are the least conscious and organized parts of society. They are, therefore, a politically backward mass and do not deserve significant attention in the pursuit of

⁶⁹ When evaluating novels, we do not 'classify' them by subject. Of course, we pay attention to aesthetic factors. However, the *Bizim Köy* novelists have never had such an aesthetic concern. Even if you transmit any passage from one novel to another, no one would notice. Secondly, these novels tell the contradiction between the Institute graduate teacher who is the foot soldier of the education army and the peasants who stand in the *imam*'s crew, rather than the contradiction between the *ağas* and producer peasants. Therefore, the origin of these novels is removed from socialism and enters the populism of the RPP's dictatorial regime.

socialist goals. Although they are in a process of proletarianization due to the economic forces pushing them into factories, thereby leading to a transformation of their “personal base,” they have difficulty in changing “their personal superstructure” accordingly. He writes:

[F]abrika işçisi olmuş köylünün sınıfsal yönden olumlu bir davranışa girebilmesi için ... elbette, işçi sınıfıyla bütünleşmesi, onun özlemlerine sahip çıkması, içinde yaşamaya başladığı yeni ortamı, (fabrikayı, şehri, bunların koşullarını), benimsemesi [gerekir]. Yoksa, kaybettiği bir dünyayı, oradaki mal sahipliğini, ya da muhtemel bir tarla hayalini sürdürüp durursa, içinde yaşadığı somut koşullarla üstyapısı ters düşmüş olur, bu da onu toplumsal bakımdan gerici durumuna düşürmese bile, bal gibi lümpenproleter durumuna düşürür⁷⁰ (İlhan, 1975b).

Attila İlhan provides this explanation because he wants to show that, like peasants, who could not be a part of the proletariat but turn instead into the lumpen proletariat in the cities, the peasant authors can be thought of as “lumpen authors” (İlhan, 1975). Noting that Baykurt feels obliged to write about village issues and does not regard himself as qualified to write novels related to city life and that a similar situation applies to the other institute graduates, Attila İlhan suggests that it is clear that, despite their “base” having changed, they have difficulty changing their superstructure. If they want to be socialist authors, they should turn to the proletariat in their novels, as required by socialist-realism (İlhan, 1975).

In response, Baykurt argues, “Since Attila İlhan does not work in any concrete work during his life, he thinks socialism is easy. So he attempts to evaluate whether all steps, even novels, are socialist or not”⁷¹ (1976:55). He reminds Attila İlhan that he and his fellow institute graduates do not claim to write perfect socialist novels; rather, they follow a socialist-realist path. In order for Attila İlhan to understand their

⁷⁰ It is necessary for the factory worker peasant to integrate with the proletariat, stake a claim of its aspirations, and adopt his new environment (factory, city, and their conditions) in order to act in a positive manner class terms. If he maintains the world he lost and proprietorship in there, i.e. his insistence on a field dream, his superstructure will contrast with the concrete conditions in which he lives. Even though it does not make him reactionary in social terms, it certainly puts him into the condition of the lumpen-proletariat.

⁷¹ “Attila İlhan, yaşamı boyunca herhangi bir somut işin uygulamasında çalışmadığı için sosyalizmi de kolay sanıyor, o yüzden her adımı, hatta her romanı sosyalisttir, değildir diye kolayından değerlendirmeğe kalkıyor.”

novels' mission, he should see the "problem of *Bizim Köy*" before humiliatingly dubbing the authors "*Bizim Köy* novelists" and their works "*Bizim Köy* literature" (Baykurt, 1976:52). Baykurt responds to Atilla İlhan's "theoretical" critique of the institute graduates' interpretation of socialism by bringing the practical dimension of socialism to the forefront. For Baykurt, although Marxist and socialist classics cast peasants in a negative light, in practice peasants can and do contribute to socialist aims. He supports this argument with the example of Russia's October Revolution:

[K]öylünün devrimci sınıfın başını çekebileceğini ... söylemiş değilim. Baş çekmese de katkıda bulunur en az. Bunun derecesini ne ben kestirebilirim, ne Atilla İlhan. ... Şu ülke için doğru çıkan, bu ülke için tutmamış. Bunu her ülkenin nesnel-öznel koşulları belirler. 1917'de mujikler öncü değildir, ama sonuca saptayan başlıca güçtür. Onlar ambarın ağzını devrimden yana açmasaydı, bir iki ay içinde devrim de, devrimciler de, ters yönde bir gelişmenin yıkıntıları altında toz olup gideceklerdi. Kara kaplı kitaplar bunu da yazar, bilmem rastladı mı Atilla İlhan?⁷² (1976:56).

Fakir Baykurt also mentions the Chinese Revolution and Mao Tse-tung in his response to Atilla İlhan. By way of his explanations, he claims that focusing on the peasants or writing novels about them does not contradict a socialist point of view. In addition, he calls on Atilla İlhan to write socialist novels himself:

Arkadaşımız köyün kalkınmasına karşı değilmiş ama bu iş sosyalist yöntemle yapılmalıymış. ... [D]emek ki biz onun beğeneceği derecede başaramıyoruz, en iyisi buyurduğunu kendisi yapsın. Çünkü o da bir romancıdır. Türkiye'nin konularını tekelimize almadığımız gibi, hepsinin yazılması bizim boynumuzun borcu da değil. İnsan doğru bildiğini başkasına buyurmaz, kendi yapar. Eski bey alışkanlığıdır buyurmak⁷³ (Baykurt, 1976: 57).

⁷² I have not claimed that the peasants are able to lead the revolutionary class. Even if it does not spearhead, it supports at least. Neither Atilla İlhan nor I could estimate the grade of the peasants' participation in this process. The true way for a country is not valid for another. The objective and subjective conditions of each country determine this way. For instance, *mujiiks* were not pioneers in 1917 but they constituted a major power, which detected the result. If they didn't open hatchway for revolution, both revolution and revolutionists would have been destroyed within two months under the ruins of another development in an opposite direction. Black covered books wrote it, too. Did Atilla İlhan encounter? I don't know.

⁷³ Our friend claims that he is not against village development but the way of it should be achieved through socialist methods. As it is understood, we do not achieve it in the way he wants. Let him make the best. He is also a novelist. As we do not monopolize Turkey's problems, writing up the all is not our binding duty. People do not command things, which they know best; rather, they do these by themselves. To command is the habit of the ancient *bey*.

Here Baykurt turns Attila İlhan's criticisms of the village institute graduates against him. Although Attila İlhan attempts to give them a lesson in socialism by calling on them to focus on the proletariat, his own novels, as Baykurt notes, do not deal with the proletariat but exalt Turkish military officers (1976:56).

Taken together, the various criticisms discussed above provide an insight into how the institute graduates' novels were received by some of the significant literary figures of the period. Although it is generally thought that these novels were widely accepted and even overvalued by the intellectuals of the period, the authors themselves mention a general hostility directed towards them and their works in their memoirs and other writings. For instance, in this passage Apaydın summarizes all the criticism directed at them and how they felt in response:

Bazı eleştirmenler ortaya koyduğumuz edebiyatı köyden edebiyat çıkmaz, roman çıkmaz, köy insanı ilkeldir, ilkel insanın romanı da ilkel olur gibi sözlerle kötümeye başladılar. ... [N]eredeyse züppe olarak tanımlayacağım bazı kentli eleştirmenler yeter bu köy edebiyatı diyerek yaptıklarımızı tezek kokan roman olarak adlandırmaya kalktılar. Bizi böyle aşağıladılar⁷⁴ (Apaydın, 2009).

Similarly, Makal states he became fed up with all the critics who wanted to teach him and his fellow institute graduates about literature (1965:22). In addition, in the preface to one of his novels, Baykurt expresses sadness that his novel will be read and criticized by aloof boulevard intellectuals. He notes that he wants his novels to be read by peasants, who would be able to understand them (2008:4).

It is important to note that the literary criticisms directed at the village novels were interlaced with criticisms of the Village Institutes. For instance, Sebahattin Eyüboğlu, who was also a teacher in the institutes, and Yaşar Nabi Nayır, who supported the institutes, looked warmly upon institute graduates' novels. On the other hand, Necati Cumalı, Peyami Safa, and Nurullah Ataç, who criticized the approach of the institutes, consistently adopted a negative attitude towards these novels and, in a

⁷⁴ Some critics began to dismiss our literature by saying 'Literature or novel do not arise out of the village' and 'Villagers are primitive so that primitive people's novels are primitive'. Some urban critics, whom I identified as snobs, stated that the village literature should stop and called our works as dung-smelling works. They insulted us in this way.

sense, traced their flaws back to the mentality of the institutes. It can also be seen that criticisms of the authors' political stances came from both the right and the left. They were accused not only of taking a political stance, but also of not doing so effectively. Peyami Safa, on the one hand, accused them of reflecting their leftist ideology in their novels and even using the novel form for the purposes of political propaganda. On the other hand, Attila İlhan accused them of failing to understand socialism or write proper socialist novels.

2.4- Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, the social, political, and cultural conditions of the country, which constituted the background of the institute graduates' novels and their political and their literary ideas with respect to these conditions, were examined. This background, the authors' political ideas and activities, their literary perspectives, and the debates focusing on their works were the main focal points throughout the chapter.

The populist-peasantist ideology that marked the single-party period was identified as an important factor behind the foundation of the Village Institutes. It was seen that, because the authors graduated from these institutions, this ideology left a significant mark on them. Although these populist-peasantist traces remained observable in their political approaches, this chapter also emphasized the impact of the leftist opposition of the 1960s on the authors' political viewpoints. At the same time, this chapter showed that their efforts also affected the Turkish left in turn. The authors approached the many debates within the Turkish left in the 1960s with their own political discourse rather than proposing a definite political route or occupying a definite place in the Turkish left.

It was shown that the authors' literary approaches were shaped in accordance with their political stances. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that this political impact on their literature became a main focus of the literary debates surrounding their novels. Because of this political impact, they began to perceive literature as a tool for

struggle and positioned themselves within the framework of socialist-realism. At the same time this chapter noted the differences between the authors' literary approaches within the village literature tradition despite their general adherence to leftist ideologies and socialist-realism. In this context, it was acknowledged that the institute graduates' novels represented a common trend in this tradition by taking a particular village and examining its sociological features with respect to the general production and distribution relations in the country. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that this political impact on their literature became a main focus of the literary debates about their novels.

This chapter presented a general picture of the political and literary dimensions within which the novels were written. The content and organization of the novels, which will be explained in the next chapter, should be considered in conjunction with the background provided by this chapter.

CHAPTER 3

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE VILLAGE NOVELS

This chapter will examine the content and organization of the novels written by Village Institute graduates. Since these novels attempt to highlight the realities of village life under which the peasants are oppressed, exploited, and insulted, it is possible to see three main organizing categories in their plots: the dominant bloc against the peasants, the friends of the peasants, and the peasants themselves. The aim of this chapter is to find out how these categories are organized and who and what they include. The first part of the chapter, “the dominant bloc against the peasants,” will look at those who directly dominate the peasants and those who pave the way for dominance over them. This section will look at the state, domestic and foreign capital, religion, and intellectuals. The second part of this chapter, “friends of the peasants,” will concentrate on those who stand by the peasants against the dominant bloc. Good people in corrupt institutions and the village teacher constitute the main focus of this section. Finally, the third section will concentrate on the image of the peasants and their stance against the domination they face.

3.1- The Dominant Bloc against the Peasants

3.1.1 - The State

In the village novels, the state is presented as having a negative impact on villagers’ economic and social conditions; however, the intensity of the state’s negative role varies according to the periods in which the novels were written. Whereas in novels written in the 1950s the main difficulty in the peasants’ lives is seen as harsh natural conditions -- with the state being criticized for not taking reasonable measures

against such conditions -- in those written in the 1960s and 1970s the state's negative policies towards peasants are stressed more than natural conditions.

In the early period of the village novels, the peasants are portrayed as stuck between hard natural conditions and primitive agricultural methods. They are passive agents deprived of the economic, social, and cultural means to improve their conditions. The state, therefore, is needed to provide them with assistance. However, the state produces no reasonable solution to peasants' problems due to its irrelevance in their lives, inevitably resulting in poverty and oppression for the villagers. The typical example of this kind of narrative is *Bizim Köy* written by Makal in 1950. It is also possible to find examples of this kind of narrative in Apaydın's *Yarbükü* (1959) and Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* (1959).

Makal's novel is built on a relationship between the peasants and the state that is devoid of contact and in which the latter's negligence is responsible for the oppression of the former. *Bizim Köy* portrays a village in which the peasants suffer from hot, burning summers and harsh winters that damage the productivity of the land; are deprived of practical tools for coping with the vagaries of nature; work with their two hands and perhaps a few oxen -- in many cases, they cannot afford to buy oxen and use their own hands to plow instead; and, in the end, perish (Makal, 1970:36). In order to overcome their plight, they look to the state to engage their problems and produce solutions. But they are disappointed in this expectation. This is reflected in the following dialogue between peasants in *Bizim Köy*:

'Yavu' dedi Nuri ağa. ... Bundan sekiz on sene evvel bizim eve bi gıran girdi, tam on tane mevta çıktı. Allah seni inandırısın.

Memo: 'O vakıtlar hep öyle oldu oğlum! Anam ağnadırdı ırahmetlik de: 303'ün gıtlığında tek bi şinik arpa geçmiş ellerine; tam iki ay yağsız tuzsuz un haşılı bişirmişler, avuç avuç. O sene 50 kişi gırılmış açıktan bu köyde!'

'Başka deyil de, tam aşkıyalığın sırası ki yâni! Geçmeli şu yola, 'in eşşekten usulcacık guzum!' demeli. 'Cebinde, hâybende ne varsa yiyelim.'

Bu sözü söyleyen de, Veli idi. Bana dönerek de: 'Efendi guzum burda dedenleri carı carı yazıyon a. Defterde

galmasın; hükümet babaya sal da ne diyecekse disın halımıza...' dedi. (Makal, 1970 :63-4)⁷⁵

As can be seen in this passage, the state is so unconcerned about the peasants' problems that they feel obliged to resort to robbery. Beyond simply depicting peasants in a kind of rebellion, Makal emphasizes that, given the material conditions in which the peasants live, it is proper for them to resist. They are left alone with their problems and have to solve them on their own.

Another problem related to nature faced by the peasants is water scarcity, which is common in central Anatolia, the location of many of the village novels. In Apaydın's *Yarbükü*, written in 1959, peasants suffer from a lack of water for irrigating their crops, which causes conflicts in the village. It is suggested in the novel that, although this scarcity comes from nature, the state could still take measures to assist the peasants, but fails to do so: "Once the government had this area examined with the idea of building a dam, but later somehow they changed their minds. So, this place here, *Yarbükü*, was left on its own" (1959:10).⁷⁶ This is the novelist's voice, and it argues that, like all villages, *Yarbükü* has been abandoned to its fate. In cases where the peasants appeal to the government for help to solve their problems, they are not listened to and must continue to face their hard lives on their own (Apaydın, 1959:88).

In fact, as mentioned in earlier chapters, the state's relationship with the peasantry was problematic from the very early years of the Republic. Whereas the founder of the Republic, Atatürk, exalted the peasantry as "masters of the people" and several institutions were established ostensibly for the wellbeing of the peasants, their

⁷⁵ " 'Say' said Nuri Aga, ... 'the famine happened in our own house, nine or ten years ago; ten died then. It's true, I swear it.' "

Then Memo spoke. 'Yes, it was just the same time. My bıy! -my dear mother (dead now, God bless her) used to tell us that during the famine of 303 only a single shinik of barley remained. For two whole months they cooked it handful by handful, without salt or fat. That year fifty died of starvation in the village.

'There's no way out; it's best to turn bandit. It's come to that: one must hold a man up on the road, and say: 'Get off that donkey quietly; we'll eat what you have got in that dandle-bag of yours.' It was Veli who had spoken. 'My dear efendi,' he went on, turning to me, 'you're taking down all that's being said here; but don't let it stay in that notebook. Tell the Government -it's supposed to be a father to us; and say what you like about the state we're in.' " (quoted in Stirling, 1965:51-2)

⁷⁶ "Bir zamanlar buraya baraj yapılması için Hükümet tarafından incelemeler filân yaptırılmıştı. Sonradan nedense vazgeçilmiş, bu Yarbükü de kendi haline bırakılmıştı böyle"

conditions never changed for the better. Therefore, in these novels, the state's irrelevance to the peasants' lives can also be seen in the depiction of state institutions whose policies are rarely compatible with the peasants' demands. The following passage in *Bizim Köy* critiques the functioning of the Agricultural Co-operatives:

Bizim ilçenin yedi sekiz köyünde 'Tarım Kooperatifi' var. Aslında köylülerin faydalanması düşünülerek hayırlı bir erek için kurulan bu kooperatifler bugün köylüyü bir çıkmaza sokmuş durumdadır. Çünkü köylü kooperatiften para alırken işinde ilerleme düşüncesiyle hareket ederek her zaman aldığı parayı kârlı bir işe harcayamıyor. Sadece ödünç aldığı parayı eski borçlarına yatırarak bir an için hafifliyor. ... Çoğunluk borcunu ödeyemiyor. Sonra kalkıp faiz yüzünden iki katına çıkınca büsbütün ödeyemez oluyor. Sonunda icraya veriliyor ve işte o zaman kara sefalet baş gösteriyor. Bu çevrenin köylerinde yarıdan fazlası icraya verilmiştir. (1970:52)⁷⁷

In such a situation, in addition to natural difficulties such as aridity, infertility of the land, and crop shortages, the state's institutions turn peasants into debtors. However, it cannot be said that the authors adopted a particularly critical attitude toward the state in the 1950s. Rather, they criticize the state's failure to produce solutions to the peasants' problems. For them, the state refuses to see or understand the peasants, so they must continue to live their hard lives and face social exclusion.

During the 1960s, on the other hand, the state is portrayed in the village novels not only as indirectly causing peasants' oppression, but also as playing a direct role in this oppression. It is no longer derelict in its duty of supporting peasants, but uses its powers to oppress them and exploit their labor. This shift in the role of the state is depicted in two basic ways. First, although the vagaries of nature continue to have a major impact on the peasants, the state's burden on them is more dominant in the narratives of these novels. In the novels of the 1950s, the peasants do not encounter

⁷⁷ "In seven or eight of the villages in our Province there are Agricultural Co-operatives. These Co-operatives were originally established with the best intentions, having in mind the benefit of the villager. But to-day they have brought him to an impasse, because, while the villager, acting from the motives of economy, has had the money from them, he has not always spent it to the best advantage. By simply paying off his debts with the borrowed money he has had temporarily relief. ... The majority are unable to pay off their debts. They have to pay interest on what they still owe; and when that is doubled, they get to a point when they are quite unable to meet them. As a result, the villager is prosecuted, and then it is that the demon of want appears. In the villages of this neighbourhood more than half the villagers who associated with the Co-operative have been prosecuted." (quoted in Stirling, 1965:39-40)

the extensions of the state, because there is simply no contact with the state, which itself constitutes a significant point of criticism for the authors. In the novels of the 1960s and the 1970s, however, the peasants come into direct contact with state forces, especially by way of state personnel who come into the village from the outside. But in almost every case their condition is worsened by this contact with the authorities. Thus, the authors shift their focus from the state's irrelevance to its direct role in oppressing the peasantry in this period.

The state's negative role in village life is also portrayed through its close contacts with particular segments of village society. While the ways in which the state affected peasants' lives remain blurred in the novels of the 1950s, from the 1960s onwards the state is seen as enmeshed in village life through clientelistic ties, through which state forces find supporters in the village. These supporters --who receive state support, in turn-- oppress and exploit poor peasants by gaining strength from the state forces. In this way, the state is seen as an entity that also contributes to the disorganization of peasants and prevents them from acting collectively.

Baykurt's *Irazca'nın Dirliđi* (1961) and *Kaplumbađalar* (1967) give an illuminating example of this shift of emphasis from the state's passive neglect of the peasants to its active oppression of them. In these novels, a common vineyard story is narrated in two different ways. The first story is as follows:

Çok eski hikaye. Bađlar birbiriyle diz dize imiř. Güzel asmalar toprađı örtermiř. Üzümlere alaca düşünce, ortalarına çardaklar kurulur, yataklar atılmıř. ... Ve bađ bozumlarında güz Őenlikleri yapılmıř. Üzümler selelerle sepetlerle kırılır, kađnılarla tařınırmıř. Ve kalburların içine salkımlar yıđmaca dodurulup yol boyunca gelip geçenlere, üzümlülere üzüksüzlere saçılmıř. Aklı karalı salkımlar, bir bolluk içinde dađıtılmıř. Birden bir kıran gelmiř, silip süpürmüř. Ne bađ kalmıř, ne yaprak. (Baykurt, 1961:13)⁷⁸

⁷⁸ It is quite a long story. Those vineyards used to be all connected to each other in harmony. Beautiful vine leaves used to cover the earth below. When grapes started to ripen, you would put a pergola up in the middle of them as well as beds. You would put the grapes in the baskets and carry

This is a short story that Baykut mentions briefly in *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*. Several years later, it became the basis for the whole story of *Kaplumbađalar*. In the latter, however, the villagers build a vineyard together under the leadership of the village teacher. This is directly inspired by the ideal of "the peasant who is able to cope with nature" propagated by the Village Institutes and their mastermind, Tongu. In this novel, the peasants build a vineyard on a steppe. Working together, they succeed against natural obstacles thanks to the assistance of the village teacher, Rıza. Eventually, the vineyard is destroyed, but this time it is not a result of a natural disaster such as pestilence. Instead, it is the state forces that play the primary role. After the peasants build the vineyard, state personnel working under the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre come to the village and dispossess the peasants of the vineyard. The peasants can only have the vineyard again if they pay rent for it to the state. But the peasants are too poor to pay this rent and the vineyard is abandoned. Afterwards, the peasants remark:

Bađ bostan bizim nemizeydi? Daha tattıđımız yıl ensemizde bittiler! Ortada bir hkmet olduđunu unutmuřuz. En bařta onu hesaplamalıymıř!⁷⁹(Baykurt,2008:330-331)

Eđer dersiniz ki, istedikleri icarı verelim, bozalım bađları, gitsin bu dzen byle; nefsime ben veremem! 650 istiyorlar ev bařına! Kuruř isteseler belki; ama lira! Eđer dersiniz ki, Krođlu aleyhsselam gibi dađlara ıkalım, vuruřalım, dvřelim; ben ona da yođum! Tek bařına bizim ky! Tek bařına bizim kyn ne deđer var? Benim elimde bir av tfeđi, onun elinde makineli, cip, cephanes!  gnde yakalar. Efendime syleyeyim, heralda bu iřin ıkarı yoktur. Vardır ama biz bilmiyoruz. Ensemizdeki devlettir. Tırnakları demirden.⁸⁰ (Baykurt, 2008:318)

them with a tumbrel. You would fill the big sieves with grapes and while carrying them down the road, you would offer the black and white bunches to people. Grapes used to be in abundance then. However, a pestilence hit the grapes suddenly and wiped out the vineyards completely.

⁷⁹ Of course we should not have expected enjoying the vineyards. The government was on us as soon as we had the first product. We had forgotten that there is a government that is omnipotent! We should have known!

⁸⁰ If you tell me to give the rent that the government wants, leave the vineyards and let them get away with it, I cannot do it. They want 650 lira for one house. It would not be that bad if it was 650 kurus; but lira! If you tell me to go to the mountains like Koroglu and be a bandit fighting for the cause, I cannot do that either. What is my village worth alone? Me holding a shotgun, the government holding a machine gun... They would catch me in three days! What I am trying to say is that, I don't think

As can be seen in this passage, the pestilence in the first story is replaced by the state in the second. The state takes the place of a natural disaster in terms of the damage it does to the villagers' livelihoods. It is so powerful with the forces at its disposal that the villagers cannot resist.

The state's negative policies and its power over the peasants via state personnel also constitute a significant focus of Apaydın's novels. In *Define* (1972), the peasants complain about experts who implement the state's pricing policies by coming to the village to buy their crops. The peasants manage to harvest their crops despite several natural difficulties, but the state -- or the government as its executive force -- undervalues their crops, and thereby their labor. Two villagers who subsist on tobacco farming discuss this issue in the following terms:

-Köylü değil misin, dedi yanındaki. Ne ekersen ek, fark etmez. Hep aynı. Bizim sabahımız yok, sabahımız. Köylünün derdini ne bilir dee Ankara'daki hükümet? Dedim ki ekispere: 'Beyim, bizim yevmiyemiz kaçta geliyor, bilyon mu?' Dedi ki: 'Bana ne senin yevmiyenden? Ben önümdeki tütüne bakarım.'

-He ya, ona ne? Herif alıyor aydan aya temiz mayışını, keyfine bakıyor. Sen ne olursan ol, umrunda mı? (Apaydın, 1972:150)⁸¹

As can be seen in this passage, the peasants work hard to harvest tobacco, but the government makes their product worthless. A similar situation is mentioned in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* (1975), in which Osman, a villager, loses his mind worrying about his livelihood, which depends on tobacco farming. In an inner monologue, he complains about the experts who undervalue his tobacco:

there is a way out of this situation. Maybe there is but I do not know it. We have the state keeping a tight rein on us. It has its iron nails in us.

⁸¹ -Aren't you a villager? Said the other. "Plant whatever you want, it does not matter. It is all the same. We don't even have the mornings for ourselves! The high government in Ankara will not bother knowing the villagers problems. I told the expert, "Do you know sir, how much our hourly rate is?" and he answered, "I don't care about your rate, I am only interested in the product."

-Of course he doesn't care, does he! He earns a comfortable monthly salary and enjoys it. Whoever the hell you are, he does not care!

Dürzüler! Benim tütünüme para vermiyorlar. Ulen ne iştir bu? Adamına göre fiyat biçiyorlar. Biz fakiriz diye dilber tütüne para vermiyorlar. Allahtan bulasicalar. Bir yıl emek verdik biz ona, dürzüler! Alçaklar!.. ... Bir yıl gece gündüz bunun için mi çalıştık biz? Ulen dürzüler, Allah sormaz mı bu ettiğinizi? Oturmuşlar masanın başına, şöyle bir bakarlar, tamam... Dört lira. Ne dört lirası be dürzü? Sekiz desen gene az. On desen gene az. Biliyor musun sen ona verilen emeği? Ne hallardan geçip geldi bu? Sürmesi ekmesi, fidesi, çapası...⁸² (Apaydın, 1975:47-8)

The state is portrayed as cheating poor villagers whose subsistence depends on their labor, and in this way, the state is also positioned against labor. Thus, Apaydın and Baykurt portray the state not as irrelevant or useless, but as not working in the interest of the peasants.

These authors' decision to highlight the state's negative impact on the peasants' lives is also related to their political-ideological views. In addition to their critical approach to the social order throughout the 1950s, the effect of socialist ideas on their work crystallized primarily in the mid-1960s. Despite the fact that they sometimes discussed or hinted at a corrupt social order in their novels in the 1950s, they did not explain the dynamics of this order. During the 1960s, they started to discuss who was responsible for this order and the ways in which it had been established in their novels. In the village novels of the 1960s, it is the state, together with its personnel and institutions, which is primarily responsible for the corrupt state of society. Furthermore, the state does not simply implement its negative policies from outside the village, but also finds collaborators inside the village through patronage relations.

⁸² Scoundrels! They don't pay for my tobacco. What the hell is this all about? They offer different prices for different people. They don't pay for perfect tobacco because we are poor. God, give them what they deserve! We have been working on this for a year, scoundrels! We worked for a year, day and night, and look what we get! Scoundrels, do you think God will not judge you for what you have done? They sit on the table, look at the product and decide without giving it much thought, they say, 'OK this costs four lira.' What the hell is four lira, you scoundrels? Even eight lira is lower than my products' worth! Do you have any idea how much work it requires? Do you know how many processes it took to make it proper? Ploughing, planting...

This situation can be observed in Baykurts' *Yılanların Öcü* (1959) and its continuation, *Irazca'nın Dirliđi* (1961). These two novels take as their subject land ownership and property relations in the village. In these novels, two criticisms are interwoven: the failure of the RPP on land reform and the patronage relations that brought to the village by the DP. *Yılanların Öcü* starts by focusing on the unequal distribution of land that resulted from the failure of the RPP to implement land reform. In the past, land was sold to the peasants rather than being distributed to them equally, so that the social order in which the big landowners derived power from their property was protected in the village of Karataş. The *muhtar* of the village is one of the big landowners in the village because he could afford to buy a large amount of land when it was being distributed during the period of the RPP. Due to the success of the DP in bringing big landowners into its ranks, the *muhtar* is an important representative of the DP in the novel. He gives a talk in the village, saying:

Bahusus, Őimdi ortalıkta bir demokratçılık var. ... Bu demokratçılıktan maksat, herkes nerde, sen de orada olacaksın demek. Őimdi bir iŐe baŐladı mı çođunluk diyorlar. Çođunluk hay hayı bastı mı, 'Hayır' diyenin hali haraptır. ... Bundan böyle muhaliflik, münafıklık yoktur. 'Hayır' demek yasak edilmiŐtir.⁸³ (Baykurt, 1962:69)

In this passage, Baykurt emphasizes the DP's oppressive manner, which tolerates no opposition, through the words of the *muhtar*. Throughout the novel, the DP is seen as having captured the state apparatus and implementing its negative policies through the use of peasants who give it their support (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:221). Deriving his strength from the DP, the *muhtar* oppresses the poor peasants – including Kara Bayram, the main character of the novel -- and uses violence against them. However, in this novel, the connection between the *muhtar* and the DP is portrayed as a one-sided relationship in which the former is the supporter of the latter. In other words, what the DP gives the *muhtar* in return for his support is not clear. That the relationship between these two is in fact reciprocal is revealed in *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*. Since the DP utilizes patronage relations in which political power

⁸³ Now, there is this thing, 'being a democrat.' So this means you need to stand where everyone stands. They talk about the majority before doing something nowadays. When the majority says 'yes,' the ones who say "no" will be damned. From this point on, there is no opposition. Saying 'no' is no longer allowed.

rewards its supporters in return for their support or services (Sunar, 1985:2077), this novel shows the *muhtar* receiving his reward for his support of the DP. Specifically, he is to remove opponents of the DP from the local voter rolls in exchange for a certain amount of credit and a tractor. In the following passage he explains his mission, and its award, to his wife:

Seçim olacak deye pangadaki gradomu yükselttiler avrat! Motur alıp tarlaları alt üst ediyorum, habarın olsun! Bu hükümet bizi zorla adam edecek. Türkiye'nin numune çiftçisi olacam. ... Buna akıl derler avrat, akıl! Şimdi Nufus tevterini götürüp vermekten gayam, bütün aykırı döyüsleri liste harici yapacaklar. Başta Gara Bayram. Sonra Irazca. Sonra gelini Haçça. Geldim geçiverdim, Ağali düzüsü. Hemi de hanesi halkı. Geldim geçiverdim, Kosa cavırı. ... Hükümetin golundan olmuyan döyüslerin ne işi var seçimde sandıkta? Bizim Reyiz akıllı. Şimdiden yel gelecek delikleri dıkamak istiyor. Hem canım bunların verdiği oydan ne anlaşılır? Cahal düzüler! Diyeceksin ki, sen de cahalsın. Evet, cahalım emme, aklım var. Hükümeti destekliyorum. Demokratçılık yapıyorum. Onlar öyle mi? Aykırı pezevenkler! Bu sebepten de motur alıp goşturuyorum avrat! Hükümetin pangasında gradom yükseliyor...⁸⁴ (Baykurt, 1961:55)

Those whom the *muhtar* would remove from the voter list are engaged in a struggle over land with him. This is why they oppose the *muhtar* -- and the DP, as a source of his power. This is an important passage that shows the poor peasants on one side and the powerful factions aligned according to their economic interests, on the other.

The clientelistic relations mentioned in the village novels are not limited to the DP or *muhtars*. As can be seen in Apaydın's novels, such relations spread to anyone who possesses large land holdings and establishes close ties with the government. In

⁸⁴ Wife, they promoted me at the bank for the elections! Take notice, wife, I will take the tractor and go to and from the fields. This government is going to put us in order. I will belong to the Turkish government, as its own farmer. This is called smarts, wife! As soon as I give them the voter list, they will discard all the pimps. First they will discard Gara Bayram, then Irazca, and then her daughter-in-law. Ağali and his family and Kosa too! You will all watch me succeed! What do those scoundrels have to do with the election while they don't support the government? Our Reyiz is very intelligent as he wants to avoid the possible opposition. What would they vote for anyway? Those ignorant pimps! If you tell me that I am ignorant as well, wife, I say you might have a point. However, what I have is smarts, so I support the government. I am being a democrat. They are not, those deviants! That's the reason why I have the tractor, wife! I got promoted at the government's bank...

Define (1972), Yarbay Dayı is a rich villager and a relative of the Samsun deputy for the ruling party; therefore, state requisitioning experts pay more money for his tobacco than for that of ordinary villagers. One of the villagers complains about this situation:

Adamına göre fiyat biçiyorlar yavru! Aynı tarlanın tütününe iki fiyat biçilir mi? Yarbay Dayı'nın tütününe altı lira dedi. Benimkine dört lira. Ula Allah'ın kulu! Tarlalarımız yanyana. Aynı zamanda ektik, aynı zamanda kırdık. Birimiz ne verdiysek, nasıl baktıysak, öbürümüz de öyle baktık. Farkımız yok. Niye onunki altı lira da benimki dört lira? Ha, niye?⁸⁵ (Apaydın, 1972:149)

It can be understood from this passage that state policy lacks equal pricing standards, favoring rich peasants at the expense of the poor. In the novels of Baykurt and Apaydın, the characters who derive strength from state forces create divisions within the village, preventing the peasants from engaging in collective struggle against the forces who oppress and exploit them.

Though it does not directly take up the relationship between the peasants and the state, in Baykurt's *Tırpan* it is mentioned that the state is governed by people who allow corruption. The *ağa* in this novel gives his support to the JP and enjoys a close relationship with the government. In one passage, he states:

Şu gazetelere bak. Bizim Başkanın kardaşlarını yazıyor. Bankalardan çekmişler çekmişler, fabrika şu bu kurmuşlar. Tabii kuracaklar. Kurmayacaklar da neden Başkanın kardeşi oldular? Neyse! Azcık kabat da bizimkinde var. Köylü kafası işlemiyor. Bu kadar verme kardeşlerine dedim. Kredileri verdi verdi, verdirdi. Kendisine de kol gibi girdi. Şimdi çıkaramıyor. Köylü olduğu için aklı çok, fikri kısa!⁸⁶ (Baykurt, 1971:260)

⁸⁵ They set the price differently for each individual. How can you offer two different prices for the product of the same field? Experts set the price at 6 lira for Yarbay Dayı's tobacco, whereas mine is just 4 lira. For God's sake, our fields are attached to each other! We planted at the same time; we harvested the product at the same time. We followed each other's steps, there is no difference between our products! Why does mine cost 4 lira but his costs 6 lira? Can you answer that question?

⁸⁶ Look at the news in those newspapers; they are about our president's brothers. They took money out from the banks and set up a factory. Of course, there would be no point in being the president's

Here the "villager president" is directly addressing Süleyman Demirel who was the prime minister and chairman of the JP at the time. In the period when *Tirpan* was written, Demirel had been implicated in a graft scandal. It was claimed that his brother had taken out a loan from a state bank illegally (Birand et al., 1994). Thus, in addition to the state's neglect of the peasantry and its oppression of the peasants through politicians' clientelistic relations, the state is also accused of corruption

3.1.2 - Domestic and Foreign Capital

Due to the authors' involvement in leftist movements mainly after 1960, their novels also looked at property relations as well as production and distribution relations in this period. In their novels, those who control large land holdings and means of production are portrayed as parts of the dominant classes because they oppress ordinary villagers and exploit their labor. The dominant classes include both agrarian bourgeoisie and local and foreign capitalists, i.e. Turkish and American businessmen. These classes are not considered a force separate from the state, because they occupy important positions within the state. Thus, the authors identify a dominant bloc in which the state and bourgeois class fractions co-operate in the capitalist agricultural development process in Turkey. Though big landowners are the main exploitative and oppressive force facing villagers in these novels, other fractions of the bourgeoisie are allowed to enter the villages and take part in this exploitation and oppression thanks to Turkish-American cooperation. Therefore, the bourgeois class fractions comprise a twofold division of "inside exploiters" and "outside exploiters."

Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* (1959) provides an early example of the literary investigation of property relations. The village of Karataş in the novel was under the command of an *ağa* who had previously owned all the village lands, but then sold his lands to the villagers. As mentioned in the preceding section, since the villagers

brothers if you couldn't use your privilege to set up a factory. Some of it is the president's fault, though; his simple peasant mind does not work enough for that kind of business. I said to him, 'Do not give too much to your brothers.' But he gave them credits. As a result now he is the one who got screwed, he cannot get out of it. After all he is a peasant; he does not have the smarts."

could not afford to buy land, they had to get credit from the state's bank and became debtors. Irazca, one of the main characters in the novel, describes the situation:

Altı yedi yıl oluyor, bey, köyü köylüsüne sattı, parayı cebine attı, gitti. Karataş köyü dört yüz bin lire borç ödedi. Ödedi emme nasıl ödedi? Orasını gel Karataş'a sor. Öküz, inek, dana... Un, bulgur, tarhana... Pazarda para eden ne varsa elinde, sattı. Daha da satıyor. Borç bitmedi daha. Ödedi dediğime bakma. Bey parasını pangadan aldı. Hükümetin pangasından. Panga da bizden alıyor. Bir dünya fayızınan. Bir etek para veriyorsak, temsil, bir etek de fayız tutuyor. Emme, sonunda ektiğimiz toprak bizim ya, yeter.⁸⁷ (Baykurt, 1962:177)

In fact, the villagers are pleased to have these lands regardless of the economic pressure they face as a result, because the old system in which the *ağa* dominated all relations in the village was very difficult for them. As Irazca's son, Kara Bayram, says: "I am glad at least we are no longer sharecropping! What if we were still planting these three furrows and we would have to give half to the *Ağa*. As it is just 20 acres of fallow a year, 20 acres for planting; it would not be nice if we had to share the half of what is left with the *Ağa*... We had had enough with that nonsense."⁸⁸ (Baykurt, 1959:25).

Because the state failed to carry out an effective land reform, not everyone in the village has an equal amount of land. In the new situation, instead of an *ağa*, a few villagers hold large amounts of land. For instance, oppressive characters such as the *muhtar* and Haceli are big landowners in the new situation, in contrast to the ordinary villagers, who have small holdings or no land at all, such as Kara Bayram

⁸⁷ It has been six, seven years now, the *bey* sold the village to the villagers, took the money and left. The village of Karataş had to pay 400,000 lira in debt. The debt is being paid yes, but how? Ask the village, ask how painful was to pay the debt. They have sold everything of value! They have sold the cows, oxen, flour; they have sold bulgur, tarhana... Whatever goods they had, they sold them. They are still selling, by the way. The debt is not finished. The *bey* took his money from the government's bank; the bank takes it from us with a hell of a lot of interest! Let's say we give them a handful of money and the interest comes out as another handful. Nevertheless, we still own the land we plant. I think that is still more important than all."

⁸⁸ "Yarıcılıktan kurtulduğumuz yeter ulan! Ya gene bu üç evleği eksek, kaldırdığımızın yarısını ağaya versek? Yılda yirmi dönüm nadas, yirmi dönüm ekin, ondan kalkanın da yarısını ağa bölse daha mı eyiydi? ... Az çekmedik"

and Irazca. In this novel, the big landowners are portrayed as supporters of the DP; furthermore, their political allegiances, which they establish through their property, give them the right to oppress others in a tyrannical manner. In this novel, because the *muhtar*⁸⁹ and Haceli set their eyes on the land in front of Kara Bayram's house, a struggle arises between them and Kara Bayram's family. They do not exploit Kara Bayram's labor for their own interest, but use violence against him and his family repeatedly. In *Irazca'nın Dirliđi* (1961), a sequence to *Yılanların Öcü*, the *muhtar* oppresses not only Kara Bayram and his family, but all of the villagers, by compelling them to work on his farm. He calls Bekçi Mustafa to send his command to the villagers and says:

Garadaş'ı ev ev dolaşacaksın. Diyeceksin ki, "Muhtarın hepinize selamı var. Yarın bilimüm arpalarını biçtirecek. Her evden bir ırgat çağırıyor. Adam köy için didiniyor. Daha şimdi ilçeden geldi. Mamiren beylerin yanında Garadaş'ın gıradosunu yükseltmek için anası dini ağlıyor. Köylü de onun için çalışsın birez."⁹⁰ (Baykurt, 1961:74)

In this way, he forces the villagers to work on his farm without pay. Thus, while the villagers seem to be freed from feudal exploitation and oppression, they nevertheless suffer under the exploitation and oppression of the nascent agrarian bourgeoisie (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:218).

This point forms a significant focus of the novel and is primarily reflected in the character of the *bey*. Since these novels illustrate the conditions in central Anatolia, where petty commodity production was common, the *bey* employs workers as sharecroppers or shepherds on his farms. He is depicted as more modern than the *ağa* because he has strong relations with urban areas -- sometimes even residing in the city -- and his only relation to the village is that his economic activity depends on his farm there. In other words, he earns income from the village, but his standard of

⁸⁹ "Muhtar" refers to the headman of a village or quarter in Turkish.

⁹⁰ Go to each house in Garadas and tell everyone, "The *muhtar* sends his regards. He is going to get all the barley fields harvested tomorrow and every house needs to send a man to work. The *muhtar* works so hard for the village. In fact, he has just been to the city, he tries hard to make Garadas village better. So, the vilagers need to work for him."

living is closer to that of the city. In Apaydın's *Ortakçılar* (1964), Hilmi Bey is a figure with strong ties to "Ankara," referring to the government. He lives in a modern farmhouse in the village in the rice-growing season and in Ankara for the rest of the year, and schools his children in Europe, but earns his all income by selling the crops from his farm. The novel narrates the period of opposition to the RPP before the DP's coming into power -- Hilmi Bey gives his support to the opposition group -- and starts with the arrival of Sefer, a Village Institute student, at Hilmi Bey's farm. A sharecropper tells Sefer of their working conditions on this farm:

Biz nasıl olacağız bre Sefer? Bilmez misin, sürünüyoruz işte. Baban anlatmıştır, deyyusun yerine ot mu ektik, çeltik mi ektik belli değil. Akşamlara dek doğrulmadan çalışıyoruz. Yarın mahsul kalkınca gelecek Hilmi Beyimiz, bölecek ortasından. Bir de 'şu tohum' diyecek alacak, 'şu bilmem ne' diyecek alacak... Yaz altı ay anamız ağladıktan sonra, bir eşek yükü çeltik sarınıp gideceğiz işte. Yaşamak mı bu bizimkisi? Ortakçı milleti gibi rezil millet var mı o gördüğün yerlerde, ha Sefer?⁹¹ (Apaydın, 2007:26)

In this passage, the story he tells goes beyond Hilmi Bey's farm and describes the working conditions of all sharecroppers, in which they suffer under unequal relations of distribution. Hilmi Bey and his fellow big landowners maintain a high standard of living by exploiting the villagers' labor capacity and their connections with the government or state forces enables this exploitation. Hakkı Bey in Apaydın's *Emmioğlu* (1961) is portrayed in almost the same way as Hilmi Bey. One difference is that the events in this novel occur during the DP's rule and Hakkı Bey is a deputy for the party. He not only pays the villagers less than what their labor merits, but also turns them into debtors. A villager who leads others to become sharecroppers on Hakkı Bey's farm tells their story:

[T]am iki yüz ellişer bin lira borçlanmışız. Hem de yalnız tohum parası! Bunun faiziyle ayrıca elden aldıklarımız hesapta yok. Senin anlayacağın biz hepten battık o yıl.

⁹¹ Sefer, how do you think we are doing? Don't you know it, we are crawling. Your father must have told you, we have been working really really hard on that pimp's field. We work day and night without a break. Soon, our Hilmi Bey will show up and divide the product. He is going to take everything from us, offering several excuses... After working so relentlessly for six months, we will be just left with a bagful of rice. Can you call this living? Do you know anyone more outrageous than a sharecropper.

Uşaklara da her şeyi söyleyemiyorum. Söylesem bırakır emeklerini neyi, giderler köye. ... Uşaklar çalışıyorlar ki sabahtan akşamlara dek. Gene hiçbirinde adama benzer bir taraf kalmamış. ...Ceplerinde zati para yok. Bir tek sigara bulurlarsa üç kişi ortak içiyorlar. Çalışmaktan anaları ağlamış.⁹² (Apaydın, 1961:286)

Such examples as Hilmi Bey and Hakkı Bey, corresponding to the nascent agrarian bourgeoisie, constitute the village novels' points of criticism of the DP's policies. However, this criticism in these novels is not limited to the period of the DP.

The *bey* and the *ağa* figures are consistently seen protecting their privileged positions before and after the DP's time in power. The events in *Turpan*, written by Baykurt in 1971, take place during the JP period. The novel builds its narrative on the oppression of ordinary villagers at the hands of an *ağa* named Kabak Musdu. Kabak Musdu, with his money and large landholdings, establishes close relations with the government and state institutions. He is described in the novel as follows:

Ankara'nın köylerinden koyun kuzu toplar, götürür Et Balık Kurumu'na ya da kasaplara satar. Vekillere, elçilere mor lahana, bal, peynir götürür. Petekli oğul balı bulur. Ankara'daki Amerikan pazarlarından da mal alır, iççilere aktarır. Çankaya köşküne keklik, bıldırcın, av kuşu götürür. Ankara'da bir spor kulübünün onur üyesi. Partinin başkan vekillerinden hovardalık arkadaşları var.⁹³ (Baykurt, 1971:3)

Kabak Musdu's position as *ağa* comes from his possession of all the lands in the village of Evcı, where he exploits the villagers by employing them for no wages. However, the events of the novel occur in a different village, Gökçimen, as his oppression spreads to neighboring villages. The 60-year-old *ağa* decides to marry a

⁹² We have precisely 250,000 lira in debt each. And this is only the price for the seed. The things we later bought with the interest of this are not included. As you understand, we were totally bankrupt that year. I cannot tell the guys everything because if I do, they would just leave the fields... They work from dusk till dawn. They don't even look human anymore... They don't have money. If they find a single cigarette, they share it. Working in the fields consumed them.

⁹³ He brings lambs from Ankara's villages and sells it to the Meat and Fish Institute or to the butchers. He takes cabbage, honey, and cheese to deputies. He finds the virgin honey for them. He buys products from the American bazaar in Ankara and sells them. He takes partridge, quail, and game. He is an honorary member of a sports club in Ankara. He has friends to hang out with who are the party head's representatives.

15-year-old girl and succeeds by means of his wealth. This novel is significant because it suggests that those who hold capital not only exploit villagers' labor but also oppress them in other ways.

The authors do not limit the criticism in their works to exploitative forces such as the agrarian bourgeoisie. They also direct their criticisms at other factions of the bourgeoisie. During the second half of the 1940s, a recovery program within the scope of the Marshall Plan was extended to Turkey and allowed American capital to enter the country. With the help of American funds, Turkey's imports were increased significantly. A significant portion of these imports consisted of agricultural machinery (Keyder, 1987:119). This development affected villages as well as cities because of the ensuing wave of migration from rural areas to urban areas as a result of these labor-reducing technologies. Naturally, this situation was also reflected in the village novels, with American capital being placed on the oppressive and exploitative side of their basic antagonism.

Discussions of foreign capital in these novels coincided with criticism of Turkey's dependence on foreign resources. An early, albeit brief, example of this issue can be found in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, written in 1961. In this novel, Veli Usta, who has migrated from his village to a province, complains about the financial difficulties Turkey faces despite the state's rhetoric of development:

“Yükseldik, kalkındık!... Az zamanda çok iş gördük!...”
Kabara kabara çatlayacağız, Allah etmesin! Ulan yükseldinse yükseldin; ne bağıryorsun? Kime duyuracaksın! Yükselmiş!
Bir yorgan iğnesini yabandan alıyorsun; ne haber!
Yükselmiş! Bir karın ağrısının hapını yapamıyorsun! Yarı
yanın ağanın kumandasında. Okullarında Amerika'nın
süttozu. ... Böyle mi yükseldin?⁹⁴ (Baykurt, 2013:192)

⁹⁴ “We have progressed, we have developed! We have done a lot of things in a short time!...” We are about to burst from boasting, God forbid! Fine [referring to the government], you have progressed; we got it, stop shouting it out? Who is going to hear it? Progressed! You even import your needles! Progressed! You cannot even produce a pill for freaking a stomachache! Half of you are ruled by ağa's; you can only serve imported milk powder in your schools... Is that how you progressed?

Thus, he suggests that as long as the country's development strategies depend on foreign resources, real development will not be possible. While this novel does not attempt an in-depth look at foreign capital, *American Sargısı*, written by Baykurt in 1967, offers a detailed narrative of American capital and its relation to domestic capital and the state. The events of the novel occur in the period of the DP, when migration from rural areas to urban areas accelerated. In the early parts of the novel, a Turkish businessman, Melih Dalyan, and his lover have the following exchange:

-Bu apartmanın kapıcısı kim şimdi biliyor musun? Deliviran köyünün muhtarı. Muhtarlığı bırakıp gelmiş, kapıcılık ediyor. Esenboğa yanlarında bir köymüş. Köylerin muhtarları bile geliyor, ötesini anla.

-Boş ver. Üzme kendini bunlarla. Bizimkiler seviniyor şimdi buna. Sermaye akını artıyor dışardan. Yeni yeni fabrikalar. Montaj sanayisi genişliyor. İşçi bulma zorluğu olmaz diyorlar.⁹⁵ (Baykurt, 1967:10-11)

The last remarks are belong to Melih Dalyan. Those who, he claims, are pleased with the situation are the American officials carrying out the Marshall Plan recovery and Turkish government officials. He is the owner of the company *Yerli Export-Import Taş* and participates in the meetings of the "Aid Mission to the Government of Turkey," working together with American officials. His business is in the mining sector and he wants to expand to other sectors, including petroleum. However, the existing legislation on natural assets is very restrictive for his objectives, so he supports the DP for "its promise of an autonomous economy ... without the interference of bureaucratic control" (Keyder, 1987:118). At a meeting of the aid commission. He says:

Seçimler geliyor! İyi çalışırsak, sağlayacağımız çoğunluk her şeyi düzeltir. ... O zaman Ball tasarısını da kolaylıkla çıkartabiliriz. Petrol tasarısını demek istiyorum yani. Madenler için de harekete geçeriz. Şimdiki mevzuatta

⁹⁵ - Do you know the doorman of this apartment? The old *muhtar* (headman) of the Deliviran village. He left his duty and came here to be a doorman. His village is close to Esenboga. Even the headmen of villages are leaving, it is that serious.

-Never mind, don't bother yourself with these, said the other. People are happy with this situation now. Capital is increasing. We have a lot of new factories. The assembly industry is getting bigger. They say, there won't be any difficulty finding workers this way.

kısıtlama çok. Bunların hepsi oy çoğunluğuyla başarılacak işler.⁹⁶ (Baykurt, 1967:25)

In the time of the DP government, an American expert, Max Ball, prepared a bill, known as the “Ball draft,” which would offer petroleum assets up to the control of foreign companies (Uluğbay, 2009). Since the DP was the main supporter of Ball’s draft, Melih Dalyan, as a businessman worrying about his interests, sides with the DP in the novel. However, the American officials are not as excited about the elections, because they are sure their policies will be implemented regardless of which party wins. As Mr. Boger, the director of the aid mission, explains in the novel:

Ve önümüzdeki yaz Türkiye’de genel seçimler var. Demokratik Parti kazanacak elbet. Biz durumumuzu düşünerek herhangi bir hareket yapmıyoruz. Ama Melih Dalyan ve arkadaşları sıkı çalışıyorlar. ... Kısaca diyebilirim ki, seçimler için endişem yok. Şayet beklemediğimiz bir sonuç olursa, işlerimiz biraz zorlaşır. Ama eninde sonunda bu zorlukları yeneriz. Çünkü Cumhuriyetçilerde de sözü geçer dostumuz çok. ... Türk-Amerikan işbirliğinin ve Marshall planının değerini bunlar da idrak etmektedirler. İsterse Cumhuriyetçiler kazansınlar seçimi.⁹⁷ (Baykurt, 1967:42)

This important passage exemplifies the authors’ political and ideological views. Although their criticisms of the DP are clear in their novels, their argument against the corrupt social order also targets the RPP's policies. The problems they identify are related to the state, not to particular parties. It is the state whose policies favor domestic and foreign capital. In *Amerikan Sargısı*, the aid commission designates the village of Kızılöz as "a model village" for a Turkish-American pilot project (1967:36). This project included initiatives such as the creation of a "Turkish-American Friendship Garden” in the village, the planting of new crops, and livestock farming with modern methods. The choice of village, however, cannot be made

⁹⁶ Elections are approaching. If we work hard, with the majority we gain, we can improve everything... Then we can get the Ball resolution passed. I mean the oil resolution. We can work for mines. And the present legislation limits a lot of things regarding mines. We can change all these with a majority.

⁹⁷ And next summer we have general elections in Turkey. No doubt, the democrats will win. We are not keen on doing anything regarding our situation. But Melih Dalyan and his friends are working hard... In short, I can say that I am not concerned about the elections. If we have an unexpected result, it might make things a bit difficult for us but we can overcome everything sooner or later. Because we have a lot of powerful friends among the republicans... Republicans can appreciate the value of Turkish-American cooperation and the Marshall Plan. So we will not be bothered if the republicans win.

randomly. Behind the scenes, the organizers aim to forestall any possible opposition to Turkish-American cooperation by winning the sympathy of the people:

Bütün köylerde [göç gibi sebeplerden ötürü] bir rahatsızlık var. Bu ratsızlık bir tepki yaratabilir. Böyle bir tepki, iki ülke arasındaki ilişkilere ters bir etki yapabilir. ... Gayet açık olarak biliyoruz ki bir de sol akımlar var ülkede. Büyük işsiz gruplarının kentlerde toplanması, sol akımları işini kolaylaştırır. İnsanlar şu sonuca ulaşabilir: Bütün bunlar Amerikalılar yüzünden oluyor.⁹⁸ (Baykurt, 1967:26)

Although he thinks it is necessary for villagers to move to urban areas to provide labor for the young industrial sector, he points out that an excess labor force in the city and a death of labor in the villages could lead to social problems that would endanger the political and economic power of the bourgeoisie. Thus, the agricultural branch of the aid commission tasked with conducting the pilot project even changes the name of the village to "Güzelöz," because its previous name, "Kızılöz," has leftist connotations.

While the village residents talk in the coffee house, they hear a statement from the Turkish president on the radio. One of them remarks on the president's speech:

Bizim ireysicumhur [Amerika'ya] gittiydi ya, bir akşam ordan konuşma yaptı, burdan dinledik. Vatandaşlarım deyi çok şeyler konuştu. 'Böyük dostumuz Amarika!...' diyor da başka demiyordu. ... Akılda kalmıyor, çok laf etti. Siyaset, Tecaret, Medeniyet... dedi durdu. Maden, tütün, benzin, mazut dedi.⁹⁹ (Baykurt, 1967:151)

Dedi ki, "Biz çok kahraman milletiz. Heçbir vakit savaşmaktan yılmayız." Dedi ki, "Çok maden taşları vardır

⁹⁸ There is unease in every village due to the migration. This unease might damage the relationships between the two countries... As we clearly know that there are leftist movements present in the country. The fact that the unemployed groups might come together in the cities could make the leftists movements get stronger. People might think that the Americans cause these movements.

⁹⁹ You know our president is in the US right now. He gave a speech from there in the evening. We listened to him from here. He said a lot of things. He started his speech saying, 'My citizens.' He kept on saying, 'Our big friend America! ... I cannot remember it all now, but he said a lot: politics, trading, civilization... he kept saying. He said mines, tobacco and oil.

bizim toprağımızda.” Dedi ki, “Yedi iklim, incir, zeytin, pamuk, tütün, üzüm, fındık, fıstık... Heç kimseye değil, ucuz bahalı, hep size satarız. Dahi, alıcı olursanız, toprağımızın altında benzin mazut bulunur, onları da satarız.” Onlar da, “Hay hay!.. Biz Türkün birinci dostuyuz, siz şöyle şöyle kanun yapın aranızda ki, öteki düveller bu işleri kıskanmasınlar. Biz de size büyük makinelerden veririz.”¹⁰⁰ (Baykurt, 1967:158)

In the novel, the villagers do not see their situation as related to the development of their village, as promised by the Americans, but as connected with the president's remarks. Using the privileges of the Turkish state, American officials gain the right to use the country's resources. In fact, this reflects American imperialism, and Turkey is not the only country exposed to it. The US also pushes other underdeveloped countries to accept its methods under the guise of benevolence. After a peasant learns that two of the American officials involved in the project in Turkey, Mr. Buckley and Mr. Boger, plan to go to other underdeveloped countries, he explains the situation to others:

Buckley beyi Hindistan'a yollamışlar. Oradaki okulları pilot puruca yapacakmış. Amerikanın Türkten sonra ikinci dostu Hindistan'ı kendilerine eyice bağlayacaklarmış.¹⁰¹ (Baykurt, 1967:258)

[Boger Bey,] “Ben üç ay sonra Camayka'ya gideceğim. Orada çalışacağım...” [dedi.] Demek bu sefer de orayı dostlaştıracak. Dünnenin tümünü dostlaştıracaklar böyle böyle.¹⁰² (Baykurt, 1967:265)

It is understood from these remarks that the policies being implemented in Turkey will be implemented in other underdeveloped countries. The US will enforce imperialism on these countries in the name of "establishing friendly relations."

¹⁰⁰ He said: “We are a very brave nation. We will never grow tired of fighting. » He also said, “We have a lot of mines in our land, » then he added, “For seven seasons, we grow olives, cotton, tobacco, grapes, nuts, peanuts... We will never sell them to anyone but you. Even if you want to buy our oil, we can sell it to you too.” And the Americans said in return, “Of course, we are the best mates of the Turks. First you need to make legislation so that the other countries will be excluded from this plan. And then we can give you big machines.”

¹⁰¹ Mr. Buckley has been sent to India. They will launch the school programs there. They are supposed to establish an intimate relationship with India, which is Turkey's best friend after America.

¹⁰² Boger bey said that he was going to go to Jamaica to work. That means he is going to befriend them, as well. Apparently, they will go around the world like this, establishing relationships.

In the case of the village in the novel, the Americans ostensibly attempt to change the village's conditions for the better, but end up making things worse for the villagers. The pesticides the Americans give them to use on their farms decrease the fertility of their fields and much of their livestock dies because of the Americans' methods. But while the villagers' conditions are getting worse, the bourgeoisie is strengthening its position. Due to the cooperation between the state and domestic-foreign capital, Melih Dalyan takes an important natural resource in the village, its mine, under his control and sells its coal to American companies. One of the villagers explains this situation:

[D]ediler ki, madenleri deniz yoluyla Amarika'ya taşıyan, bizim köye gelen Melih Dalyan beyimiş. Amerikanın birinci adamı olup bunun sözünden çıkamazlarmış. ... Çok anasının gözü bir adammış ki, deniz papırlarıyla madeni Amarika'ya yıktıktan sonra boş getirmiyormuş geri. Orda ucuz, burda bahalı mallardan doldurup geliyormuş. İki başlı tecaret. İlim bilim, fen, dünneyi avuçlarına almışlar, habarımız yok.¹⁰³ (Baykurt, 1967:148-9)

The cooperation between the state and domestic-foreign capital indicates that the forces aligned against the villagers are organized and, at the same time, encourage disorganization among the peasants. For example, Melih Dalyan and American officials bribe some villagers in exchange for cooperation. Therefore, not only the villager's economic conditions but also their unity is damaged. A villager expresses his concern about this situation to Melih Dalyan:

Valla sizin yaptıklarınız karşısında benim bir şeye aklım ermez oldu. Eskiden kara cahal idim, şimdi kapkara cahal oldum. Amerikanları ardınıza düşürüp geldiniz bu köye. Her şey karma karış oldu. Komşu iki bölük, üç bölük oldu. Millet

¹⁰³ I have been told that Mr. Melih Dalyan is the one who transports [the products of] our mines to America. I heard that he is the best man in America and that people have to do whatever he says... I heard that he is such a clever man that, when he goes there with his ship, he does not come back empty handed. He brings a lot of valuable products back to Turkey. What he does is a two-ended trade. They rule the world, those guys. They know it all, don't they?

paraya alıřtı. Ki, yarın kesilince ne yaparlar bilmiyorum.¹⁰⁴
(Baykurt, 1967:188)

Another novel reflecting this cooperation between the state and domestic-foreign capital is Apaydın's *Define*, written in 1972. In the novel, the villagers of Görekli try to find an ancient treasure, as it is believed that the village was built on the site of an ancient city. They have not found the big treasure yet, but they have found some valuable objects that they have managed to sell to merchants in the city. Recently, an American merchant, named Corc, has come to the village and established close relationships with the villagers in order to buy the valuable objects they find. Corc represents foreign capital in the novel and tries to get particularly close to Seyit Ali, a villager who is determined to find the big treasure. Speaking with other villagers, Seyit Ali says about Corc:

Yalnız altın deęil, antika eřya... Kapkacak, küp, heykel... Hepsi para anladın mı? Bildiđin gibi deęil. Bu benim Corc ehbabım dee... bu iřin adamı. Taa Amerikandan kalkıp gelmiř ki, bu iřlere yardım ede. Bizim hükümetin birinciye gelir dostu. Anladın mı?¹⁰⁵ (Apaydın, 1972:11)

After Seyit Ali and his friends find a valuable statue made of pure gold, Corc, Ziya Bey, a domestic merchant, and Memduh Bey, a deputy of the ruling party, conspire to trick the villagers out of their find. Seyit Ali explains what happens to them:

[Memduh Bey] mahsus yaptı bu iři. Punduna getirip yıktı bizi dü rzü. Ne kuyumcuyu bulabildik, ne Corc ehbabı. Hepsi kayboluverdi ortadan. Nasıl ayarladı yavu? Nasıl bir dü men çevirdi? Kalakaldık ortada. Bu adamlarla uğ rařılmaz Rüstem. Akıl ermez bunların iřine.¹⁰⁶ (Apaydın, 1972:389).

¹⁰⁴ I swear that I am dumbfounded by your deeds. I used to call myself an ignorant man, but now I feel like I am beyond ignorance. You have come to this village with those Americans and you made everything complicated. You divided our neighbors. People got used to money, which is not a good thing, because when there is no money, I don't know what those people will do.

¹⁰⁵ Not just gold, antique goods. Pots, pans, and statues. They are all worth money, do you understand? This friend of mine, George, is the man. He has come from America, just to help with this business. Our government values its friends very much, if you know what I mean.

¹⁰⁶ Mr Memduh cheated us, that scoundrel! We found neither the jeweller nor our friend George. They all disappeared. How did he plan this all, what kind of trick did he play? We could not understand anything, we were just left alone. Rustem, my friend, one should not get involved with those people. One cannot comprehend their dirty business.

These three characters represent the oppressive bloc in the novel consisting of the state, the commercial bourgeoisie, and foreign capital deceive the peasants similar to Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*.

3.1.3- Religion

Men of religion are another significant focus in the village novels due to their connections with the oppressive forces and their critical role in the peasants' submission to an unjust order. In most novels, the place left unattended by the state in terms of contact with the peasants is filled by men of religion¹⁰⁷. Religious precepts are usually seen as the only authority organizing the peasants' lives in the village. In any problems the peasants face in their daily lives, they appeal to men of religion instead of looking for institutional or collective solutions. However, these men of religion do not say anything different from the state or the bourgeoisie because, in the novels, religion collaborates with the other oppressive forces. They indoctrinate the peasants to obey the rules, bow to their fate, and wait for a better world to come in the afterlife. Therefore, rather than directly oppressing the peasants, the men of religion are seen as paving the way for their oppression.

In *Bizim Köy*, Makal titles the section in which he relates a story about the peasants' perceptions of religion "opium" because he regards religious superstitions as having a more potent effect on peasants' lives than anything else.¹⁰⁸ In this section, Makal discusses a religious poem that is commonly seen on the floors of the villagers' houses. For instance, the *muhtar*, with whom Makal met in the village, says of this

¹⁰⁷ Men of religion consist of two main figures who are the *Imam* or the *Hoca*. These two Turkish words refer to religious leader.

¹⁰⁸ It is obvious that Makal's naming of a religious poem in this section "opium" is connected with Marx's remarks on religion. In another book, Baykurt notes that after he wrote *Bizim Köy*, he gave a warning about these parallels: "Yayınlamış olduğum kitapta, sosyalistlerin (komünistlerin demek istiyordu) işine gelecek ve onlara yaraşır kelimeler varmış, onları çıkarıp yerine başka kelime ya da deyimler koymalıyım... Örnek veriyordu: Din konusunda yazılmış bir manzumeye, uyuşturucu, yani 'afyon' diyormuşum..." (Makal, 1965:78).

poem: “You know, what you read on that wall is even stronger than an army”¹⁰⁹ (1950:112). The power of religion over the peasants also constitutes a significant focal point in Baykurt’s novels. In *Yılanların Öcü*, written in 1959, Kara Bayram criticizes the peasants' behavior during the prayer in the village's mosque: “The crowd is swaying like the wheat fields in the wind. They just stand there, without grasping what is going on... They are just standing there. They stand close to each other, like the sheep in a herd, they kneel and their shoulders are down.”¹¹⁰ (Baykurt, 1962:219). The feeling that brings them to their knees is the fear of God imposed on them by religion, and its power makes them motionless. During the prayer, they are lined up like soldiers in Kara Bayram's eyes: “As if you are in the army, you cannot move before you are ordered "Irat". If they do not call out "Irat" for ten years, they would have to wait for ten years there. It is quite similar to the prayer, actually. Whoever came up with the idea of the prayer was a smart person. I think it inspired the military order, too”¹¹¹ (Baykurt, 1962:220).

In Baykurt’s novels, religion makes the peasants stand motionless not only during prayer, but in every aspect of life. In *Onuncu Köy*, İmam Fevzi exercises power over the peasants through religious superstition. In the village, named Yaşarköy, the peasants suffer from attacks by wild birds, which come at a certain time every year. However, the peasants cannot do anything to get rid of these birds because İmam Fevzi claims they are sent by God to show his power. In the novel, the situation is expressed in this way:

Yaşarköy’ün insanları, gökten gelip kendilerini ‘yola getiren’ kuşları bekliyor. Oysa yola gelecek ne halleri vardı? Bu küçücük derenin içindeki çetin dünyaya ayak bastı basalı,

¹⁰⁹ “Şu duvarda okuduğun yok mu, iyi bil ki candarmadan değil, ordudan daha kuvvetlidir.”

¹¹⁰ “Kalabalık, rüzgarda buğday tarlaları gibi dalgalanıyor. Saf saf durmuşlar, dinliyorlar. Saf saf... Ve anlamadan. Koyunlar gibi güzel güzel sokulmuşlar birbirlerine. Diz çökmüşler. Omuzları düşük.”

¹¹¹ “Askeriyenin esas duruşu gibi. ‘Irat!’ demeden kıprıda da bir tanı! On yıl ‘Irat!’ demesin, on yıl dikilirsin öyle. Namaz da ona benziyor. Bu namazı düşünen eyi düşünmüş. Askerliğin esas duruşunu burdan uydurmuşlar zaten.”As if you are in the army, you cannot move before you are ordered "Irat". If they do not call out "Irat" for ten years, they would have to wait for ten years there. It is quite similar to the prayer, actually. Whoever came up with the idea of the prayer was a smart person. I think it inspired the military order, too."

‘Aman günah olur! Aman kabahat olur!’ diye sakına sakına, gülmez, oynamaz, kıpırdamaz olmuşlar. Ömürlerini, yasaklarla, günahlarla çevrili Yaşarköy’de tüketiyorlar. Kimse kimseye kötü söylemediği, göğe taş atmadığı, kediye köpeğe iş kesmediği, aptessiz namaz kılmadığı, kimse Tanrı’ya, devlete, rüzgâra kafa tutmadığı halde, İmam Fevzi Efendi’nin her cuma, ‘Yoldan çıktınız; kuşlar yetmiyor, gökten yılan yağacak, çarpılacaksınız!’ diye başlarını yumruklayıp durması bitip tükenmek bilmiyor.¹¹² (Baykurt, 1961:321)

As can be seen in this passage, the peasants are portrayed as entirely under the influence of religion. Their collective subconscious is composed of religious superstitions (Timur, 2002:158).

In Apaydın’s novels, too, religious ideas encircle the peasants’ lives and restrain them from attempting to improve their conditions. In his novels religion takes over the space that has been left unattended by the state. In other words, religion is important for them because it is seen as the only solution to their problems. For instance, in *Define*, since there is not even a small clinic in the village, the peasants ask for advice from men of religion when they have serious health problems. Although the village teacher tells them they need to go to the district doctor, they are not persuaded. Instead, they take Veli Hoca’s advice. Veli Hoca says:

İyi olur o, iyi olur. ... Öldürmeyen Allah öldürmez. ... İmanınızı bozmayın, gerisini Allah’a bırakın. ... Her şey Allah’tan. Kaza da, belâ da... ... Doktor yaraya ne edecek? Onlar yaraman anlamaz. Hele kırık çıkık varsa, hiç anlamaz. Dereköylü Kırbıyığı getirin. O bi görsün. Biz de okur üfleriz. İyi ederiz Allah’ın izniyle.¹¹³ (Apaydın, 1972:147).

¹¹² Yasarköy's people are waiting for the birds to lead them. But can they really be led? They grew up in this miniature world, being limited by these words: ‘Don;t do this it is a sin, don’t do that it is forbidden.’ The more they heard words, the more paralyzed they became. They are people who don’t laugh, have fun, or dance. They waste their lifetimes in this Yasarköy which is surrounded by ‘do not dos’... Even if no one says anything wrong to each other, no one bothers one another, and no one practices the prayer without ablution, and even if no one opposes God or the state or the wind; the village priest Fevzi Efendi consumes them every Friday with his endless sermons. Emphasizing that they are out of line, that they are going to be cursed by God, and that they are going to be punished.

¹¹³ He will be fine, he will be fine, don't worry. God forbid, he won't die. Don't lose your belief, leave it to God's will. God decides everything; God brings everything, even curses and troubles. ... What would a doctor do with a wound, he would not know. He would not know about broken bones,

A similar situation is seen again in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu*. The peasants give priority to primitive religious solutions over modern or institutional solutions. For the village teacher in the novel, this reflects the fact that they have been left alone with their *hacı* and *hoca* for thousands of years because the state has not concerned itself with their problems (Apaydın, 1975:176). As a result, religious rules have more sway over the peasantry than any kind of law.

Even though religion has such significant power over the peasants, this power is not autonomous from oppressive forces such as the state or the bourgeoisie. In the village novels, the relationship between religion and the oppressive forces takes two forms: Either religious figures support the agrarian bourgeoisie or the state's policies, or religion itself naturalizes the oppression of the peasants by encouraging an attitude of resignation. In Apaydın's *Yarbükü*, for instance, the *hacı* and the *imam* do not have very strong roles in the plot, but it is remarked that they both work for Kocaağa's interests (1959:61). Similarly, Osman Hafız in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* ploughs communal lands without permission, as the big landowner Duranâ does (2013:24). Another similar figure is Şakir Hafız in Baykurt's *Tırpan*. He is one of the most important supporters of Kabak Ağa (2003:13). All of these characters try to convince the poor peasants not to oppose the *ağas'* decisions by exploiting religion, thereby benefiting from the *ağas'* support. Another similar figure is Hacı Kadir in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*, which features a village without an *ağa* or *bey*. Hacı Kadir gives his support to the Turkish-American pilot project implemented in the village. Since this decision is taken by the state, for Hacı Kadir, Turkish and American officers are allowed to change everything in the village regardless of how harmful it may be for the peasants. His well-known words to the peasants are "*ulûlemre itaat!*"¹¹⁴ (1967:174). In return, he is rewarded by the officials for his support.

either. Call Kirbiyik from Derekoy, he is the healer. He will pray for you and you will be better by Gods will.

¹¹⁴ This is a religious phrase mentioned in a verse of the Quran. It means showing full respect to one's superiors after God and his prophet.

Setting aside religious figures, religion itself may become a realm of inequalities and a motive for oppression. In Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü*, Kara Bayram remarks on the arrangement of the peasants in the mosque, pointing out who gets to stand in the front rows while the poor peasants stand in the back:

Mihrabın sağı solu, dağ köylüklerinin zengin hacıları tarafından Arabistan ellerinden hediye getirilmiş taş basması yazılarla donatılmış. Sonra yüksek tavan. Mehmet Hafız, insanı ağlamaklı eden yanık sesiyle Kur'andan parçalar okuyor, dinletiyor. Ön sıralar sallanıyor. ... Ön sıranın ortasında, imamın hemen ardında muhtar var. ... Deli Haceli de muhtarın hemen kıyısında durmuş, düzü! ... Muhtar ırlanıp duruyor. ırlan bakalım çakalın eniği, ırlan! Allahın gözünü boyarım sanıyorsun, he mi? Yavaş gel bakalım! Benden beter, Tebbet'i bilmen, kışını silmen, tutar zarı zarı ırlanırsın Allahın hususî camisinde! ... Yattılar kalktılar, Allahı, Allahtan daha çok, gözle görülür elle tutulur çıkarlarını, basit ihtiyaçlarını düşündüler.¹¹⁵ (Baykurt, 1962:219-221)

Kara Bayram notes that the mosque is decorated with presents from the wealthier villagers. In the prayer those who occupy the front rows are the tyrannical figures who seize the village's lands and persecute Kara Bayram for his opposition to their actions. They are also relatively rich compared to poor villagers such as Kara Bayram and his family. Therefore, the prayer is seen not as "a religious ritual in which people from all strata are in alignment equally" (Kıvılcımlı quoted in Erdoğan, 2009:188), but a symbol of inequality. A similar situation can be seen in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*. The big landowner Duranâ stands behind the imam during the prayer and a villager observes: "Have you noticed how Durâna was swaying behind the priest? That bloody old scoundrel! How can they still call themselves Muslim, while

¹¹⁵ The mosque's mihrab is decorated with calligraphy brought there by the pilgrims from Arabia. Then there is this very high ceiling and Hafız Mehmet recites pieces from the Quran with his sad voice and makes you listen. The people in the front row, swaying with the pleasure... In the middle of the front row, the *muhtar* sits, just opposite the priest... Crazy Haceli is sitting next to the *muhtar*, that dirty scoundrel! The *muhtar* keeps muttering. Mutter, you dirty fox, keep muttering! You think that you can cheat Allah with your muttering? Stop there, you fox, you don't even know the Tebbet prayer. You don't even clean your ass; you mutter and muffle in Allah's own mosque! They look like they are living for Allah, but all they have done is to think about their own good and their own superficial needs.

they are practicing all kinds of obstinacy! I truly think that even the worst infidels are better people than those scoundrels”¹¹⁶ (2013:30).

As seen in these passages, the *muhtar* and Haceli in *Yılanların Öcü* and Duranâ in *Onuncu Köy* are oppressive characters, but they are the closest people to the *imam* symbolically. In another novel by Baykurt, *Tırpan*, the *ağa* Kabak Musdu decides to marry a girl 45 years younger than himself. He persuades her family to agree to the marriage with the help of Şakir Hafız, who argues that the Quran and the hadiths permit such marriages. Then, the wise woman Uluguş says to Şakir Hafız: “You Crazy Hafız, you attributed all the holy books to yourself! You left nothing at all for the poor and needy”¹¹⁷ (2003:101). With these words, Uluguş emphasizes that religion is manipulated by self-interested men of religion for the benefit of the oppressors, not for the peasants.

The most significant critique of religion in these novels focuses on the way it exerts its power by extolling an attitude of resignation. Religion teaches the peasants to resign themselves to their fate because God will ensure that things turn out for the best. The poor peasants should not act against the forces oppressing them and must endure the difficulties they face because God will reward them for their patience after death. In this way, inequalities and injustices are legitimized in the peasants’ minds, making them submissive to the corrupt order. Thus, religion is powerful for both the oppressors and the oppressed peasants: the former's force rests at least in part upon religion, while the latter endure difficult living conditions by drawing strength from their religious beliefs. However, religion is clearly portrayed as enabling corruption and the abuse of the peasants’ rights. For this reason, Irazca in Baykurt’s *Yılanların Öcü* defines villages as “Places where you hear the word ‘Allah’ so many times, whereas his rules are not even mentioned once”¹¹⁸ (1961:38),

¹¹⁶ “Dikkat ettin mi? Bizim Duranâ, imamın ardında nasıl sallanıyordu? Hey gidi kır düzü! ... Olmadık domuzlukları yapıyorlar; adları gene Müslüman düzülerin! Şu köyde kaç düzü biliyorum, kabuklu gâvur onlardan iyi!”

¹¹⁷ “Bütün kitapları kendine yordun deli Hafız! Karıya, kıza, yoksula bir şey bırakmadın!”

¹¹⁸ “Allah’ın bol, şeriatın git olduğu yerler.”

meaning that the oppressors there speak of God, but do not bother to comply with religious rules.

Compared with other oppressive forces such as the state and the bourgeoisie, the authors are bolder in bringing religious figures and issues into disreputation. Although religion has its own divine place, the characters in the novels bring it down from its ethereal realm to the earth by focusing on religious figures' earthly affairs. In most of these novels, religious figures are portrayed as seeking food and drink, not any divine goal. For instance, Ali Hoca in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* comes to pray for Osman's recovery from an illness; however, Osman knows that he really came to eat, telling him: "You rascal hoca, you managed to talk me into it. Look, wife, this Ali Hoca wants to eat here! Cook some dishes. What other reason on earth would make him come to my place other than eating? Prepare the chicken, make some baklava, he will not accept a less worthy meal than that."

Hee he he he... Sonra ha, sonra? Ulen hınzır hoca, yolunu yaptın gene hadi! Bak karı, yemek istiyor bu Ali Hoca. Yemek pişir. Başka niye gelir bize? Tavuk kes, baklava yaz, aşağısı idare etmez ha"¹¹⁹ (Apaydın, 1975:44). Similarly, in Apaydın's *Define*, Veli Hoca comes to pray for a sick person hoping to get some food in return. The villager Seyit and Veli Hoca share the following exchange:

- Bizimkini ayırın. Hoca hakkı... Pilavın dibinden, etin iyi yerinden.

- Elbet ayırırız hocam. Ayıp ettin. Dua eden sen, âmin diyen biz. Hakkın büyüğü sizin.

...

[Hoca,] gideceği sırada geri döndü; Seyit'in kulağına fısıldadı:

- Kelleyle bacaklar ne oldu? Onları bizim eve yollayıver. Hoca emmin paça çorbasını sever. Bilin ya?

- Olur hele, sen merak etme, dedi ağız ucuyle. "Ula hınzır hoca, ona da mı göz diktin? Rabbenaa, hep bana... Gözünü

¹¹⁹ "Hee he he he... Sonra ha, sonra? Ulen hınzır hoca, yolunu yaptın gene hadi! Bak karı, yemek istiyor bu Ali Hoca. Yemek pişir. Başka niye gelir bize? Tavuk kes, baklava yaz, aşağısı idare etmez ha."

toprak doyursun. Sen okuduysan biz de boş mu durduk?
Kelleye de mi göz diktin moruk?”¹²⁰ (Apaydın, 1972:68)

The last words are Seyit’s inner monologue and he describes Veli Hoca not as a contented figure, as men of religion presumably ought to be, but as a greedy person. Another way of demeaning religious figures is to treat them as ordinary people. For instance, in Apaydın’s *Define*, there is a tomb of a saint, named Ballıbaba, to whom the peasants appeal for their wishes or problems. The poor villager Seyit Ali prays to Ballıbaba several times for help finding the treasury in order to get rid of poverty; however, his prayers do not change anything:

Ulen Ballıbaba, millet sana amma çok Fatıha okuyor ha?!..
Ben bile belki bin kere okudum. Tâ çocukluğumuzdan beri,
her gelip geçerken. Bıkmadan, usanmadan... Hepsini
duyarsın öyle ya? Saydın mı kaç olduğunu? Milyon olmuştur
her halde. Eee, ne faydası oldu? Bırak Allahını seversen...¹²¹
(Apaydın, 1972:9).

Even though he acknowledges Ballıbaba’s sacredness, he does not hesitate to dig up his grave when the possibility of the treasure being hidden under his grave occurs to him. After he digs up the grave, he does not find anything valuable and says: “Son of a gun Ballıbaba. Why didn’t you have that gold that I wanted? It was going to save me. Our Saint (referring to Ballıbaba) is a fake one I guess. Prayers never work. I guess he is as poor as me. What a bloody shame!”¹²² (Apaydın, 1972:177). In this

¹²⁰ - Leave my share. It is a hoca’s share after all. Bottom of the rice pilav, best part of the chicken for me.

- Of course we will, my hoca. You say the prayer, we say amen. You deserve the best of it.

...

The hoca, while leaving, turns back and whispers onto Seyit's ear;

- What are you going to do with the head and legs? Send them to my house, will you? I like Paca soup [a soup made from legs], do you know what I mean?

- Yes we will, don't worry, says Seyit Ali, reluctantly. And he thinks, “For God's sake, hoca, you rascal. Nothing on earth can satisfy you! Just being a literate man does not give you the privilege over us! You are not even ashamed of wanting the bloody head of a chicken, you old, shameless, greedy rascal.

¹²¹ So Ballıbaba, people pray a lot for your soul, don't they? Even I prayed, at least a thousand times, when I was a kid. Since I was a kid, every day when I went past here, I prayed for you! I bet you have heard it all don't you? Have you counted how many prayers I have done? I must have prayed a million times... So, tell me why they never worked? Damn those bloody prayers ...

¹²² “Ah ağzına tükürdüğüm, o altın çıkıverseydi, ne iyi olacaktı? Kurtulacaktık be. İş yok bu bizim evliyada. O da benim gibi cıvır... Tüh”

way, he insults the saint's dignity. Ballıbaba is no longer sacred and untouchable, but a poor person like Seyit Ali.

A similar example can be found in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü*, in which Kara Bayram criticizes the imam's sermon in the mosque. The imam, Müslüman Mehmet, continually preaches about patience, sobriety, trusting in God, and waiting for the afterlife. However, Kara Bayram has faced many injustices and he expresses his anger at the imam's sermon in an inner monologue:

Ben öcümü bu dünyada almak isterim. Bugün! Burada! Dostun düşmanın önünde! Benim meselem bu insanlarla, bugünle, burasıyla! Göreceğim adaleti bugün görmezsem onun bir değeri yok nazarımda. Biz de böyle düşünüyoruz bu kötü aklımızla ey Müslüman Memmet! Sen ayakta ve yokarda, biz oturmuşuz ve yerde! Sen âhireti kendine garantilemiş, sen Allah'ın siperine sinmiş, sen ağustos ayında Peygamberin gölgesinde seriin, biz, zayıf ökümüzü zayıf ineğimizle kağnyaya koşup sap çekeceğiz diye tozlu yollarda perişanız! Terliyoruz. Yanıyoruz. Derimiz kavlayıp kalkıyor. ... Fakat biz bugünün konuşulmasını istiyoruz. İn, in! Yere in! Yanımıza! Yanımızdan konuş. Atma oradan, yüksekten!¹²³
(Baykurt, 1962:220)

Thus, Kara Bayram portrays the *imam* as standing on a high place while the peasants stand on the ground. He becomes the voice of the poor peasants who work under difficult conditions and calls on the imam to come down from his high place and stand beside them. In this way, Kara Bayram attempts to symbolically eliminate the hierarchical distance between the imam and the poor peasants.

¹²³ I want my revenge, in this reality, right now! Here, in front of everyone! My business is to do with today, with these people, and with this place! If I don't see the justice today, it is no longer justice for me. So, you Muslim Memmet, that is what we think with our incompetent minds! You are standing above and we are sitting below! You think you guaranteed Heaven and you are living under Allah's wings and resting under the prophets' shade in summer. While we are struggling on the dusty roads to plough with our thin oxen! We are sweating, we are burning... Our skin peels... But we still want to talk about today. Come down; come down from your ivory tower. Come down to our level and stop talking from high up there!

3.1.4- Intellectuals

In the village novels, intellectuals do not directly oppress the peasants or exploit their labor, but they nevertheless become part of this oppression and exploitation by ignoring the peasants -- or more generally the people's -- problems. The topic of the intellectuals is alluded to by referring to the literate sections of society, consisting of urban intellectuals, who never visit the villages and do not know the conditions the peasants face, and the teachers in the village,¹²⁴ who are not fellow villagers but come to the village only because they have been appointed there.

Urban intellectuals do not feature as character in the village novels. Rather, they are addressed in the words of the novelist and other characters, such as the village teacher and the populist intellectuals who support the peasants. It is true that they do not directly harm the peasants, but they are unable to fulfill the duty that is given to them by the enlightenment principles of the Republic. As can be seen in Makal's *Bizim Köy* written in 1950, this issue constitutes a focal point in even the initial works of the Institute graduates. While he is explaining the peasants' working and living conditions, including himself with them, he poses this question to the intellectuals:

Akşam oldu. Eve geldik. Yarın burçak yolmaya gidilecek. Bir süre de oraya devam gerek. Alinyazımızın çarkı ömürlerimizi öğüterek bin yıl önceki gibi dönüyor, dönüyor...

Ah bu durumu anlatacak kudret olsa kalemimde! Sanatkârlarımız nerede? Onların gözleri görmeli bu sahneleri... Sel gibi akan terlerden ne şaheserler meydana gelirdi.

Yakup Kadri 'Yaban'da köy gerçeğine şöyle bir dokunacak olmuştu, kıyametler koptu, Türk köyüne iftira etti, diye. Türk köyünü hâlâ 'Çoban kaval çalar ânın-hayatî şairanedir' mısralarındaki levhayla düşünenler bu memleketi

¹²⁴ The teacher in the village refers to the urban teacher appointed to the village. This figure is totally different from the village teacher, who is known for his closeness to the peasants and his participation in village life. For further information about the village teacher, see chapter 3.2.2.

tanımıyorlar, onun gerçekleriyle hallü hamur olmadıkça köyü bildiğimizi iddiadan, onun adına avukatlık etmekten vazgeçelim bari.¹²⁵ (Makal, 1970:48)

In this passage, Makal points out the intellectuals' mentality in terms of looking at the realities of the village from the early years of the Republic to the 1950s. Since Kemalist ideology, as well as conservative and national-conservative ideologies, proclaimed the village and the peasantry to possess the national essence (Bora and Erdoğan, 2003:634), discussing the harsh reality of an Anatolian village could be perceived as a national threat in this period. In fact, the criticism directed at Makal after he wrote *Bizim Köy* was similar to that faced by Yakup Kadri in the 1930s. Makal was "maligned for presenting what some considered an unnecessarily sordid view which was damaging to the national image" (Rathbun, 1971:16).

Since *Bizim Köy* is not a novel, Makal criticizes the intellectuals in his own voice. Other authors' criticisms, however, can be found in the voice of characters such as village teachers or populist intellectuals. These criticisms are, nonetheless, similar to those of Makal and focus on the intellectuals' neglect of the peasants, calling on them to acknowledge the realities faced by villagers. For instance, the village teacher in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* expresses his anger at the intellectuals by stating, "The thing that most upsets me is the ignorance of the intellectuals on this issue!"¹²⁶ (2013:196), meaning that they do not say even one word against the DP's dominance over and manipulation of the peasants. Another example is Doctor Suphi in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu*, who compares the intellectuals of the Republic with those of the Ottoman period in terms of their apathy toward the people:

¹²⁵ In the evening we came home. We will go to harvest some vetch tomorrow. We will work there for a while. Our wheel of fortune is whirling and whirling, grinding our lives...

How I wish I could have the ability to put this situation thoroughly in writing! Where are our poets? They should see what is going on here... They would compose poems on the sweat of those poor workers.

Yakup Kadri happened to write about the reality in the villages, on his book *Yaban*. It created a big fuss! They said he insulted Turkish peasants. But those who think of the Turkish peasant as having an easy life, playing his flute happily in the woods, are wrong. We should stop assuming that kind of thing, unless we actually open ourselves to see the truth.

¹²⁶ "Beni asıl üzen aydınların vurdumduymazlığı!"

[H]alkımız devletten ve aydınlardan hakkı olan yakınlığı görmüyor. Osmanlı aydını neyse Cumhuriyet aydını da aşağı yukarı o. Zaten onların yetiştirilmesi. Halkla gerçek bir inilti kurulamıyor. Değilse bizim halkımız sanıldığı kadar yoz değil. İnanabilse, güvenebilse, hemen ardından gelecek. Hazır... .. Bence bütün suç aydınlardadır. Hepimizin birer yüzü karadır. Hiç birimiz görevlerimizi tam yapamıyoruz.¹²⁷
(Apaydın, 1975:175-177)

In this passage, the intellectuals are portrayed as acting like the state in terms of their negligence of the people. For Timur (2002:162), after Apaydın explains the unequal production and distribution relations from which the peasants suffer throughout the novel, it is not possible to lay all the blame for their plight on the intellectuals. It is true that the words of the doctor, which are included in the story while he is treating his patient, seem puzzling in the context of the plot. But, at the same time, these remarks indicate that the author felt the need to place a discussion of the intellectuals in the novel.

The village novels also include characters who highlight the differences between intellectuals and peasants, in addition to the former's neglect of the latter. Gezici Hamdi, an education official in the province, defines intellectuals as “*yandan sürmeler*” in the sense of their remoteness from their origins:

[O]nlar bu milletin yandan sürmeleri! Muhallebi çocukları! Güllerin, tüllerin içinde piş piş büyümüş onlar! Çoğu anasının südüyle değil, emzikle, inek südüyle yetişmiş. Korkak, pısırık, nazik! Pardon mösyö, vıy madam! Biraz okumuşlar, Londra, Paris gezip tozmuşlar; ama bilmezler senin Sarıkızlı'nı, Tozak'ını, halkı, milleti. Bilmezler dört mevsimin ayrı çilesini. Yazın susuz tarlalarda, kışın çamur yollarda, suların böldüğü köprülerden düşe uça; yarlardan, yamaçlardan yuvarlanarak; kanadı kırılıp yollarda kalarak; iki çuval buğdayın nasıl ekilip biçildiğini, nasıl kasabaya

¹²⁷ Our intellectuals and government are not interested in the people. Intellectuals of the Republican Turkey are quiet similar with the Ottoman intellectuals of that time. The way that they are educated causes this problem. They cannot have a proper relationship with the people. But our people are not as illiterate as those intellectuals think. If they believe and if they trust in something, they would go for it. I think the intellectuals are to blame. We all should be ashamed of it. We are unable to fulfill our duties.

ulaştığını, fırında ekme olduğunu bilmezler. Karıları, kızları, hem de kendileri sanır ki biz aylık alıyoruz, fırıncılar para kazanmak için hamuru pişirip camekana diziyor. Onun için böyle dans oyunlarıyla, bordo şaraplarıyla vakit geçirirler...¹²⁸
(Baykurt, 2006:324)

In fact, Gezici Hamdi formulates an implicit distinction between the peasants and the intellectuals. One of the important terms that defines the peasants is "work": They produce the materials that make life possible. In order to produce, they must work under difficult conditions. In Gezici Hamdi's example, in order to produce two sacks of wheat, they work in dry and muddy farms, fall from cliffs, and suffer other indignities in the village. The intellectuals, on the contrary, seem to live as parasites. They neither work nor know how to produce the necessities of life. Whereas peasants produce flour and bakers bake bread, the only thing the intellectuals do -- like all non-working parts of society -- is eat it. In other words, they live on the peasants' labor, but are not actually interested in them.

As noted above, the village novels do not feature intellectuals who come to the village or condescend to speak to the villagers. This does not mean, however, that villagers never come across the mentality of such intellectuals. The characters that exemplify this kind of intellectual mentality are the teachers in the village who are not villagers, but come from the cities. These characters would never have come to the village voluntarily. Moreover, after they arrive, they never establish close relationships with the peasants; rather, they insult them and try to find ways to get out of the village. In Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, one of the villagers describes such teachers as "strangers" and complains that they do not want to stay in the village, talk with the villagers, or make an effort to educate the village's children (2013:251). Similar sentiments are expressed in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*. The teacher Nurten

¹²⁸ They are the disconnected parts of this society. They were brought up with roses and pampered well! They have been raised with cow's milk and pacifiers, not with their own mothers milk! They are cowardly, fainthearted! Pardon Monsieur, Qui Madame! They are educated, they have been to Paris and London but they are ignorant about their own country and its people. They don't know how hard to work on the fields. Each season has its own hardship. They don't know how much those people work to make bread. They don't know how much the workers struggle just to harvest two bags of wheat to make bread. Every one of them thinks that we are paid monthly, the baker cooks the dough and puts it in there to make money. That's why they spend time dancing and drinking their Bordeaux wine...

comes to the village for mandatory service and she has no desire to stay there. A villager says about her:

[Köye] yeni bir öğretmen verdiler. Kadın bir öğretmen. Adı da ya Ayten'di, ya Nurten. ... İlk gelişinde yarım gün durdu, okula bir girip çıktı, 'Ben gidiyorum,' deyip gitti. On gün sonra bulundu geldi. Yarım gün durdu, bir daha gitti, beş gün sonra geldi.¹²⁹ (Baykurt, 1967:257-258)

Moreover, when she stays in the village, she does not even talk with the villagers. When one of the villagers stops her to engage her in conversation, the following dialogue ensues between them:

“Dur hele bakalım, Nurten Hanım! Biz seni köyümüzün hocası biliyoruz, bebelerimizi yolluyoruz. Yapma bakalım böyle. Evlerimize buyur. Kadınıımız kızımız gelirse tersleme, bu köylüyle geçin sen...”

“Yok! Zeki bey beni buraya altı aylığına yolladı. Ankara'nın okuluna alacaktı, bir yıl geçti, almadı. Tatilden sonra gelmeyeceğim. Durmayacam ki köyünüzde, ne karışayım içinize?”¹³⁰ (Baykurt, 1967:260-261)

Nurten was appointed to the village after its original teacher -- a village teacher -- was relieved of his duties by the state because he opposed the Turkish-American cooperation project in the village. Since the village teacher is close to the villagers and is willing to help solve their problems, when the villagers encounter the teacher Nurten, they remark: “So we understood that there are teachers, and there are the ones who pretend to be one!”¹³¹ (Baykut, 1967:261).

¹²⁹ The government brought a teacher to the village, a woman. Her name was Ayten, maybe Nurten... When she first came, she stayed half a day, just looked at the school and said, 'I am leaving,' and she left. Then she was found, 10 days later. She again spent half a day and went. And she came five days later.

¹³⁰ "Stop here Miss Nurten! Aren't you our school's teacher, we send our children to you. Don't act like this. Visit our houses, don't insult our wives and children, get on well with these people... "
"But no, Zeki bey sent me here for six months. He was going to attain me to an Ankara school, there has been a year. I am not going to come after the holiday. I am not going to stay in your village, why would I bother mingling in."

¹³¹ “Öğretmen varmış, öğretmencik varmış, şimdi anladık!”

Another example of this aloofness toward the villagers is the teacher Suna in Apaydın's *Define*. In addition to her distant attitude, her insulting manner is more explicit in this novel. The village teacher İdris recalls that Suna refused his proposal because of his village roots:

Dereköyü'nde çalışan Suzan öğretmen teklifimi reddetti. Ben köylüymüşüm. Köylüyle evlenmezmiş. Çok incitti bu söz beni. Beğenmiyorum, desin. Köylüyle evlenmem ne demek? Okullarda hiçbir şey öğrenmemiş mi bu kız? Köylü ayrı bir sınıf mı? Ayrı tür insanlar mı? Ne hakkı var köylüyü küçük görmeye? ... Şimdi nerede çalışıyorsun a densiz? Kimin ekmeğini yiyorsun? Hatta şehirde yaşarken kimin ekmeğini yedin? Bütün ihtiyaçlarımı sağlayan insanlar kimler? O beğenmediğin köylüler değil mi? Onları bu durumda bırakanlar da senin gibi kökünden kopmuş züppeler. Nankörler!¹³² (Apaydın, 1972:108)

Similar to Gezici Hamdi in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, mentioned above, İdris notes that Suna eats the bread the peasants produce, but simultaneously insults them. İdris defines Suna and those like her as “*kökünden kopmuş züppeler*,” characterizing them as snobs, similar to Gezici Hamdi's “*yandan sürmeler*.” Also, for İdris, this mentality of Suna and her type of literate people is responsible for the peasants' poor social conditions. In general, urban intellectuals are portrayed as not doing what is necessary for the peasants; in other words, although they are capable of addressing the peasants' problems, they choose not to do so. They are not directly connected to the state, but they end up adopting the same attitude of indifference.

However, some of these novels also feature teachers in the village over whom the state's influence is more apparent. Such teachers come to the villages due to a state decision. Therefore, they work under the state and reflect the state's education

¹³² The teacher Suzan who works in Dereköyü refused my proposal. She said that I was a peasant and that she would not marry a peasant. I was really insulted by that. It would have been better if she said that she did not fancy me. What does it even mean to say ‘I won't marry a peasant’? Did she not learn anything at the school? Are the peasants a different class? Are they different people? Why is she looking down on us? (Referring to her) Where do you think do you work now you tactless person. Whose bread are you eating now? Even when you are living in the city, you ate the bread that us peasants made. Who do you think provide for your needs? Aren't them those peasants that you don't like? We are in this situation because of snobs like you. You ingrate!

policies, which do not take the educational needs of the peasants into consideration. For instance, this kind of attitude can be seen in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı* in the teacher Ertan, who is brought to the village as part of the Turkish-American cooperation project.¹³³ As is common in portrayals of this kind of teacher, he is marked by his insulting demeanor toward the peasants. The novel's narrator introduces him in this way:

“Köylüler çok geri. Tezeğin toprağın içindeler. Pişirdiklerini yemek mesele! Bir de kaba insanlar ki, insan gibi tartışmayı bilmezler. Hemen kavgaya dökerler işi. Maden olmasa, bir hafta kalmam burada.” [diyordu]. Ama sabretmesi gerekiyordu. İngilizceye çalışıyordu. Lise bitirmelere hazırlanacaktı. Bırakacaktı köy öğretmenliğini. Bir fakülteye yazılacaktı. Sonra Amerika'ya gidecekti. ‘Master’dan sonra ‘Ph.D’ yapacaktı. ... Hem canım, köyün geriliğinden ona neydi? O kendi planlarına bakardı. Dünyaya bir daha gelecek değildi ki!¹³⁴ (Baykurt, 1967:199)

What keeps him in the village is the mines, because he is participating in the mineral exploration process being conducted there by Turkish-American companies. One of the peasants says of him, “Mr. Ertan found a mine. Thanks to the Americans, he is operating this mine with Mr. Melih and registered it under his mother’s name”¹³⁵ (Baykurt, 1967:179). Thus, Ertan is portrayed as thinking of his own interests instead of making an effort to educate the peasants.

Another character who reflects the state's negative education policies is the teacher Hüseyin in Baykurt's *Tırpan*. He is an incompetent person, but that is the kind of

¹³³ The inclusion of a teacher with "imperialist" tendencies in the novel is related to the authors' criticism of the Ministry of National Education's adoption of American principles. Makal's summarize's this criticism: "[E]ğitimi eğitimlikten çıkaranlar, özel sektörcü kitaplarla işbirliği eden ... Amerikalıların ve Amerikanlaştırılmışların elinde bulunan Eğitim Bakanlığı [ilgilileridir]. Üç Amerikalı uzmana danışa danışa program taslağı hazırlayan Şube Müdürünü gördüm de Türklüğümden utandım. Bu bir dehşettir" (1965:71).

¹³⁴ “Peasants are very backwards. They live in dust and mulch. I would refrain from eating what they cook! And they are so rude, they don't know how to discuss things, instead they create big arguments. If it wasn't for the mine, I wouldn't spend a week in here” he said. But he had to be patient. He was studying English and he was going to take high school finale exams. He would go to a collage and maybe to US. He would do her masters and then her PhD... Now that He has seen how backwards the peasants are, he decided not to care and just think about his own plans. He thought, you only live once..!

¹³⁵ “Ertan Bey bir maden arayıp bulmuş, Amerikanlar sayısında bu madenin gaytını validesinin üstüne yaptırıp Melih beyin yardımıyla işletiyor.”

person the state sends to teach in the villages. Not just remote villages, but even villages close to the capital city are full of this kind of teacher. His description by the novel's narrator is as follows:

On dokuz yaşında bir vekil öğretmen. Lise üçten takıntılı iki yıldır. Birkaç torpil bulup öğretmen vekilliğine atandı. ... Habire derse çalışıyor. Cebir kitapları, test kitapları getirtti, kurşunkalemle sarı deftere boyuna denklem kuruyor, çözüyor, yanlış doğru işaretliyor. Lise bitirme verip üniversite sınavlarına katılacak. Puan tutturabilirse Hukuk Fakültesine yazılacak. Adı öğretmen! Başkent'in uzak yakın pek çok köyü, böyle öğretmenlerle dolu. Ne TÖS'e giriyor, ne öteki sendikalara. ... Okulun yanındaki eve kapanıyor, köy içine çıkmıyor.¹³⁶ (Baykurt, 1971:235)

The teacher Hüseyin has neither adequate teaching experience nor any ideals of teaching or enlightening rural children. Rather, he thinks that the peasants' lives are restricted to the farm or to work in the factories if they migrate to the cities, so he only teaches them enough for such work. He does not believe education can change their lives (Baykurt, 1971:236). In fact, it is hard to define such a character as an intellectual, but he is the only literate person in the village. As such, he is the most intellectual character the peasants can encounter given the intellectuals' lack of interest in them.

3.2- Friends of the Peasants

3.2.1- Good People in Corrupt Institutions

Even though the antagonistic relationship between the oppressed and the oppressors in society pervades the novels written by village institute graduates, it should be noted that this is not an impervious antagonism. In other words, characters

¹³⁶ He is a 19-year-old substitute teacher. He has been trying to pass the third year of high school for two years. With the help of a few people he knows, he now works as a substitute teacher... He is constantly studying; algebra books, test books... He is constantly solving math problems, making equations. After finishing high school he will go to a college. If his score is good enough, he wants to study law. But he is a teacher here! Most of the villages of the capital are full of this kind of teachers. They neither belong to unions nor Turkish Teachers Association... They live secluded in the houses next to the school and never mingle in the village.

representing the dominant bloc against the peasants, such as state personnel, can also be seen siding with the peasants. These figures are portrayed as populist characters who take the initiative to help the peasants in their struggle against state policies and big landowners.

These populist characters consist of *kaymakams*, doctors, and education officials. They constitute “the good among the bad. One of the well-known characters of the village novels, Irazca, says in *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*:

Gine dünyanın yarısı eyi... Kötülerin yamacında eyiler var. Arayıp soruyorlar, insanın gönlünü alıyorlar. Gamını kederini dağıtıyorlar. Gecelerin yanında güzdüzler, gışların yanında yazlar. Allah'ım kötülerin yanına da eyileri koymuş güleşdiriyor.¹³⁷ (Baykurt, 1961:168)

Irazca makes this remark in reference the *kaymakam* in this novel. In the story which starts with *Yılanların Öcü* and continues with *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*, the *kaymakam* is known for his support of the poor peasants, such as Irazca and her family. While he is coming to the village, Irazca crosses paths with him and tells him about the *muhtar* seizing the land in front of her house and his violence against her family because of their resistance to his decisions. The *kaymakam* believes her story and annuls the *muhtar*'s decisions. He has the following inner monologue when he encounters the *muhtar*:

Öyle köyler, öyle karşılamalar gördük ki... Öyle oyunlara geldik ki... Biz hiçbir numarayı kolay kolay yutmayız artık... Bundan sonra... Biz çiydik, piştik... Kördük, açıldık... Uyuttular, uyandık. Ve biz, adamın yüređini parça parça eden, yedi kurşun yemiş gibi kanlarını akıtan bir halde, Irazca'yı dinledik... Irazca'ya inandık, iman ettik... Yalansız... Dolansız... İvansız, garazsız... Şimdi sen bırak şu sahte karşılamaları... .. Sen de Irazca gibi soy şu sahteliklerini... Şu

¹³⁷ I can say, at least, half of the world's population is good... There are good people alongside bad people. Good people call sometimes and ask how we are doing, which is very nice. Makes you feel happy. As the sun under the rain clouds, Allah put some good people alongside the bad ones and they are constantly fighting.

eğreti pis yüzü at adamsan... At da gel yanıma...¹³⁸ (Baykurt, 1962:189)

In *Irazca'nın Dirliği*, the struggle between Irazca's family and the *muhtar* -- along with his collaborator Haceli -- continues despite the *kaymakam*'s interventions. However, this time the *muhtar*'s son and Haceli's brother attempt to sexually assault Irazca's grandson. Here, too, Irazca appeals to the *kaymakam* for help. Because the *kaymakam* supports her again, the *muhtar* uses his connections with the DP to have the *kaymakam* reassigned to another village. When the *kaymakam* comes to the village to notify Irazca that he must leave, he sees Irazca's heartfelt sadness and hopelessness about the situation. He says of his feelings at that moment:

Hey gidi hey! Kulakların bunları duymalı, gözlerin de görmeliydi Müsteşar bey! Köylü romantizmi diyordun. Bak bakalım öyle mi?... Ben sevgi diyorum, onlar romantizm diyorlar! Hey gidi hey! Hey gidi benim çilesi uzun, insanları mahzun, mahzun, mahzun memleketim! Sevenlerinin futbol topu gibi oradan oraya tekmelendiği memleketim!¹³⁹ (Baykurt, 1961:188)

As the *kaymakam* explains, in the existing social order, serving or loving the peasants is not compatible with the his mission according to the state authorities; rather, such motives are perceived as peasant romanticism.

Similar to the *kaymakam* in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* and *Irazca'nın Dirliği*, the *kaymakam* of Karakaş in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* is a populist character. He understands the peasants' difficulties and supports them against the big landowners. However, his attitude results in his reassignment, like the *kaymakam* in Baykurt's novels. A villager in the novel says of him:

¹³⁸ We have seen so many villages and so many welcomes... We have experienced so many tricks and games so we can never fall for tricks anymore. We have matured, our eyes are opened, we have woken up. And we have listened Irazca's sad story. We believed in her and worshipped her. Without any lies or games. Now, leave this flamboyant welcoming aside and leave your false face like Irazca does. Leave your dirty mask aside and come as you are...

¹³⁹ Mr. counselor, you should have seen this, you should have heard this! You called it 'peasant romanticism' and now come and see if it really is? I call it love, they call it romanticism! My dear suffering, lonely country! Oh my country, where the lovers are insulted and played like a football!

Hökümet adamları içinde bir Karakaş kaymakamı gördüm bizden yana. O iyiydi işte. ... ‘Benim elimde yetki olsa sizin tütününüze yirmi lira veririm, ... [ç]ünkü sigara olunca altmış liradan satılıyor, bunun yirmi lirası niye sizin cebinize girmesin’ dedi. ... Şikâyet ettiler de başka yere sürdüler. Ağaların hoşuna gitmemiş. Onlara sert davranmış. Onlara sert davranmıyacakmış. Çok okumuş emme bunu anlayamamış gözünü sevdiğim Karakaş kaymakam. ... Fakırdan yanaydı canım, açıkça söylüyordu. Dediğine göre kendi de fakır çocuğuydu. Fakır çocukları okuyamaz emme bu nasıl olduysa okumuş.¹⁴⁰ (Apaydın, 1975:49)

As can be understood from the villager's remarks, people like the *kaymakam* of Karakaş are rare; nonetheless, they do exist within the state cadres. These stories in Baykurt's and Apaydın's novels suggest that the *kaymakams* work under an order ruled by the dominant classes, so when they do not serve the interest of these forces, they are removed (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:229).

Even though the education system does not value rural education, some education officials in the village novels recognize that the way to the development of the country passes through the education of the peasants. Such officials are aware that not only the education system, but all of the state cadres are in the hands of those who think only of their own interests and neglect the popular masses. One of these characters is Müfettiş Kadri in Apaydın's *Define*. When he comes to the village, he is not content to inspect the village school; rather, he learns about the peasants' problems from the village teacher and tries to solve them by talking to all of the peasants. The main problem is the peasants' unauthorized search for a treasure they believe to be buried in the village. Although the peasants could not find the big treasure, they found some valuable objects and sold them to an American merchant. Müfettiş Kadri warns the peasants against doing this and becomes angry with them because of their ignorance. But when he sees the peasants' bad conditions and their desperation, he comes to understand their actions. He tells the village teacher:

¹⁴⁰ Among the government's men, the Karakas *kaymakam* used to stand on our side. He was good... He said ' If I had the power, I would pay 20 lira for your tobacco my friend, because a carton of cigarettes costs 60 lira now, you should be able to earn 20 lira of it' and they complained about him and they exiled him... *Agas* did not like him! He was being supposedly rude to them. They called him ill minded just because he supported the poor and said it out loud. He comes from a poor background himself. Normally, poor children cannot go to school but he somehow managed.

Adamlar haklı vallahi. Çaresiz kalmış, her şeyi yaparlar. Bu adamın işi gücü olsa, kazancı olsa, yarınına güvense, ne gider define arar, ne de götürür yabancıya satar. ... Hem biliyor musun, kodamanların yaptığı yanında bunlarınki nedir? Hiç... Define arayıp bulacak da, satacak da, üç beş kuruş kazanacak. Çok sade kalıyor bunlarınki. Çok küçük kalıyor¹⁴¹ (Apaydın, 1972:228-229).

He is also aware that the state and its bureaucratic cadres are already enmeshed in graft and corruption: “They are all the same my friend, he said. They talk very big and they talk highly about the country but in reality, all they care about is filling their own pockets. Starts from the villages *muhtar* and goes up to the high level. I know it all, corrupt rascals”¹⁴² (Apaydın, 1972:225). For him, in comparison to such corruption, the peasants' unauthorized and self-interested attempts to free themselves from their bad conditions can be seen as reasonable. Thus, in spite of being a state education official, Müfettiş Kadri takes the peasants' side.

Gezici Hamdi in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar* is a similar education official. He is the head of the districts' secondary school. He does not spend his time in "city clubs," which are only open to their own members not to the ordinary peasants. Instead, when he finds the time, he goes to one of the nearby villages. He is a typical populist character who, though not a villager himself, takes off his jacket and works alongside the peasants on their farms, speaks like them, and adopts their problems as his own and tries to solve them. Like Müfettiş Kadri in Apaydın's *Define*, he criticizes the state's policies: “The supposedly educated say that our country is doing great, but it is all an illusion! Yeah, they are doing great but it is only for them! Ankara always gives the wrong statistics”¹⁴³ (Baykurt, 2008:83).

¹⁴¹ They are desperate, they could do anything. If this man had a job and a salary, he would not be searching for a treasure chest to sell to a foreigner... And to be honest, rich people do a lot worse... This guy goes, finds the treasure and tries to sell it. Sounds like a lot of work with no guarantee to earn just a few lira. You can't compare this with what the rich does, really.

¹⁴² “Bunlar hep böyledir kardeşim, dedi. Söyledikleriyle yaptıkları birbirini tutmaz. İri iri konuşurlar, memleket, millet nutku çekerler, el altından da keseleri doldurmaya bakarlar. Köy muhtarından başla, git yukarı doğru, bilirim hepsini.”

¹⁴³ “Elinde yasa olanlar, kalem olanlar ... [k]alkınıyoruz, kalkındırıyoruz diyorlar, hepsi palavra! Ancak kendilerini kalkındırıyorlar! Ankara habire istatistik kabartmayı biliyor!”

Gezici Hamdi is the most remarkable figure in the village novels in terms of his clear vision of an ideal social order. He classifies the prevailing segments of society in three basic layers. The first layer is “*yandan sürmeler*,” who are disconnected from the people and the powerholders in the current order; the second layer is “*daldan eğmeler*,” consisting of populist officers and intellectuals like him; and the third layer is “*kökten sürmeler*,” the peasants and workers who constitute the root of society. According to him, though power is in the hands of the non-working dominant classes, the ones who produce life are the working masses, the peasants and workers. He suggests that, since the peasants and workers carry the weight of life on their shoulders, they should be in power instead of the non-working and self-interested dominant classes:

Saffet Bey değil, şu yataktaki Rıza bakan olacak! Rıza kim? Halis kökten sürme! Tozaklı. Topraktan öğrenip kitapsız bilen.¹⁴⁴ En dayanıklı granit. Yağmur geçmez, soğuk geçmez! Kaymakamın yerine de Sırrı Bey'i değil, seni, Sarıkızlı köyünden İlyas'ı oturtacaksın. Bütün valiler, kaymakamlar, bakanlar, böyle işçiden, köylüden olacak! Beni de hepsinin başına başbakan yapacaksın anasını satayım; bak o zaman nasıl tıklar tıklar yürüyor işler!¹⁴⁵ (Baykurt, 2006:325)

For him, the populist state officers or intellectuals who stand by the popular masses, i.e., “*daldan eğmeler*,” will play an important role in the period of transition to such an order. These good people in corrupt institutions have relations to both sides of the basic antagonism. They have institutional ties with the state and an emotional ties with the peasants. Therefore, in order to change society for the better, they should struggle within the state on behalf of the peasants.

¹⁴⁴ This sentence is the same as Nazım's verse describing the Turkish peasant as learning from experience, not from books.

¹⁴⁵ Not Mr. Saffet, this guy Rıza, the one in the bed, should be the governor. Who is Rıza? He is from Tozak. He learnt from experience, not books. He is one tough person! İlyas from Sarıkızlı village should be district governor. All the management in the countryside should consist of local people. And make me the president of all and see how smoothly things will work in here my friend.

In the village novels, doctors also tend to be significant figures who support the peasants. Although they do not go into great detail on this issue, in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı* and Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* it is mentioned that poor peasants are deprived of adequate treatment in public hospitals. The doctors insult them and do not prioritize their treatment. However, two doctors in the village novels depart from such an attitude and make an effort to help the peasants. One of these is Doctor Ahmet in Baykurt's *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*. After Kara Bayram is beaten by his enemies in the village, he stays in the hospital in the city. During his treatment, Doctor Ahmet is friendly to Kara Bayram and listens to his problems. Kara Bayram tells his mother, Irazca, about the doctor: “Doctor Mr. Ahmet treats me well, Mum! He knows peasants’ conditions”¹⁴⁶ (Baykurt, 1961:178). The doctor, who knows the village conditions and understands Bayram's problems, also helps him to stay in the city and find a job.

Doctor Suphi in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* is another such figure. Like Doctor Ahmet, Doctor Suphi does not hesitate to help his patient, Osman, in every situation. He is neither a villager nor closely acquainted with village issues; however, he knows the conditions of the country through his patients. He comes across many people who are poor, exhausted by work, and not supported by any institution (Apaydın, 1975:174). Because of such testimony, he keeps his mind on the people's problems. In a dialogue with the village teacher, he says:

Halkımız mutlu olmadan hiçbirimiz mutlu olamayız dostum. Her şey yarım kalır, eksik kalır. Ben burada votka içerken, döner yerken... .. Halk orada yiyecek ekmek bulamıyorsa, kahroluncaya kadar çalıştığı halde insanca bir hayat süremiyorsa, bunlar benim içime sinmez. Boğazımda dizili kalır. İnan ki mutlu değilim.¹⁴⁷ (Apaydın, 1975:173-174).

¹⁴⁶ “Tektur Amat bey benimle çok iyi ana! Köylük hallarını biliyor.”

¹⁴⁷ We cannot be happy without our people, my friend. Nothing would be complete then. I mean, I can drink vodka here and eat a kebab. But the people in there cannot even find bread, and they cannot even live a decent life even if they work their guts off, then, my consciousness won't allow me to enjoy this meal.

Doctor Suphi diagnoses Osman's disease not in any medical terms, but as "tobacco exhaustion," because Osman has lost his mind amid the hardships of harvesting tobacco that is undervalued by the state. For him, what peasants like Osman need more than any medical prescription is the care of the state and intellectuals. However, the state works for the happy few, not for the masses:

Bakıyoruz, politik kavgalar da hep yukarda. Sen ben kavgası. İsmet Paşa demiş ki, Menderes demiş ki... Halkı pek ırgalamıyor bunlar. Zaten partiler arasında fazla bir fark yok. Ha o gelmiş, ha öbürü. Hangisi gelirse gelsin, halkın yaşamında fazla bir etkisi olmayacak. Bence sorunu şöyle koymak gerekir, devlet halktan yana mı, yoksa varlıklı küçük bir azınlıktan yana mı? Bütün şu çalışmalar, tarım, sağlık, eğitim, ticaret, sanayi, imar... aklına ne gelirse say, kimin için? Kim yararlanıyor bunlardan? Yoksul halk değil elbet. Küçük bir azınlık yararlanıyor. Oysa Kurtuluş savaşından sonra kurulan devlet halkın devleti olacaktı. Halkın yaşamını düzeltecekti. Giderek yozlaştırdılar, halktan uzaklaştırdılar. Halk dağda belde gene dayanaksız tutanaksız kaldı. Yaşamında hiçbir değişme olmadı. ... Bu neyi gösterir? Devletin halka hâlâ ulaşamadığını gösterir.¹⁴⁸ (Apaydın, 1975:175-176)

As has been mentioned previously, like the state, the intellectuals also leave the people to their fate. Although the roles of doctors in the village novels are not as critical as those of the education officials, they still show that even in a social order that does not work for the sake of the peasants, some doctors understand the peasants' conditions and do their best for them.

¹⁴⁸ When you think about it, all the political rivalries are high level. It is you or it is me kind of ones. İsmet Paha said, Menderes said... This is not the people's cup of tea'... Political parties barely differ from each other anyway. Doesn't matter which one is in charge, they won't make a big change in the people's life. I think what we should ask here is that 'does the government support the people or does it support the rich minority'. All the things they do with agriculture, health, education, trading, industry... Who does the government do them for? Who is actually taking advantage of those developments? The answer is clearly not the poor people, my friend. It is just the small rich minority. But the state that was established after the War of Independence was promised to be the people's state. The people's way of livingswere promised to go to be better... But they corrupted it in time and they fell apart from the people. The people were left without any support and nothing improved in their lives... What does this show? It shows my friend, the state is unable to level up with the people.

Even though state personnel such as the *kaymakams* and education officials take the peasants' side in the village novels, the big landowners, the bourgeoisie, and men of religion are almost never seen standing by the peasants. One exception is the American character Bobby who supports to the peasants in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*. In this novel, Bobby is a member of the Aid Mission to the Government of Turkey, which represents the foreign capital positioned in the state. However, he does not like the other members of this commission and establishes close relations with the peasants. One peasant says of Bobby:

Wayt bey, ahırın başına Bobby deye bir Amerikalı dikti bu işler için. ... Bobby güleç, eyi oğlan. Çat pat bizim dili anlıyor. ... Tiksinme, iğrenme nedir bilmiyor. ... Bu Bobby oğlanı komşular da sevdi. ... Ankara'dan ekmek yimek getirmiyor. ... Karakavuk, yemlik otunu, madımak aşını bile yiyor. İşte bu oğlan bizim köyü fet eder. Böyle dedim içimden.¹⁴⁹ (Baykurt, 1967:283).

Bobby not only establishes close relations with the peasants, but also realizes the true motives of his fellow commission members who come to the village by way of the Turkish-American cooperation project. He is aware that Melih Dalyan, who has taken the lead of the pilot project, is using his position on the Aid Commission to prospect for his mine company and that such characters as the teacher Ertan, brought to the village by the Aid Commission, have become shareholders in Melih Dalyan's company. He also blames the Turkish state for not protecting the peasants, saying in his broken Turkish: "The villagers don't have money much... The government should give you credit. But the rich take all the credit, very wrongly"¹⁵⁰ (Baykurt, 1967:286). Furthermore, he criticizes the other American officials' attitudes toward the peasants, as well as the idea of developing the village with American techniques:

Alay eder bir halimiz var bizim bu insanlarla. Biz ne sanıyoruz geri kalmış toplumları? Tâ baştan beri mi geriydi bunlar? Sürüne sürüne mi geldiler bugüne? Çok belge, çok

¹⁴⁹ Mr. White put an American in charge of the stables, he is called Bobby. Bobby is a nice smiley boy. He can understand Turkish a bit. ... He is not repelled by us. ... And this Bobby is liked very much by the villagers. ... He doesn't bring any food from Ankara, he eats our local herbs. And this guy can even conquer our village, I thought to myself.

¹⁵⁰ "Köylünün elinde yoktur para. ... Vermek lazım kredi size hükümet. Fakat kredileri kapışır parti zenginleri.. çok yâniş!"

işaret var ki, dün böyle değillerdi. Bugün böyle oluşlarının da bin bir sebebi var... kendi içlerinde ve dışlarında!¹⁵¹ (Baykurt, 1967:307)

Boby is the only American character portrayed positively in the village novels despite the fact that he is a rather unrealistic character. Nevertheless, he reflects the authors' attitudes toward issues associated with the US. The authors do not promote xenophobia against American people or institutions; rather, they are strictly against the development strategies of the Turkish government, which rely heavily on American resources and open the country to American imperialism.

3.2.2- The Village Teacher

Since each of these authors is also a village teacher, the character of the village teacher in their novels represents the missions that the authors take upon themselves in their own lives. As has been noted above, "the village teacher" differs from "the teacher in the village" by his organic roots in the village. Whereas the teacher in the village comes from the city and is only appointed to the village for a short period, all the while trying to find to get back to the city, the village teacher is a fellow villager and gains his skills in the Village Institutes, so he does not hesitate to establish close relations with the villagers or to struggle on their behalf. Due to his education in the Village Institutes, he is able to combine "work" and "intellect." He is thereby able to motivate the villagers to seek a better life. This character is the most progressive figure in the novels and his main duty is "awakening the peasants."

The mission of awakening the peasants is carried out by way of teaching the village children not only how to read and write, but also how to exercise their rights. This duty is not restricted to school, but extends to the entire village -- and even to society as a whole. The village teacher is seen taking responsibility for every issue in the

¹⁵¹ Do we look like we are having fun with those people? What do we think of the backwards societies? Do we think that they have always been backwards? Do we think they came to this point, crawling? There is a lot of proof that, they have not always been in this condition thus there are a lot of reasons why they are backwards like that today... There are a lot of internal and external reasons.

village, whether it is related to land struggles, water problems, planting, or local disputes. He takes all problems in the village as national problems, so that fighting to solve them is, in fact, a fight for the nation. For instance, Eđitmen Rıza in Baykurt's *Kaplumbađalar* explains his educational principles as follows:

Her köye bir eđitmen, öđretmen yollayabildik mi, Türk'ün düşmanları fesatlığından çatlayacak! Hem de sadece A'yı, B'yi deđil, işi gücü, hak sormayı, hak almayı bellecek eđitmenler! Köylerin düşüncesini açacak, uyandıracak. O zaman milletin yüzüne kan, dizine can gelecek...¹⁵² (Baykurt, 2008:49)

Although the village teacher in these novels is deeply committed to his duty, his task is made difficult by two important factors. The first is that the villagers sometimes are not willing to follow the village teacher's ideas or solutions. This issue is linked to the peasants' illiteracy and unquestioning commitment to religious ideas. The second is the state's pressure on the village teacher. Since the state constitutes a force against the peasants, when the village teacher gets support from the peasants and mobilizes them for a struggle against reactionary forces such as big landowners or men of religion, he is reassigned to other villages.

In Apaydın's novels, the relationship between the village teacher and the villagers is marked by disagreement. The village teacher in *Sarı Traktör* is already a villager and does not hesitate to spend his time with the peasants, helping them work on the land in the harvest season (Apaydın, 1972:82). However, when he supports the introduction of new technology in agriculture, such as tractors¹⁵³, with which the

¹⁵² As soon as we are able to send a teacher to every village, our enemies will die from envy! And those teachers will not only be teaching the alphabet, they will teaching basic human rights and decency as well. And only then , our nation will be happy, healthy and whole...

¹⁵³ It is the first and only situation in which tractor find support from the village teacher in the village novels written by the institute graduates. Since the increase in the imports of tractors and the process of spreading them to the villages was marked by the DP period (Keyder, 1987:119), the tractor in particular and mechanization in agriculture with the help of foreign aid in general is criticized by the writers. Therefore, Apaydın's narrative of the tractor coinciding with the DP's discourse (Türkeş, 2001: 217) was confusing; however, it could be understood from the novel that since the hardships of nature on the peasants marked the village novel in the 1950s, the tractor was presented as a solution to the struggle between nature and the peasants more than constituting support for the DP's policies.

peasants are unfamiliar, there is a disagreement between him and the villagers. When the village teacher gives his support to Ârif, who wants his father to buy a tractor because he is suffering from the hard working conditions on his farm, his father İzzet accuses him of sowing divisions in his family, saying: “Leave it alone, bloody teacher! You set father and son against each other!”¹⁵⁴ (Apaydın, 1958:49).

Although the role of the village teacher in *Sarı Traktör* is limited to his closeness with the peasants and his support for new technologies that make the peasants' work easier, the village teacher in Apaydın's *Define* is drawn more clearly in terms of his mission in the village. He becomes involved in every problem in the village, such as the poverty of the peasants, the premodern conditions they live in, their search for treasure in order to deal with their poverty, the domination of religious superstitions, the *muhtar*'s self-interested actions, and the American character who comes to the village and establishes close ties with the peasants in order to get money for himself. İdris is so worried about these issues that he loses sleep thinking about them. He says to himself:

Sayı say derler. On bine kadar sayı sayıyorum, gene uyuyamıyorum. Bu köyün sorunları bende uyku bırakmıyor. Ölümüm bundan olacak her halde. ... Zavallı insancıklar. Köstebek hayatı yaşıyorlar. Kim bunun sorumlusu? Yok mu bundan kurtulmanın yolu? Var, olmaz mı? Hem de pek kolay. Dümdüz. Ama kimilerinin işine gelmiyor. Köylünün bilgisizliği, yoksulluğu onların yararına oluyor. Aslında değil, ama onlara öyle geliyor. Köylüyü hızlı bir gelişme yoluna sokmakan ödleri patlıyor. Çünkü işleri bozulacak o zaman. Ememeyecekler, somuramayacaklar. İç somurganlar, dış somurganlar. Bir ölünün gövdesine yapışır gibi yapışmışlar. Bırakmıyorlar. Gece böcekleri!..¹⁵⁵ (Apaydın, 1972:108-109)

¹⁵⁴ “Bırak be öğretmen. Babayı oğlunu birbirine katıyorsun sen!”

¹⁵⁵ They say counting helps. I count till 10,000, but I still cannot sleep. This village's problems keep me awake. I think I am going to die from this burden... Poor people, they live like mole. Who is responsible for that? Is there any way to get away from this problem? Of course there is, and it is very easy and straight. But the means has no benefit for some people. Those kinds of people prefer villagers to be illiterate because they assume they benefit from this illiteracy. They are scared of putting the villagers under a proper education and enlightenment process because they fear that, their business will be spoiled then. They fear that they will not be able to suck the blood of the villagers

Whenever he attempts to explain to the villagers the deeper causes of their poor conditions or warn them about situations that may turn out badly for them, he is dismissed with remarks like “It is none of your business! Go mind your own. Go tend to your children’s education!”¹⁵⁶ (Apaydın, 1972:148) or “This teacher is a good guy. But he minds everyone else’s business. Why do you care about people’s excavation efforts?”¹⁵⁷ (Apaydın, 1972:76). Even though he is often exhausted by the peasants' negative reactions, he never gives up his struggle to awaken them. Like İdris, the village teacher Sefer in Apaydın’s *Tütün Yorgunu* complains about the impossibility of explaining to the villagers the exploitation and oppression they face at the hands of society's powerholders (1975:174). In Apaydın's novels, the inability of the village teachers and the villagers to reach consensus is explained by way of the latter's illiteracy. However, the peasants' illiteracy is not an ultimate cause, but is itself a result of other causes. The peasants are not illiterate by their nature or totally unconscious; instead, the oppressors and exploiters keep them in ignorance. Therefore, the village teacher in Apaydın's novels sees the villagers as illiterate -- for example, portraying them as “moles” refers to this characterization -- but he also knows their illiteracy is not their fault. Thus, the village teacher's negative and positive attitudes towards the peasants are interwoven. In *Define*, İdris complains about the the peasants' taking the *hoca's* advice instead of his, saying: “In every subject, the villagers and the *hoca* would have the opposite opinion, but every time, the villagers ended up doing what *hoca* wanted”¹⁵⁸ (Apaydın, 1972:148). However, Sefer in *Tütün Yorgunu* understands why they give more credence to the *hoca* than the village teacher: “Those people have their thousand-years-old history as their heads, their *hoca* and their *aga*. They don't have anyone else closer to them than those traditional local authorities. They cannot be expected to trust the others”¹⁵⁹

anymore. There are internal slugs, and there are external slugs. They stuck on like slugs and they wouldn't let go.

¹⁵⁶ “Sen karışma. Git işine. Çocuğunu okut!”

¹⁵⁷ “Şu öğretmen iyi adam. Lâkin her şeye karışıyor. Sana ne elin definesi, kazısı?”

¹⁵⁸ “Hep böyle oluyordu. Her konuda karşı karşıya geliyorlardı. Köylüler de her seferinde hocanın dediğini yapıyorlardı.”

¹⁵⁹ “Halk bin yıllık ağasıyla, hacısıyla hocasıyla başbaşa. Kendisine ondan yakın kimse yok. Öbürlerine nasıl inansın?”

(Apaydın, 1975:176). It is understood in this passage that it is the state and its policies that leave the peasants alone with their problems so that the peasants are inclined to follow a traditional approach determined under the force of the *ağa* and religious principles.

The obstacles facing the village teachers' attempts to awaken the peasants are not limited to the peasants' unwillingness to listen to them. Since the big landowners do not want the peasants to be awakened and the state collaborates with them, there is also pressure on the village teacher from these forces. While speaking with a doctor in the city, Sefer in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* explains this situation: "We are under pressure. We are being beaten up in different ways. When a person is over the line a bit, all the troubles come and find him. You know there are many examples of that"¹⁶⁰ (Apaydın, 1975:177). This point is underlined more directly in Baykurt's novels. Although Baykurt's discourse on the peasants parallels to some extent that of Apaydın, he is more optimistic about the peasants' support for the village teacher. The village teacher must spend hours explaining to them how they are oppressed and the necessity of struggle against oppressive forces, but in the end he succeeds in winning over the peasants. Therefore, the main obstacle to the village teacher's struggle comes from the big landowners and the state's policies, not from the peasants. For instance, in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*, the peasants do not like the village teacher Cemal Hoca at first, on the grounds that his religious beliefs are lacking -- as they say in the novel, "*diniyesi gevşek*" (1967:54). However, they change their minds after Cemal defends the villagers against the Americans who come to the village with the help of the state. However, since the Americans and the Turkish state personnel are irritated by Cemal's reactions to their policies and the peasants' support for his ideas, Cemal is appointed to other villages by the state. While the village teachers in Apaydın's novels continue with their struggle without significant support from the peasants, Cemal, in Baykurt's novel, is also adamant about struggling for the peasants. But the important difference is that the peasants

¹⁶⁰ "Baskılar altındayız. Çeşitli yollarla köstekleniyoruz. Biraz ileri gidenin başına gelmedik iş kalmıyor. Pek çok örnek var, biliyorsunuz."

take Cemal's side (Baykurt, 1967: 173). This is illustrated in a dialogue between Cemal and the peasants following his reassignment:

‘Bunlar çıktı, köyün tadı kaçtı. Gül gibi bir öğretmenden olduk en sonu. Var mıydı bu gidende bir eşin benzerin? Öğretmen lafı geçti mi seni gösteriyorlardı. Ben bu dünnenin içine sıçayım!’

‘Yaktılar seni Cemal Oca!’

‘Yaksınlar! Yana yana olacak! Yanmalarımız belleyecek karanlığın anasını!..’¹⁶¹ (Baykurt, 1967:253)

Cemal’s fate is the same as another village teacher in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*. This novel tells the story of a man who has become an itinerant village teacher thanks to the frequent reassignments forced on him by the state. The novel's title, “The Tenth Village,” playfully refers to a village that becomes home to all the honest people dismissed from the other nine villages. The village teacher explains the situation as follows: “This village is our tenth village! There are a lot of villages in the world. The ones that think and talk right, the ones that know how to say no, and the ones that dare to challenge the sick system, you all come and gather here... And the yes men, you however, you all go there, you go backwards...”¹⁶² (Baykurt, 1961:334). The village teacher comes to his tenth village because he opposes an *ağa* who has seized the villagers’ land in a village and a *bey* who has forced the peasants to work on his land in another village, and because he succeeds in mobilizing the peasants against these oppressive forces. After the peasants stand against the *ağa* and the *bey* thanks to the village teacher’s efforts, these oppressive figures begin to regard him as a threat to their interests, so they use their relations with the state's personnel and institutions, including the gendarmerie, to have him removed. Therefore, accusations such as “He is a teacher! He shall teach his children!”¹⁶³ (Baykurt, 1961:167) and

¹⁶¹ “They came here and everything changed for the worse. And at last, we lost a good teacher. You were unique and you stood out from the crowd. To hell with it!” said the villager.

“They destroyed you teacher Cemal!” added the other.

“Let them do it” Cemal hoca continued “We will illuminate this darkness with our fire!..”

¹⁶² “Burası bizim Onuncu Köy’ümüzdür artık! Dünyada köy çok. Doğru düşünenler, doğru söyleyenler, olmaz deyenler, kafa tutanlar, dikine gidenler buraya... Uysallar, evetçiler, oraya, geriye.”

¹⁶³ “Bu bir öğretmendir! Okulda oturup çocuğunu okutsun!”

“You shall not interfere with this burden that is not yours!”¹⁶⁴ (Baykurt, 1961:184) do not come from the peasants, as in Apaydın's novels, but from the gendarmerie or other state personnel. Furthermore, though the village teacher works under the state, every time he seek his rights, he is ignored by the state authorities. He explains his feelings about this in response to the prosecutor who informs him about his reassignment:

Kaymakam, Milli Eğitim Memuru, Parti Başkanı, hepsi beni bıraktı. Güçlüklerin ortasında yapayalnız kaldım. Kimse üstüme kanat germiyor. Kimse kuvvet vermiyor. Üstelik, yasa güvencelerinden yoksun bırakılıyorum. Oyuncak gibi, ordan alınıp oraya atılıyorum. Şimdi o köye benden sonra gidecek arkadaş ne yapacak? Yeni gideceğim köyde ben ne yapacağım? Yüzlerce, binlerce köyde, yüzlerce, binlerce arkadaşımız değersiz birer piyon gibi harcanırsa, memleket ne yapacak?¹⁶⁵ (Baykurt, 1961:188)

These words which Baykurt puts into the mouth of the village teacher are, in fact, the reasons behind the establishment of the TÖS. In those times, the main argument advanced by Baykurt and the other institute graduates was that the state institutions - - even the Ministry of National Education -- did not protect teachers' rights and that the TÖDMF was insufficient, as well; thus, the TÖS was established to take a more radical approach to such issues (Kaplan, 2002:165).¹⁶⁶

Whether struggling against the peasants' traditional mentalities and state pressure, as in Apaydın's novels, or primarily against state forces and big landowners, as in those by Baykurt, the village teacher's mission remains particularly significant in all of

¹⁶⁴ “Sana ait olmayan belaya ne karışyorsun?”

¹⁶⁵ The district governor, the national education officer, and the party's president, they all left me. I am stranded all alone, in the middle of all this hardship. No one is helping me and neither am I supported by any law. I am being thrown away like a doll. What will the next teacher do here? And what will I do in my next village? What will this country do, if they keep wasting teachers all around?

¹⁶⁶ Baykurt describes not only village teachers but all teachers in the country as "şamar oğlanları," meaning “whipping boys,” at the hands of the the state in his book Şamar Oğlanları (1976). This is a compiled work in which Baykurt gathers up his writings about the problems of teachers. In it, he states that the teachers were not the only ones who faced such pressure; rather, the workers, the peasants, the students and the intellectuals were also subjected to it (1976:10)

these novels. However, the emphasis on this mission reaches a critical point in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*. In this novel, the story of the village teacher is identified with that of Prometheus. Both are poor and try to take light from the powerful and give it to the powerless. The village teacher tells the story of Prometheus to the peasants in every village he goes to:

Tanrılar ışık denen nesneyi hapsedmişti. Akşam olunca insanlar, karanlığa kalırdı. Uzaklardan bakınca, her yer karanlık görünürdü. Sadece Olimpos'un başı, bir çiçek demeti gibi ışıktı. Promete diye yoksul bir adam, ışığı çalıyor... Oadaki, deredeki köylere koşup 'Alın, bu ışıkları, parlatın!...' diyor. Ovada nokta nokta ışıklar başlıyor.¹⁶⁷ (Baykurt, 2013:325)

Olimpos'ta Zeus, o koca Zeus, ayakyoluna çıkıyor. Bir bakıyor, ovada ışıklar! Komşu evlerde, uzak köylerde! Habire de çoğalıyor! Akli başından gidiyor! Donunu toplayıp koşuyor. ... [A]damlarını çağırıp, 'Bunu, Kafkaslar'daki kayanın başına çivileyin!' diyor. 'Zincirle de bağlayın! Bir kartal gelip ciğerini gagasın! Yaraları hiç kapanmasın!...' ¹⁶⁸ (Baykurt, 2013:160-161)

The interesting point in this passage is that the peasants are portrayed as waiting for a power to awaken them. The power awakening the peasants, which refers to "Prometheus" in the village teacher's words, is described by the peasants as a "plucky rooster" ("acar horoz"). This rooster, they say, will crow at the peak of Mount Ararat and awaken them. Since both Prometheus and the rooster are identified with the village teacher, he is portrayed as a "*mehdi*" because he is a symbol of hope for the peasants (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:242). Later, after many reassignments, the village teacher is dismissed from his job and starts to work as a blacksmith in one of the villages. However, state pressure follows him and he is forced to move to another village, where he lives as the "*delâ*" which means "crazy *ağa*," as a title of respect, because he gives up his jobs but not his mission of awakening the peasants (Tatarlı

¹⁶⁷ The Gods captured the thing called light. In the evening, everything had to be dark. When you look from afar, everything looked dark. But just the head of Mount Olympus that looked so light. So this poor man Prometheus, steals the light... And he runs to the villages around and says ' take these lights and make them shine!'. And the light begins in the land, one by one.

¹⁶⁸ Zeus, that big Zeus goes to the toilet in Olympus and sees the light in the land, multiplying. He goes mad and runs around... He calls his men and tells them, 'Nail this Prometheus to the Caucasus Mountains and chain him. Let an eagle come and bite his chest and let his wounds never heal!...

and Mollof,1969:241). He devotes himself to his mission no matter how many different jobs he is obliged to take up, saying: “For me... they are all the same! Same purpose! The purpose is to enlighten! What a big word, bringing the light down from Olympus”¹⁶⁹ (Baykurt, 1961:213). This comparison with Prometheus is the strongest form of tying the village teacher to his duties. Moreover, in this example, even when he is not allowed to do his job, he still tries to find ways to awaken the peasants. Although the other village teacher figures in the village novels are not as striking as the village teacher in *Onuncu Köy*, they are all characterized by their struggle, which is generally portrayed as the search for the “utopia” proposed by the institute graduates that saves the peasants and improves society through education (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:214).

3.3- The Peasant

Since the institute graduates wrote their novels to make the peasants' voices heard, they placed special emphasis on describing the conditions of the peasants and where they stood in the social structure. These novels adopt two approaches to describing the peasants. One is a negative description, according to which the peasants are passive agents deprived of the social, economic, and cultural means to free themselves from the corrupt order. They constitute the poor and oppressed majority in society; however, they are incapable of using their collective will. The other description is a relatively positive one, in which the peasants are presented as aware of this unjust order and imagine resisting it or actually struggle against the oppressive forces by standing together. But these two seemingly contradictory portrayals of the peasants are interwoven. This means that they are still passive agents; but they nevertheless imagine ways toward freedom in spite of their inability to pursue such a path, or they take the risk of struggling against their oppressors even though they are defeated. Therefore, the broader picture portrays peasants as standing on a treshold, rather than being entirely passive/impotent or active/powerful

¹⁶⁹ “Benim için ... [hepsi] bir! Amaç bir!... Nerde bir? Evet, bir... Amaç, ortalığı ışıtmak! Ne büyük söz... Işığı Olimpos’un başından indirmek.”

agents. It is poverty that is presented as a primary determinant of this in-between position.

Often, in the first kind of description, the peasants are compared to weak animals such as sheep, worms, and moles. For Kara Bayram in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü*, the peasants resemble sheep in the way they stand together during the prayer without understanding anything (1962:219). Similarly, Şoför Kerim in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*, who has migrated from his village to the city, tries to explain why migration to cities is increasing, saying: "Peasants are like a herd of sheep. One sheep walks in front and the others follow him"¹⁷⁰ (1967:14). Another character, İtten Korkan Hüseyin in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, who is an ordinary villager, describes the peasants as "worms upon which everyone steps"¹⁷¹ (2013:278). For the wise old man Kır Abbas in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, the peasants resemble moles:

Köylü dediğin bir köstebek. Toprağı burnuyla eşiyor. Yörüyor görmüyor. İyi kötü yiyeceğini buluyor. O kadar. Yiyeceğini insan, insan olmadan da buluyordu. Kör köstebek daha tatlısını, daha güzelini, yeşil bostanı, çeşit çeşit üzümleri, elmaları, payamları bilmiyor. Görmüyor ki bilsin!¹⁷² (2008:151).

The village teacher İdris in Apaydın's *Define* makes a similar comment, stating: "Poor people, they live like moles"¹⁷³(1972:109). All of these characterizations of the peasants are used to signify the peasants' passivity.¹⁷⁴ However, they are

¹⁷⁰ "[Köylüler] koyun sürüsüne benzer. Önden yürür bir koyun. Ötekiler onu izler."

¹⁷¹ "ayak altında sürünen, herkesin üstüne basıp geçtiği birer solucan"

¹⁷² A peasant is basically a mole. He digs the earth with his nose. He walks and walks, without actually seeing anything. He finds his food and that is all. A human has always been able to find his food, even before completing its evolution. Blind mole, he does not know about better, more beautiful, greener and does not know about all the different grapes, apples and almonds. How could he know, he is bloody blind!

¹⁷³ "Zavallı insancıklar, köstebek hayatı yaşıyorlar."

¹⁷⁴ In fact, Institute graduates are not the only ones who portray the peasants as passive agents. From Kemalist intellectuals to conservatives, the passivity of the peasants constituted a recurring theme. For instance, Yakup Kadri mentioned the passive and backward villager in *Yaban* as a defect and put the blame on the urban intellectual (Rathbun, 1972:82). As for conservative intellectuals such as Remzi

rendered passive by several factors. One of these is the state's neglect of the peasants. In Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*, a villager describes the peasants as shoes on the government's feet: "Peasants are like a pair of shoes that the government wears... Whenever it remembers it's wearing them, it kicks them on the ground"¹⁷⁵ (1967:161). In this way, he emphasizes that the state depends on the peasants but does not regard them as important. It remembers the peasants whenever it wants.

Another cause of the peasants' passivity is the overwhelming power lined up against them. Çolak Osman in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* stresses this issue by saying: "We are unable to do anything. We are powerless, disrespected, and ignored. Even if we make our way to the government, we would not be able to tell our problems. They have lawyers, they have the wife and they have their chiefs. Who would listen to little old us?"¹⁷⁶ (2013:229). "They" in Çolak Osman's words refers to the oppressive forces consisting of the *bey*, the state, and intellectuals. Against them, the peasants have no defence, as the novel's narrator explains: "They neither have any ideas nor tools to get rid of the burden they have. All they do is to accept it and be quiet about

Oğuz Arık and Nurettin Topçu, the passiveness of the peasants arising from their religious beliefs was sanctified and it was necessary to protect these beliefs (Bora and Erdoğan, 2003:632;638). Compared with these two views, although the institute graduates' works are similar in terms of portraying the peasant as passive agents, they have prominent differences. First of all, for the institute graduates, urban intellectuals are responsible for the passivity and backwardness of the peasants, but they are not alone in such responsibility. In other words, the state and the bourgeoisie take primary responsibility for the peasants' conditions. Therefore, the focus is placed on the oppression and exploitation of them, rather than their backwardness. Secondly, the passiveness and conservatism of the peasants are not sanctified, in contrast with the conservative intellectuals. Rather, they are totally against the peasants' passiveness arising from their religious beliefs and they argue that it should be immediately changed into a situation in which they are free from religious chains. Thirdly, as a point common to both Kemalist and conservative intellectuals, since the peasants do not discover their hidden potential by themselves, they are in need of the support of a reformist figure (Bora and Erdoğan, 2003:639). For such Kemalist figures as Yakup Kadri, this is the urban intellectual, whereas for the conservatives he is "*hak için cihat açan inkılapçı*." It is possible to argue that the institute graduates agree with the idea that the peasants are incapable of realizing their potential by themselves and someone must guide them in that way; however, in the opinion of the institute graduates, this person is the village teacher. In contrast to the urban intellectual and "*hak için cihat açan inkılapçı*," he is of the peasants but due to his education he becomes a villager intellectual and makes an effort to awake the peasants.

¹⁷⁵ "Köylü dediğin hükümetin ayağında bir babıç. ... Bir babıç ki aklına gelirse tabanına bir pençe vurur."

¹⁷⁶ "Bizim elimizden bir şey gelmez. Bizim hiçbir yerde adımız okunmaz. Biz hükümete varsak, lafımızı anlatamayız. Onların avukatları var. Onlardan amiren mamiren var; âlim var. Bizi kim sayar, kim dinler?"

it”¹⁷⁷ (1961:321). Thus, their passivity and silence stems from not knowing how to face their oppressors and improve their conditions. In Apaydın’s *Defîne*, when the peasants are deceived by the conspiracy of an American merchant, a Turkish merchant and a deputy, one of them exclaims Good God! We are stupid! We are the peasants!”¹⁷⁸ (1972:369). In the novel, the oppressors are so strong, well organized, and clever that the peasants are rendered ignorant in the face of their power.

The last cause of the peasants' passivity is their strong ties to religion and the attitude of resignation this encourages. In Baykurt’s *Onuncu Köy*, the village teacher observes: “I have seen such people that I was puzzled how religion pacified them! It killed their self-assurance. Religion gave them the impression that, provided that they don't have any big supporter behind them, they are not worthy of anything”¹⁷⁹ (2013:38). The peasants believe religion provides support that they need, but it ends up reducing their capability of resistance. In Baykurt’s *Tırpan*, a peasant describes the mission of religion as follows: “They talk about benefaction, malefaction, and faith and so on, just to wipe out the last piece of resistance they have”¹⁸⁰ (2003:113). In this way, the capacity of peasants to revolt against the corrupt order in which they are oppressed is eliminated.

In the village novels' positive description of peasants, they are seen as objecting to the corrupt order in which they live, either individually or collectively. In the case of individual objections, they speak with their inner voice. This can be seen in Kara Bayram's inner monologue during the imam's sermon in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü*. Although he listens to the imam silently and never says anything to his face, he does

¹⁷⁷ “Başlarındaki belanın nasıl savulacağı hakkında görüşleri, buluşları ve ellerinde araçları yok. Boyun büküp susuyor, sadece susuyorlar.”

¹⁷⁸ “Ah be, ah!.. Aptalız biz be! Biz köylüyüz!”

¹⁷⁹ “[Ç]evremde öylelerini görüyorum ki, din ezmiş, bastırmış! Kendilerine güvenlerini öldürmüş. Bir büyük destekçileri olmadıkça, bir değere sahip olmadıkları inancını yerleştirmiş.”

¹⁸⁰ “Gittikçe azalan direncini temelli silip atmak için, hayırdan, şerden, kaderden, kısmetten, alınıdaki yazılardan söz ediyorlar.”

not believe in the idea of resignation that the imam promotes. Similarly, Seyit Ali in Apaydın's *Define* does not oppose Müfettiş Kadri's advice on giving up the illegal search for treasure, but he does imagine a response: "He swore after him... And said 'Find me a job, don't patronise me. Show me a way to make ends meet! I don't have a monthly salary. Of course you are patronising, because you don't evens know what it means to need things' ”¹⁸¹ (1972:228).

A collective imaginary of resistance can also be found in the in the village novels. For instance, Çoban Musa in Apaydın's *Yoz Davar* is a shepherd who is oppressed by an *ağa*. He is exhausted by being owerworked and he does not earn what his work deserves. For him, all shepherds should come together and resist the *ağas*:

Böyle kurulmuş temel. Temeline tükürdüğüm temel. Bir kuruldu mu, değişmez kolay kolay. Birlik olacaksın ki değiştiresin. Toplanacaksın hep çobanlar bir araya, 'ula' diyeceksin, 'yetmez bu para arkadaş'. Davar başına üçer pangınot verdiler, verdiler. Vermediler, atıp sopaları yürüyeceğiz köylerimize. Ne bu be? Akşama değin taban tepiyoruz Allah'ın kırlarında. Hak mı bu? ¹⁸² (Apaydın, 1983:7).

In such an unjust order, not only shepherds but all peasants are faced with such problems and fantasize about collective resistance to their oppressors. In Apaydın's *Define*, the peasants, who subsist on tobacco farming but face financial difficulties due to the state's policies, believe that if they come together and stop harvesting tobacco collectively, their resistance could cause a serious problem for the government. They say in a discussion among themselves:

-[Eksper] alıyor aydan aya temiz mayışını, keyfine bakıyor.
Sen ne olursan ol, umrunda mı?
-Birlik olsak öyle umrunda olur ki...

¹⁸¹ "Deyyus diye sövdü arkasından. ... Akıl öğreteceğine iş bul. Geçim yolu göster. Senin gibi aydan aya mayış almıyorum ben. Kendileri rahata kavuşmuşlar, bol bol akıl dağıtırlar."

¹⁸² That is how the foundation has been laid. Bloody foundation! Once it is settled, it cannot easily be changed. You need to align with the others to change things. You need to gather all the shepherds and say, 'This money is not enough.' They should give us at least three banknotes for a cattle and if they don't, we should walk to the villages. What the hell is this nonsense? We keep working all day in the bloody countryside, this is just not fair.

- Ne yapacağız birlik olunca? Dövecek miyiz?
 -Yoo, niye dövelim? Ekmiyoruz, deriz, bitti.
 -Ekmezsen ekme yavuş, ekispere ne?
 -Ekispere ne olur mu? O da yukarıya bildirir. Kimse ekmeyiverirse hükümetin hali ne olur?
 -Heç bir şey olmaz. Hükümetle uğraşılmaz kardaşım. Emir verir, zorla gene ektirir.
 -Hee, ektirir...
 -Ya korkar mı?
 -Ula nasıl konuşuyorsun sen Hüseyin? Biz birlik olsak dağı deviririz oğlum.
 -Hangı dağı?¹⁸³

This dialogue, in fact, exemplifies the peasants' in-between position. On the one hand, they do not believe they can resist oppressive forces, such as economic and political institutions, because these institutions are “seen as natural, perpetual, and irreducible categories” (Gramsci, 2000:114) in peasants’ minds. On the other hand, in their imaginary worlds, they believe in their potential and that if they act together for their own interests, they can defeat the dominant forces. In fact, this shows two sides of the peasants’ psychology in which the obedience and anger are interwoven (Gramsci, 2010:138; 383-4). An even more significant example of this can be found in Baykurt’s *Tırpan*. In this novel, Dürü, a fifteen year-old girl, is forced to marry an *ağa*. After the rich *ağa* succeeds in marrying the little girl with the help of his wealth, other little girls in the village have the following discussion with the wise old woman Uluş:

- ‘Yoksullar bir olmalı, varıllara bir hastır çekip kaldırmalı dünyadan para denen şeytanı diyor! Olur mu?’
 ‘Yoksullar birleşti mi olur! Neden olmasın?’
 ‘Yoksullar birleşirler mi?’
 ‘Birleşir! Neden birleşmesin?’
 ‘Yoksulların birleştiği görülmüş mü?’

¹⁸³ -The expert gets his payment every month and enjoys himself. He doesn't care what you do.
 -He would care if we acted together
 - What are we going to do when we act together? Are we going to beat him up?
 - No, why beating? We tell him that we won't plant anymore.
 - But why would he care about whether we plant or not.
 - Yeah but he will take it to the higher levels. Besides, what would the government do if we refused to plant?
 -Nothing. I mean, the government would make us do it anyway, by force.
 -Yes, it would...
 -Would government be scared of us?
 -Oh my man, Huseyin. As long as we stick together, we can overcome anything.
 - Overcome what?

‘Ben anamdan gezgin mi doğdum bre kızlar? Ne bileyim görülmüş mü? Ama olmadık iş yok dünyada. Olmuştur, olacaktır! Kız iken, bir irebiş karı görürdüm. O anlatırdı. Vaktin zamanın birinde, bir ülkeden karıncalar birleşmiş. Karıncaları bilirsiniz, ne kadar küçük! O ülkede, ‘fil’ deye, deveden büyük, boooz bir yaratık varmış. Hep gelir karıncaların üstüne basarmış! Bir gün karıncalar fısılдамиş: ‘Birleşip bu şerbelaya bir iş edelim!’ Birleşip yürümüşler üstüne. Yıkılmışlar namussuzu. Sonra bir girişmişler. Ne kanı kalmış, ne iliği! Yutuvermişler! ‘Karıncalar birleşti mi fili yutar!’ derdi İrebiş...¹⁸⁴ (Baykurt, 2003:150)

In this passage, while there is doubt about the ability of the poor to defeat the rich in the little girls' questions, the wise woman Uluguş's response does not include such doubt. She strongly believes in the peasants' ability to achieve their aims through collective action.

Such wise elderly characters, who are ordinary peasants but possess significant life experience, are an important recurring theme in Baykurt's novels. Not only in *Tırpan*, but also in all of his novels there are such characters who link the past to the present. Like Uluguş, Irazca in *Yılanların Öcü* and *Irazca'nın Dirliği*, Topal Pehlivan in *Onuncu Köy*, Kır Abbas in *Kaplumbağalar*, and Temeloş in *Amerikan Sargısı* represent the storytellers and bring stories of the past to the present in order to create a collective vision of emancipation. If there is not a village teacher in a novel, this character is the most progressive and resistant figure; on the other hand, if there is a village teacher, this character is his most important supporter. For instance, in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, the village teacher tries to persuade the peasants to work

¹⁸⁴ ' She says, all poor should come together and screw the rich and remove money from the face of the earth! Would it be possible?'

' If the poor act together, I don't see why not'

' But would the poor act together?'

'Of course they would, why wouldn't they?'

'Have you ever heard of anything like that?'

'I am not a born traveler, girls, I don't know if anything like that happened before. But I think nothing is impossible in this world. Everything is possible, if not now, in the future! When I was younger, I knew an old lady who told me that once upon a time, in a country, the ants all came together. You know how small the ants are. In that country, there was a creature that was way bigger than a camel. It was called 'elephant'. It would always step on the ants. But one day, ants decided to come together and take him down. And they managed to do it. And they even consumed it to its bone! They swallowed it! The lady told me that when the ants come together, they can even swallow an elephant...'

collectively to take irrigation water from the *ağa*'s land for their own farms. Topal Pehlivan supports this idea and helps him to persuade the peasants:

Yatar köylünün aklı... Orasını bana bırak! Tek bacağımın mahalleleri dolaşırım! Kimdi o vafettiğin herif! Hani Atina sokaklarında dolaşır, milletin aklını erdirirdi? Hani sonunda idam ettiler? Onun gibi evleri gezerim. Önüme gelene anlatırım. İsterse beni de idam etsinler!...¹⁸⁵ (2013:75)

With this passage, Baykurt clarifies the wise old man's mission. If the village teacher undertakes the mission of Prometheus, the wise old man undertakes that of Diogenes (Tatarlı and Molloy, 1969:245). When the peasants decide to work together to face down their oppressors, it is either thanks to the village teacher's efforts or those of such elderly peasant characters.

As mentioned above, it is poverty that keeps the peasants between passivity and resistance. In the village novels, the peasants suffer from poor living conditions and financial difficulties. When Irazca in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* mentions the social stratification of the village, she identifies herself with the poor:

Seksen evli Karataş'ın üç evi iyidir. Her gün üçüne kadı gelse karşılanır, ağırlanır. Yağı tuzu, eti südü bulunur bunların... Yedi evi de şöyle böyle. Bunlar da eyi sayılır... Bu yedinin altında bir elli ev var ki, bir babucu dört kişi ortak geyer. Ölmüyecek kadar kaldırırlar, ölmeyecek kadar yerler. Biz onlardanız. Irazca dedin mi, Kara Bayram dedin mi, biziz, onlardanız. Bizim altımızda da yirmi kadar bir ocak tüter ki, gör ne ocak, ne ocak!.. Ocak demeğ dil varmaz. Ocak demek caiz değildir¹⁸⁶ (Baykurt, 1959:178-179).

¹⁸⁵ I would convince the villagers, leave it to me. I can go around all the streets with my one leg. Who was that guy that would wander around the street of Athens and would illuminate people? You know the one that was executed? I can go around like him, visiting houses. I can talk to anyone about this, even if they want to execute me!...

¹⁸⁶ Karatas has 80 houses, three of which are fairly well off. They have butter, milk and meat in abundance... And seven more houses do OK as well... But in 50 of the houses, four children wear one pair of shoes. They can only eat to survive. And we are one of them, Irazca and Kara Bayram, we are them. When coming to the remaining twenty houses, they were so poor. Even our stove does not look like a stove, you would not be able call it stove...

Bearing in mind that “poverty is not only an economic category but also a social condition which people live in, interpret, and develop methods in order to cope with” (Erdoğan, 2007a:14), in the story of Irazca, being poor is not only restricted to economic problems. Three rich houses belong to oppressive characters with large land holdings, such as the *muhtar* and Haceli; therefore, the rich and the poor also constitute the two strata of the social hierarchy in the imagination of the peasants. Furthermore, these two strata reflect class divisions. In Apaydın’s *Define*, the village teacher observes his young students and states:

Kimisi elim sende oynar, kimisi elini koynuna sokmuş düşünür. Bu düşünenler, muhakkak yoksul çocuğu. Öbürleri içlerine almaz onları. Köyde sınıf ayrımı çok erken yaşta başlar. Dört yaşındaki çocuk bile bilir yoksul olduklarını. O yaştaki çocuğun duruşuna, bakışına işler fukaralık. Hey dinine yandığımın dünyası. Rezilsin rezil!¹⁸⁷ (1972:111)

In his observations, the poverty resulting from class divisions is understood from the children’s posture and glances. Similar to the village teacher, Havana, a poor peasant, in Baykurt’s *Tırpan*, describes the world as unjust due to inequalities between the rich and the poor, stating: “This disparity is shaking the world out of balance. The rich have loads, the poor have nothing. The poor cannot even get lucky for a day”¹⁸⁸ (2003:204). In an unjust world, the poor peasants are not strong enough to cope with poverty; however they try to make do despite it. For instance, Velikul, a character in Baykurt’s *Tırpan*, compares poverty with a sea in which the poor learn different ways of swimming to avoid drowning, saying: “We stayed in the village and got married. Thus, we dove into the sea of poverty! We spend our lives flapping in the water. We have practiced all the swimming techniques in order not to be drown”¹⁸⁹ (1971:186).

¹⁸⁷ Some of them play tag, some of them think quietly in a corner. The ones that think in the corner are children of the poor. The others would not accept them. Class divisions start at a very early age in the village. Even a four year old, knows whether they are rich or poor. Even a four year old looks poor and acts like a poor. Damn you world, you are a truly dirty place!

¹⁸⁸ “Bu dünyanın direkleri tutmuyor, varsılların parası çok, yoksulların gücü yetmiyor. Bir gün olsun işimiz uz gitmiyor.”

¹⁸⁹ “Köyde kalıp evlendik. Daldık yoksulluğun denizine! Çırpın babam çırpın şimdi! Boğulmamak için yüzmenin bin türlüünü öğrendik.”

It may be argued that this description of poverty, which is common to both the negative and positive peasant images in the village novels, tends to take on an ocularcentric character in these novels.¹⁹⁰ The ocularcentric character of social relations refers to the constitution of hierarchy by means of the look (Erdoğan, 2007:52). The peasants become an object of the look in such a way that they are situated in a hierarchical relationship with the subject of the look. This subject is the outsider who comes to the village, such as an appointed teacher or visitors. For instance, the appointed teachers Nurten and Ertan in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı* find the peasants primitive and do not even want to talk with them. In Apaydın's *Define*, the American character Corc's lover, Aysun, comes to the village with him at one point, but she does not condescend to get out the car because the peasant children around the car are so wild and dirty. Aysun's inner monologue about the situation is conveyed by the novelist: "She was looking around, thinking "Where the hell is this man?". Everyone surrounded her and she thought 'Look at those rascals, good God!' She covered his nose with his handkerchief. She wore his sunglasses and, putting her head down, started to wait"¹⁹¹ (Apaydın, 1972:52).

A similar situation can be seen when the peasants leave the village. For instance, in the same novel, *Define*, when the peasants go to the city to sell the valuable objects they have found, they attempt to rent a room. However, the receptionist at the hostel thinks them worthy only of a room in front of the toilet on the ground floor:

Otel kâtibi gür saçlı, gençten bir adamdı. Tiksinir gibi baktı bunlara. Neredeyse, 'Yerimiz yok!' diyecekti. Ama az önce var dediğini hatırladı. Çaresiz defterin başına çöktü, adlarını, memleketlerini yazdı. Birinci katta helânın karşısına gelen

¹⁹⁰ The ocularcentric character of social relations is discussed by Erdoğan (2007:52) in the context of poverty. For further details, see Necmi Erdoğan (2007), *Yok-sanma:Yoksulluk-Maduniyet ve "Fark Yaraları"*, Yoksulluk Halleri, İstanbul:İletişim, pp:47-96.

¹⁹¹ "Nerede kaldı bu adam?' diye iki yana bakınıp duruyordu. Çoluk çocuk çevresine toplanmıştı. 'Ne vahşi şeyler, şunların haline bak, tüh!' Mendili burnuna kapadı. Güneş gözlüğünü taktı. Başını öne eğip beklemeye başladı"

odayı bunlara ayırdı. Orada zaten köylülerden başkası yatmazdı.¹⁹² (Apaydın, 1972:296)

This passage shows a striking example of the look the peasants face. In the look of the outsider, their place should be at the bottom of the hostel and even in front of the toilet because they are the poor and dirty.

Although these novels do not comprehensively address the migration from rural to urban areas that marked the period when they were written, in some situations they mention this wave of migration and the peasants' experiences with fields of work other than agriculture. In the novels, poverty is also seen as the reason for the peasants' leaving their hometowns and going to the cities. For instance, Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* mention the story of a villager who is obliged to go to another location and work in the mines for a tiny sum; however, he dies there because of dangerous working conditions (Baykurt, 2013:259).

Those who are obliged to leave their villages are portrayed as constituting the bottom social strata in the cities, taking up work as laborers ("ırgat"), garbage men, porters, housekeepers, and maids. For instance, in Apaydın's *Emmioğlu*, Battal leaves his village because he refuses to work as a sharecropper on a big landowner's rice field. However, his fate in the province is to work as a laborer in a construction site and as a porter in the streets. Similarly, in Baykurt's *Kamplumbağalar*, this situation is described in this way:

Ne yaşam var kentlerde? Varsa size var! Ne geçiyor eline bizden oraya gidenlerin? Ne olabiliyorlar? Kapıcı, çöpçü, hizmetçi! ... Sırtlarıyla taş çekip apartman yapıyorlar. Ama içine girip oturamıyorlar. Bekledikleri dükkânların hiçbiri kendilerinin değil. Pakladıkları donlar, bulaşıklar başkasının!

¹⁹² The receptionist was a young looking man with thick hair. He looked at them in disgust. He was about to turn them down but he remembered that he had already said that they had rooms available. Desperately, he started writing their names with their hometowns in the guestbook. He gave them the room on the first floor, across from the toilet. No but peasants would stay in that room, anyway, he thought.

Biz dünyada çöpçü, hizmetçi olmaya mı geldik Emin Bey'im?¹⁹³ (Baykurt, 2006:238)

In this passage, it is suggested that poverty follows the peasants as their fate when they go to the cities. Moreover, poverty interlaces with unequal production and distribution relations and it is presented as the result of these relations both in the village and in the city.

3.4- Concluding Remarks

This chapter has examined the general characteristics of the village novels. It has been pointed out that an antagonistic relationship between the peasants and the dominant bloc is reflected in the organization and content of these novels. However, it has been noted that this antagonism is not absolute, in the sense that some members of one antagonistic camp can be seen siding with the members of the other.

In the first section of the chapter, the dominant bloc, consisting of the state, domestic-foreign capital, religion, and intellectuals, was analyzed. It was seen that, whereas the state and domestic-foreign capital play a direct role in the oppression and exploitation of the peasants, religion and intellectuals generally only play an indirect role. The state is not portrayed as an entirely malicious entity or something that must be abolished. Rather, it is depicted as derelict in its duties toward the peasants. However, in some cases it uses its power to oppress them and exploit their labor. The big landowners, Turkish merchants and Americans appear as the representatives of domestic-foreign capital. These forces are always seen as having the means to oppress and exploit the peasants and ruin their economic and social conditions; thus, they constitute the main enemies of the peasants. While religious figures do not directly harm the peasants, they pave the way for their oppression by

¹⁹³ There is no life in the city for us. What can we do when we migrate to the town? We can only be a housekeeper, a garbageman, or a bloody maid!... The workers, they built the houses, carrying stones on their backs. But, can they actually get in them and live in there? The hosekeepers, they guard the shops that don't belong to them. The maids, they wash the underwear and the dishes that don't belong to them! Emin Bey, tell me now, were we born to be a garbage man, a housekeeper, or a maid?

exploiting religion. Finally, like the men of religion, it has been shown that intellectuals are also responsible for the peasants' conditions because of their indifference to the peasants' problems. To conclude, what makes all of these constituents a bloc are their organic ties with one another. For instance, the big landowners have important places in the bureaucratic cadres, which increase the power of both the state and the landowners. These big landowners succeed in winning some of the peasants over to their side through patronage relations, thereby causing disorganization among the peasants. Similarly, men of religion are close friends of the big landowners and teach the peasants to value resignation, making them silent and submissive to the domination they face. And, like the religious figures, the intellectuals serve the other constituents of the dominant bloc because they neglect the peasants.

Since the antagonistic relationship that defines these novels is a somewhat pliable one, the second section of the chapter examined those figures who are linked with the dominant bloc, i.e. state officials, but who decide to stand by the peasants. These good people in bad institutions consist of populist state officials, populist education officials, populist doctors, and the village teacher. Some *kaymakams* in these novels realize that the state's policies place the peasants in a difficult position and privilege their oppressors. Consequently, they stand by the peasants rather than being an instrument of the state's oppressive and exploitative mentality. The populist education officials are those who know that the state's education policies are not for the sake of the ordinary people who struggle with poverty, but for the rich. Similarly, the populist doctors acknowledge the same for the state's health policies. Therefore, all of these characters make a personal effort to defend the peasants' rights against the dominant forces or to make the peasants' lives easier.

On the other hand, because of the authors' experience in the Village Institutes and their occupations as village teachers, the village teacher figure is given more importance in these novels. It was noted that these characters devote themselves to

their work by attempting to awaken the peasants' children in school, but that they do not limit their mission to the schoolhouse. Instead, they attempt to rescue the peasants from the oppressive and exploitative forces.

The peasants, as the oppressed and exploited side of the antagonistic relationship, were examined in the third section of this chapter. It was shown that there are two sides to the image of the peasant in these novels. On the one hand, he is marked by his passivity, submission, and resignation to the existing order. On the other hand, he notices those who are responsible for his backward, oppressed, and exploited condition and contemplates putting up a fight against his situation. It was also noted that his image and condition are portrayed as intimately linked to his poverty. Poverty is seen as a social condition the peasant lives in, interprets, and develops methods to cope with. It was emphasized that the figure of the peasant is marked by an ocularcentric dimension in which he is subjected to the disparaging look of the outsider.

In the next chapter, the focal points of this chapter will be discussed in conjunction with their political and ideological connotations.

CHAPTER 4

COMMENTS ON THE INTERTEXTUALITY OF THE VILLAGE NOVELS

This chapter will attempt to clarify the points at which the village novels open upon other texts -- in other words, their intertextuality -- by bringing together the considerations of the second and third chapters. The main focus of this chapter will be on the political-ideological dimensions of these novels. The first section will try to determine the chronotope of the village novels, regarding the chronotope as a concrete whole that represents particular worldviews and ideologies in itself. The second section will look at the author's orchestration in the novels in the sense of how the characters are equipped ideologically and how this is reflected in their voices. The third section will discuss the novels' political-ideological features with specific reference to their connections with the Turkish left. Finally, the fourth section will consider the novels' ties to folk literature and socialist realism and try to understand the extent to which they parallel and diverge from these traditions.

4.1- The Chronotope in the Village Novels

As mentioned above, the chronotope unifies temporal and spatial relationships and defines the characters in a literary work with respect to these relationships. It refers to the "place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied" (Bakhtin, 1981:251). It is possible to identify various types of literary chronotopes, such as the folkloric, the chivalric, the Rabelaisian, and the idyllic chronotope. Among all the literary chronotopes Bakhtin defines, the village novels of the institute graduates fit best within the framework of the modern idyllic chronotope.

Rather than the pure varieties of idyll, such as the love idyll, the family idyll, or the idyll with a focus on agricultural labor and craft work (Bakhtin, 1981:224), the institute graduates' novels can be located in a mixed idyll in which agricultural labor

generally predominates. As a common feature of all idyllic chronotopes, whose heroes are usually peasants, craftsmen, rural clergy, or rural schoolteachers, time, corresponding to “an organic fastening down, a grafting of life and its events,” becomes concrete in a familiar, common place for all characters, such as mountains, valleys, farms, or a home (Bakhtin, 1981:225). These places are not specific to the novels’ characters; rather, they bear a socio-historical feature by belonging to the older generation as well as to the present and possibly future generations.

When the village novels are considered in terms of their time/space matrices, it can be seen that their plots are situated in a time period that starts with planting and extends to the harvest. This corresponds to a familiar space in which the peasants work together to harvest what they have sown. In Apaydın’s novels, although the farms on which the peasants work are private -- their own small farms or the farms of big landowners -- the peasants are seen planting or harvesting together. For instance, in his *Yarbükü*, *Emmioğlu*, and *Ortakçılar*, which focus on rice growing, the events start in the planting season and end in the harvest. The peasants work together either on the land of a big landowner or on their own small farms, which are divided but situated side-by-side. In Baykurt’s *Onuncu Köy* and *Kaplumbağalar* the narrative is indexed to the peasants’ stories while they are planting on common land in the village. In *Onuncu Köy*, they plant on land that is in fact common, but that has been seized by an *ağa*. In *Kaplumbağalar*, they decide to turn a steppe in the village into a vineyard together. Particularly in this novel, the beginning of the planting and harvest seasons is narrated in detail. Furthermore, all of these novels tend to explain important events in the peasants’ lives, such as birth, marriage, and death by means of this time/space matrix. One of the most famous examples of this is that the birth of children is described with references to the times of cultivating agricultural products such as wheat, rice, or tobacco or picking fruits from farms or gardens.

In most of these novels, the emphasis is on the agricultural labor that generally defines the narrative of the idyllic chronotope and determines its distinctive hero, who is not a consumer, but a producer, in the sense that he subsists on what he produces and is dependent on nature. In Bakhtin’s words:

It is the agricultural-labor element that creates a *real* link and common bond between the phenomena of nature and events of human life. ... Moreover -- and this is especially important -- agricultural labor transforms all the events of everyday life, stripping them of that private petty character obtaining when man is nothing but consumer; what happens rather is that they are turned into essential life *events*. Thus people consume the produce of their own labor; the produce is figurally linked with the productive process. (Bakhtin, 1981:227)

Such productive processes and productive heroes constitute the main focuses of the village novels. In these novels, the peasants are brought to the fore as distinct from other parts of society by means of their productive activities. As was mentioned in the third chapter, for instance, in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, Gezici Hamdi, one of the good people in corrupt institutions, defines the peasants as "producers of life" in contrast to those who do not produce, but eat the peasants' products, referring to the insensitive intellectuals and state officials (Baykurt, 2008:364). Similarly, in Apaydın's *Ortakçılar*, the rice growers subsisting on sharecropping distinguish between themselves and the big landowner who employs them by the fact that they are workers and producers but he is the one who comes and takes their products in the end (Apaydın, 2007:26).

It should be noted that Akçam (2009:414) locates these novels within the framework of the Rabelaisian chronotope and its grotesque and carnivalesque images, particularly because of the narration of planting season, the collectivity of the peasants, their solidarity on the land, and some extraordinary images of the peasants. In fact, the time/space matrix in the idyllic and Rabelaisian chronotopes is similar in the sense that both focus on the time of an organic fastening down and center on places that are common and familiar for the characters. In this context, it is possible to think of the idyllic chronotope as similar to the Rabelaisian one and to see some examples in which these two types are intertwined. However, it should be kept in mind that the time/space matrix in the Rabelaisian chronotope is different from that of the idyllic chronotope, because its time is carnival time and its space is the marketplace. Carnival time in many cases intersects with harvest time, but this time is manifested in carnivalesque practices in the marketplace (Bakhtin, 1984). In contrast, the idyllic chronotope takes harvest time as its main time and this is not

specified by the carnival's specific time and practices. Instead, common everyday life and its practices take on thematic significance in the idyllic chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981:229). Given that chronotopes are not strictly defined and that different chronotopes can bear similar features, it can be acknowledged that the village novels in some cases approach the Rabelaisian chronotope. For example, in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, the harvest time for the grapes grown in the village's common vineyard resembles a carnival in which the peasants entertain each other and practice a money-free economy, not selling their products but distributing them to their neighbors.

Nevertheless, these novels generally parallel the idyllic form. For instance, the novels' events do not happen in a marketplace, nor do they occur at carnival time. The time is generally indexed to the harvest and the space is any space in the village that is familiar or common to the peasants. In many cases, even the village square is not used as the space of the plot; rather, the space that is marked by agricultural production is brought to the fore. Also, although it is possible to find a few images of extraordinary peasants, especially those who go mad and the wise elders, it is hard to see these as examples of carnivalesque or grotesque images. For instance, Osman in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* succumbs to madness, but this is a result of the difficulties of agricultural production and the undervaluing of his products. Similarly, the wise man Kır Abbas in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar* shows some extraordinary features, such as living alone in a shelter rather than living in his own home with his family, and draws attention with his extreme levity and anger. These characters criticize and make fun of the prevalent relations of domination; however, they do not turn them upside down by putting themselves in the place of the dominant characters. Instead, the narrative of these novels is focused on ordinary agricultural labor. Socio-historical limits are more dominant in the idyllic chronotope than the transgression of these limits, just the reverse of the Rabelaisian chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981:230).

But while the characteristics of the idyll focusing on agricultural labor are more dominant in the village novels, in some novels the characteristics of the family idyll are more prominent. Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* and *Irazca'nın Dirliği* and Apaydın's

Sarı Traktör can be considered within the framework of the family idyll. The plot of *Yılanların Öcü* and *Irazca'nın Dirliği* is based upon an intergenerational story. In *Yılanların Öcü*, the story begins with the experiences of the hero's father in the past and moves toward the hero's own family. Then, in *Irazca'nın Dirliği*, the continuation of *Yılanların Öcü*, the plot focuses on the son of *Yılanların Öcü*'s hero. The family -- its togetherness and struggles, and the factors that disrupt its unity -- constitutes one of the three foundational institutions represented in this novel, together with the state and the school (Oktay, 1990). This intergenerational element is also seen in Apaydın's *Sarı Traktör*, in which changes in the means of production, i.e. the transition from non-technical manual labor to tractors, are narrated by comparing the production conditions under which the father works with those of the son.

As a final point related to the village novels' idyllic chronotope, it should be noted that the ancient and classical forms of the idyllic chronotope, in which agricultural labor bears much significance, portray a harmonious village life; however, modern forms, which interlace with the provincial novel in many cases, bear an ideological aspect (Bakhtin, 1981:229). Therefore, rather than harmony, in such cases, disharmony marks the narrative in the modern idyllic chronotope. Particularly for this reason, the village novels contain an element of disharmony in the sense that the narrative of agricultural production, which is the main element of these novels' idyllic character, reflects the exploitation of the peasants. As explained in the third chapter in detail, in these novels, which depict the beginnings of a capitalist transformation of agriculture, the peasants do not live in a self-sufficient economy, but have to depend on external sectors such as the state and the big landowners, and these are the main causes of disharmony, inequality, and exploitation. To understand this we must look more closely at the ideological aspect of these novels.

4.2- The Authors' Ideological Orchestration and their Characters

The narratives of the village novels are situated in the times in which they were written. Many of these novels were written and published in the 1950s and the 1960s,

and their plots were centered around the significant events of this period, such as the closure of the Village Institutes, the transition from a single-party to a multi-party regime, the first use of tractors in villages and their proliferation, the big landowners' rise to high positions in the bureaucratic cadres, the crystallization of social polarization, and the development of capitalist relations in agriculture. However, the stories in these novels are situated in Central Anatolia, including its northern and southern regions, where petty commodity production was the prevailing economic form associated with agricultural production through sharecropping. In addition, peasants in this region were politically passive in the sense of having difficulty using their collective will and historically conservative in the sense that religious rituals and beliefs were dominant in their lives (Frey, 1966:17). Therefore, keeping these conditions in mind, these novels shed light on a definite social evolution under the development of capitalist agriculture and the changing lives of the peasants in this process (Timur, 2002:92). These issues pertain to what Bakhtin (2009:131) calls "socioeconomic historical scholarship," which naturally had an effect on these novels. This kind of socioeconomic historical scholarship substantially defines the characters of the village novels, along with a significant contribution from the authors' political-ideological stances. Hence, these two intertwined issues must be examined. The first question here is how the characters are shaped in accordance with the authors' political-ideological stances and the second is how this shaping can be understood from the characters' voices in the novels.

On the first point, it is essential to note that, though socioeconomic historical scholarship defines the characters in these novels, they are presented by way of the authors' own ideological views. Each character has his or her own place in the social, economic, and cultural structure of the country; however, they are imbued with political-ideological stances parallel to the authors' points of view. On the second point, this kind of ideological shaping of the characters is also reflected in the characters' voices. As Bakhtin argues (2009:31), the author's orchestration is an important part of the novel in terms of bringing together different discourses. As mentioned in the first part of this chapter, rural life, in which agricultural production and the peasants' everyday practices are prominent, is indexed to an exploitative

order which brings disharmony to village life and polarization in rural society as a reflection of polarization in society as a whole. Therefore, in these novels the authors bring together the discourses of the two sides of this polarization: with the peasants, the village teachers, and certain petty bourgeois intellectuals on one side, and the dominant bloc on the other.

Given that the authors were themselves villagers, the peasants are not only a part of the authors' stories, but also a reflection of their own experiences. As such, the peasants reflect a social reality in the narrative. At the same time, however, the authors imbue them with their own political and ideological stances. For instance, socio-historical scholarship defines Irazca, one of the most famous characters in this kind of novel: she is a mother; she is widowed; she works in spite of her old age to look after her son and his family; she fights against difficulties and poverty; and she has a kind of authority in her persistence, despite being oppressed. In terms of these features, she represents the matriarchal side of Anatolian ethnography (Timur, 2002:388) and the national subconscious of Anatolian society (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969). However, in Baykurt's construction, she gains additional features. For instance, she fights against the *muhtar*, who is a supporter of the DP, and thereby against the DP's policies; she criticizes the other peasants because they do not act collectively against oppressive forces; and she refuses to pay taxes to the state because it does not protect her or her family's livelihood. A similar political and ideological shaping of the peasants can be seen in Apaydın's novels. For example, Osman in *Tütün Yorgunu* is in fact a real peasant Apaydın knew during his time as a village teacher. In his memoir, he describes him as follows:

Demiryolunun alt geçitlerinden birinin köşesinde gün boyu oturan, elleri habire oynayan yoksul bir adam görmüştüm. Önüne bir mendil açmış dileniyordu ama konuşamıyordu. Ne yaptığını başkaları anlattı. Tütün dizermiş. Köyünde tütün dize dize böyle olmuş.¹⁹⁴ (Apaydın, 2012:157)

¹⁹⁴ I saw a man sitting under the railway bridge; he was moving his hands constantly. There was a handkerchief in front of him. Apparently he was a beggar. Then I noticed that he could not speak. Others told me what he used to do. His job was to put individual tobacco leaves on a string. That's what caused him to be this way.

In his novel, Apaydin explains this madness by way of the difficulties of tobacco production. However, in doing so he brings the production and distribution relations in tobacco production to the forefront. In the plot, Osman's madness is neither an arbitrary situation nor a coincidence. He faces many difficulties producing tobacco, but the state undervalues his product. Consequently, his ability to survive on his labor is undermined and he succumbs to madness. Similarly, Apaydin's *Define* takes as its subject a village's hunt for treasure, which was in fact a common practice for Anatolian peasants. However, in his plot, Apaydin connects this situation to the abuse of the peasants by the dominant forces -- the state officials and domestic-foreign capital -- which cheat the peasants when they find the treasure.

The authors claim that their novels tell the peasants' stories in their own words and from their own perspective. However, the extent to which the peasants speak in their own voices in these works is questionable. When we examine the peasants' speech in these novels, we can see that the authors have implemented a kind of internal and external transference.¹⁹⁵ It can be suggested that the intersection of these two kinds of transference results in the "representation" and "re-representation" of the peasants. In this regard, the authors' give a significant place to the poor peasants' voices in order to bring the voices of a large segment of the subaltern to the literary field, resulting in a tension between "speaking about" and "speaking for" them. Recalling Spivak's suggestion that the subaltern are rendered unable to speak and that their voices remain trapped within representation and re-representation, in the village novels the poor peasants' voices are frequently replaced with those of the authors, who make them speak in accordance with their own ideological stances. One of the most significant examples of this can be seen in the relationship between the peasants and the village teacher. In Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, the wise man Kır Abbas describes the peasants as "blind moles" and regards the village teacher Rıza as trying to open their blind eyes (Baykurt, 2008:151). It is doubtful that a peasant like Kır Abbas

¹⁹⁵ "Internal focalization" and "external focalization" are two concepts taken from Gerard Genette's narrative analysis. These concepts are related to the narrator's perspective. Whereas the narrator knows his characters' ways of thinking and moves on the same level with them in the former, he knows less than the characters do and looks at them from outside in the latter. For further information, see Eagleton (1996), *Literature Theory*, Minneapolis:Blackwell Publishers, p:92.

would describe himself and his fellow peasants as blind moles and attribute a redemptive role to the village teacher. Similarly, in Apaydın's *Define*, the village teacher fails to win the peasants over with his arguments and complains that they are not capable of understanding his efforts. The teacher repeatedly warns them against being deceived. But they do not take his warnings seriously. At the end of the novel, after the dominant forces deceive the peasants, one of them laments: "Keşke Öğretmenin dediğini yapsaydım. ... Ah be, ah!.. Aptalız biz be! Biz köylüüz!.." ¹⁹⁶ (Apaydın, 1972:388-389). Although a peasant who is deceived by someone may feel stupid, it is doubtful that he would regret not taking the teacher's advice. This is a kind of external transference on the peasants implemented by the authors.

Whereas the contradictory construction of the peasants in these novels, which was explained in the third chapter, carries the traces of the Kemalist-populist-peasantist ideology, it is not identical with this ideology. The populist-peasantist ideology regards the peasants as both primitive and in need of modernization, on the one hand, and wise in terms of bearing the essence of the nation, on the other. In the village novels, the peasants are passive and primitive agents who need to be awakened and modernized, on the one hand. And they are wise, understanding, and capable of taking collective action to secure their interests, on the other.

In one respect, the authors' negative construction of the peasants does not carry the elitist implications of the populist-peasantist ideology. Generally, the negative construction of the peasants in these novels constitutes a criticism of society's perception of them. For instance, Çolak Osman in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* says: "We are unable to do anything. We are powerless, not respected, and ignored. Even if we make our way to the government, we would not be able to tell our problems. ... Who would listen to us?" (1961:229). This is a negative portrayal of the peasant in terms of his passivity and inability to be heard. However, the important point is that this passage marks a difference between "talk" and "speech." As Spivak explains, "'speech' implies that one's 'talking' can be heard" (Spivak quoted in Carr,

¹⁹⁶ "I wish I had done what my teacher told me to do. How I wish I listened... We are stupid aren't we? We are peasants!"

2001:26). In other words, the subaltern is able to talk, but its talking does not become speech; rather, the subaltern's "speech is systematically denied at the level of dominant hearing" (Carr, 2001:26). Therefore, while the authors speak about and speak for the peasants, they also lay bare and criticize the fact that they are unheard by the authorities. Indeed, this is why they attempt to write the stories of the unheard peasants.

Similarly, the positive portrayals of the peasants in these novels are not related to their bearing of the essence of the nation; rather, they are related to the peasants' acknowledgment of what is going on around them and contemplating ways to save themselves from the corrupt order in which they are oppressed and exploited. For instance, a villager in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* recognizes the country's dependence on foreign resources by looking at the imported tractors whose numbers are increasing day by day in the village and the powdered milk distributed in the village schools with the help of American aid. Thus, he disputes the government's discourse on the country's development, saying: "Progressed! You even import your needles! Progressed! You cannot even produce the pill for a freaking stomachache! ... Is that how you progressed?" (Baykurt, 1961:192). Another example of this positive depiction of the peasantry can be found in Apaydın's *Define*. In one part of this novel, the peasants discuss how to save themselves from the government's policies on agricultural production, acknowledging that their success depends on acting together: "[Experts] would care about us if we acted together. ... We tell them that we won't plant anymore. ... As long as we stick together, we can overcome anything" (Apaydın, 1972: 149-150).

The construction of the teacher figure in these novels is also marked by the authors' ideological stances. As mentioned earlier in this study, this figure takes two forms: the village teacher and the teacher in the village. These two forms refer to the authors' division of the country's intellectuals into two blocs. This figure is portrayed positively when the authors describe the village teacher and negatively one when they refer to the teacher in the village. As explained in the third chapter, whereas the village teacher establishes a close relationship with the peasants and

takes their problems as his own, the teacher in the village keeps his distance from them and has no interest in their problems. Whereas the village teacher does his work on behalf of the people, the teacher in the village does it for his own benefit and is willing to ally with the dominant forces.

The Village Institute graduate authors have been criticized for reflecting their experiences in their novels. According to these criticisms, this reduces the literary value of their novels' and renders them little more than autobiographies. This point of criticism is more apparent in the representation of the village teacher in the novels. The village teacher represents the authors and their own experiences in the village. Most of the authors' ideas are given by way of the village teacher's voice in the novels. For instance, in Apaydın's memoir, he describes his experience as a village teacher as follows:

Geceleyin yer yatağında kendimle boğuşurdum. Bir çıkar yol arardım. Nasıl da zordu bu iş. Nasıl gelinmişti buralara ve nasıl kurtulunacaktı? ... Rahatlık, aydınlık, düzlük, zorla boğulmuş, içinden çıkılmaz hale getirilmişti. Bu güzelim doğa ortasında insanımız yoksuldu, bilinçsizdi ve karanlık içinde çırpınıyordu. Ellerinde bir koca baltadan başka araç yoktu. ... Bizim okullar onların hiçbir gereksinimine yanıt verecek durumda değildi. ... Devlet o kadar uzaktı ki, yurttaşlarımızın yaşamını değiştirelim diye bir çaba buralara ulaşmıyordu. (2012:41-42)¹⁹⁷

This passage is almost identical to comments by the village teacher İdris in *Define*. İdris says he loses sleep thinking about the peasants' problems, which he tries to solve even if it is not his job, and he criticizes the state for its ignorance of the peasants' plight (Apaydın, 1972:108-9). Similarly, the village teacher in Baykurt's novels reflects Baykurt's own experiences. Like the village teacher in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, Baykurt was reassigned and put on trial many times in his career for

¹⁹⁷ Every night in bed, I used to think about a way out. I would think a lot about how we ended up here and how difficult it would be to get out from this situation... For us, prosperity, enlightenment, felicity were very far away from being achieved. Our people were poor and illiterate and they were suffocated in the darkness even if they were living in this gorgeous nature. They did not have any tools apart from a big axe... Our schools were not enough to provide them with their needs... The government was so far away from them that the effort they made to help to change their citizens' lives did not even reach here.

siding with the peasants.¹⁹⁸ Furthermore, the differences between the portrayals of the village teacher in the novels of Apaydın and Baykurt, which was explained in the previous chapter, also stem from their different experiences. For instance, Apaydın’s village teacher figures are alone in the village and the peasants do not support him. In *Define*, İdris says, “In every subject, the villagers and *Hoca* would have the opposite opinion, but every time, the villagers ended up doing what the *Hoca* wanted” (Apaydın, 1972:82). In his memoir, Apaydın himself complained about this issue in almost the same terms as İdris: “Our destiny was an odd one. We were on the people’s side, but the people did not embrace us. They did not even know about us. The enemy of the common folk would blindly put the blame on us for everything. We would be insulted in the ugliest way”¹⁹⁹ (2012:115). In contrast, Baykurt’s village teacher figures are always able to support the peasants and the peasants stand shoulder to shoulder with them. For example, in *Amerikan Sargısı*, when the Turkish and American officials force the village teacher Cemal to leave the village, the peasants say: “They came here and everything changed for the worse. And, in the end, we lost a good teacher. You were unique and you stood out from the crowd” (Baykurt, 1967:253). In response, Cemal stresses that he and the peasants constitute a “we” and that they will struggle together: “We will illuminate this darkness with our fire” (Baykurt, 1967:253). Like the village teacher in his novel, Baykurt writes in his memoir that the people support the village teachers. He complains about the dominant forces, not the villagers: “The administration sided against us, the teachers from the village institutes. The police department is watching us. Even if the common folk sides with us, the darkness overcomes our light” (1999:5).²⁰⁰ However, for both Apaydın and Baykurt, being a village teacher means struggling for the people whether or not the peasants support him and this constitutes the idea of awakening the people.

¹⁹⁸ Baykurt collected his memories of his teaching career in his books *Kavacık Köyünün Öğretmeni* and *Köşe Bucak Anadolu*. For further information, see Fakir Baykurt, 1999, *Kavacık Köyünün Öğretmeni (Özyaşam 3)*, İstanbul:Papirüs.

¹⁹⁹ “Bir garip yazgıydı bizim yazgımız. Halktan yanaydık ama halk bize sahip çıkmıyordu. Haberi bile yoktu. Onun düşmanları ise bizleri gözü kapalı suçluyorlardı. En ağır hakaretlerle aşağılıyorlardı.”

²⁰⁰ “Baştaki yönetim köy enstitülü öğretmenlere cephe almış. Karakol peşimizde. ... Halk bizi tutsa da karakış sert, karanlığın gücü bastırıyor”

On the other hand, the teacher in the village is among those described by Apaydın as “the literate figures who distance themselves from the people,” as “those who drifted away from the people” by Makal, and as “boulevard intellectuals” by Baykurt. These intellectuals are not directly seen in the novels because they are not willing to go to the villages; however, the mentality of this kind of intellectual is discussed through the figure of the teacher in the village who is forced to come to the village as part of his work for the state. Thus, their voices parallel the authors’ depictions of such intellectuals. For instance, the teacher Nurten in the village in Baykurt’s *Amerikan Sargısı* express the distance between herself and the villagers and her effort to escape from the village by saying, “I am not going to stay in your village, why would I bother mingling?” (Baykurt, 1967:261). In addition, the teacher Ertan despises the villagers, saying: “Peasants are very backwards. They live in dust and mulch. I would refrain from eating what they cook! And they are so rude, they don’t know how to discuss things” (Baykurt, 1967:199).

Thirdly, the dominant bloc, consisting of the state forces, the bourgeoisie, including domestic and foreign capital, and the men of religion, is also portrayed in line with the authors’ political and ideological stances. As was explained throughout the third chapter, these components of the dominant bloc are defined in the novels by the clientelistic ties between them and their exploitation of religion, with particular reference to the governments of the DP and the JP. For the authors, these are the “real intentions” of these constituents of the dominant bloc. The authors attempt to show them in their “true colors” in every situation. Thus, these governments’ economic policies supporting the peasants and their social policies that attempted to accommodate the people’s way of life are not given a place in the village novels.²⁰¹ Instead, for the authors, whatever this bloc does is for the sake of its own profits, not for the people. For this reason, in Baykurt’s *Amerikan Sargısı*, the state officials, American bureaucrats, and Turkish bourgeoisie come together to profit from the village’s natural resources by deceiving the peasants. Apaydın’s *Define* tells an

²⁰¹ For the economic policies of the DP and JP supporting the peasants and their social approaches to the peasants, see Feroz Ahmad (1993), *The Making of Modern Turkey*, London:Routledge, pp:105, 115-6, 139, 153.

almost identical story. However, a more apparent sign of the authors' ideological shaping of these characters is that they all are described as holding negative attitudes towards the peasants' education. Since the authors see the existing education system as based on inequalities and regard education as primarily aimed at awakening the peasants and developing the country, those they oppose ideologically and politically are portrayed as standing against the education of the peasants. For instance, in Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, the big landowner Durâna does not allow his daughter to go to school, and this gives rise to many conflicts with the village teacher. In fact, this attitude of the big landowner is seen in many village novels and is attributed to religious figures. Furthermore, the big landowners and the state are portrayed as bearing responsibility for the hierarchical structure of education. For instance, whereas the big landowner Hilmi Bey in Apaydın's *Ortakçılar*, who is one of the representatives of the agrarian bourgeoisie and has strong ties with the government but at the same time supports the DP's opposition, sends his children to European countries and colleges in Turkey's big cities for their education, he supports the closure of the Village Institutes and, thus, the annulment of the peasant children's right to education. Another example reflecting the hierarchical structuring of education can be found in Baykurt's *Tirpan*. In this novel, the peasants come together to write a letter to the government requesting a new teacher for the village because the current one does not care about the children's education. However, the state does not appoint an adequate teacher, though at the same time it gives great opportunities to the children of the rich.

As Benk (2000:556) argues, in the village novels the authors constantly intervene in the discourse of the characters and the descriptions, explaining what they want to say and what they represent. Since the characters are obviously given political-ideological features in line with the authors' points of view, it is hard to see the village novels as dialogic in Bakhtinian terms. Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that they show heteroglossic features in their intertextual context. First of all, these novels base their stories on "the others" of society. The peasants, as a neglected part of society, were nowhere more apparent than in the novels of the institute graduates in the period in which they were written. By way of these novels, the peasants

entered Turkish literature with their hard living conditions, their poverty, their oppression and exploitation, their traditional values, their own ways of living, their sorrow, their own dialect, and so forth. Even though the authors put their own voices in the peasants' mouths, they themselves had experienced the difficulties of village life, grew up with traditional values, confronted the humiliation of being peasants, and faced otherization in society; as such, their depiction of the peasant bears a sort of reality. Furthermore, this kind of image was also used to criticize the authors of the novels, with their critics dismissing them as peasant authors, semi-intellectuals, or lumpen intellectuals.

4.3- The Village Novels and the Turkish Left

As mentioned in chapter two, the Village Institutes in which the authors were educated in the 1940s in line with Kemalist principles and the leftist opposition which they supported in the 1960s had a significant impact on their political and literary ideas. Particularly for this reason, whereas the impact of Kemalism is more dominant in their works written and published in the 1950s, their novels written and published in the 1960s reflect both a Kemalist influence and the views of the Turkish left, but place more emphasis on the latter. Since only four village novels -- Makal's *Bizim Köy*, Apaydın's *Sarı Traktör* and *Yarbükü*, and Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* -- were written in the 1950s, the majority of these works belong to the 1960s and bear the traces of the Turkish left. Particularly for this reason, the village novels also coincide with the Turkish left's rise in the Turkish novel at the time (Türkeş, 2007:1053).

The Village Institutes were a product of Kemalist-populist-peasantist ideology and worked under its principles, as was explained in the second chapter. However, though the Village Institutes were a product of Kemalist ideology, they did not strictly adhere to that ideology. And though the authors were educated in the institutes, their ideas sometimes diverged from those of the institutes. Therefore, in addition to the influence of their education in institutes, some divergence between the authors' ideas and those of the institutes can be observed in their novels.

One of the most important effects of Kemalist ideology on the Village Institutes could be found in their explanation of the underlying causes of the backwardness of the village and the peasants, which emphasized natural difficulties and insufficient technology, rather than social relations and social inequalities. This was in accordance with their rejection of class conflicts in society (Karaömerlioğlu, 2006:100-1). However, in the institute graduates' novels, even though natural difficulties and insufficient technology are cited as causes of the backwardness of the village, this explanation took a back seat to social relations and social hierarchies. Here, it should be mentioned that the stress on social relations and hierarchies is clearly apparent in the novels written in the 1960s under the influence of the Turkish left. In the novels written in the 1960s, the state's negative role in social relations of production and that of the big landowners becomes more prominent in the narrative. For instance, Baykurts' *Irazca'nın Dirliđi*, written in the early 1960s, tells of a crop disease that damages agricultural production and harms the peasants' living conditions (Baykurt, 1961:13). However, in Baykurt's *Kaplumbağalar*, written in the second half of the 1960s, the focus shifts from a natural disaster to the state's negative role on the peasants' production and living conditions. The peasants grow grapes without much difficulty, but the state seizes their land and stops them from harvesting the grapes. The state is portrayed as a malevolent force, described as digging its "iron nails" into the peasants (Baykurt, 2008:318). Similarly, Apaydın's novels written in the 1950s, *Sarı Traktör* and *Yarbükü*, emphasize natural difficulties such as drought, the scarcity of irrigation water, and very hot summers, and technical problems such as the primitive and insufficient means of production used by the peasants. However, in the 1960s, his novels *Emmiođlu* and *Ortakçılar* in particular tell stories of peasants who work as sharecroppers on the lands of big landowners. These novels do not focus on natural difficulties, but on the big landowners who unjustly expropriate the peasants' products (Apaydın, 1961:286; 2007:26).

Similarly, the source of the idea of awakening the peasants, which is a crucial part of the institute graduates' discourses in their novels, can be found in the Kemalist tradition with its specific focus on enlightenment. However, there is a basic

divergence between enlightening the peasants and awakening them: Whereas the former means taking the bureaucrats' and intellectuals' knowledge down to the people, the vast majority of whom are peasants (Karpat, 1963:65), and trying to change their lives from above, the latter means providing education for the peasants that is compatible with their material conditions and showing them how they are oppressed and exploited so that they can have a voice about the relations in which they live and change their own circumstances. In this context, the authors' idea of awakening the peasants coincides with the idea of "the regeneration of the village from inside in a meaningful and conscious way" advocated by Tonguç (Tonguç quoted in Timur, 2008:212). For Tonguç, the village already has valuable resources and as a result of the "emanation of the village resources," "the peasants, like other citizens, gained and exercised their rights and nobody could insult or exploit them" (Aytemur, 2009:105). For Tonguç, the regeneration of the village is more or less a systematic procedure that must be supported by the state and this was the mission of the Village Institutes; however, the awakening of the peasant refers to the teacher's daily struggle against reactionary forces when there is no possibility of applying such a regeneration program supported by the state after the closure of the Village Institutes. Recalling the authors' ideas as expressed in the TÖS' texts, explained in the second chapter, awakening the people in general is presented as the main principle of the pedagogical dimension of revolution. As teachers, they claim to adopt this principle, which is actualized by imbuing children with political consciousness through education and undertaking this duty for the oppressed and exploited parts of society that remain outside of the school. Therefore, the village teacher in the novels acts as a revolutionary figure and tries to imbue the schoolchildren with political consciousness and mobilize the peasants in the village against the dominant bloc. For instance, some village teachers in the novels try to awaken the schoolchildren and the peasants to the threat of imperialism, reflecting the anti-imperialist tendency that marked the Turkish left and the TÖS in the 1960s. In Apaydın's *Define*, the village teacher İdris warns his students against the American Corc, who came from the US and appears in the novel as the representative of foreign capital and imperialist forces (Apaydın, 1972:47). The village teacher Cemal does the same in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*. In addition, the

village teachers in Apaydın's novels try to awaken the people against the dominant forces, including the big landowners and men of religion, by explaining to them how they are oppressed and exploited by these forces. While the village teachers in Baykurt's novels try to do the same, they also make a significant effort to mobilize the peasants against these forces.

Contrary to common belief, the figure of the progressive village teacher does not have a place in every village novel. The village teacher figure entered these novels as a progressive character with his duty of awakening the peasants in 1961, when the authors' leftist tendencies began to solidify. Before Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy*, written in 1961, there were six village novels, and none of them featured this kind of village teacher. Only in Apaydın's *Sarı Traktör*, written in 1958, is there such a village teacher before this point; even then, he is not imbued with the duty of awakening the peasants. Rather, he only establishes close relations with the peasants and becomes one of them. In addition, Baykurt's *Irazca'nın Dirliği*, written in 1961, mentions a teacher in the city that Kara Bayram and his family move to. He is the teacher of Kara Bayram's son and encourages him to continue his education. But starting with Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* in 1961 almost all of the village novels feature village teachers with more revolutionary ideas who try to awaken and mobilize the peasants. In this sense, the village teacher and his principle of awakening the peasants parallel the authors' leftist tendencies more than Kemalism's principles of enlightenment and modernization.

It is, therefore, necessary to examine further the impact of the Turkish left on these novels. Because the village novels written make direct references to contemporary political discussions, government policies, and social problems, their language is noticeably politicized. Hence, it may be argued that the discussions in the Turkish left to which the authors' ideas are articulated constitute the background of these novels. By looking at the authors' writings on literature and politics and the declarations of the TÖS, which were prepared with significant contributions from them, the second chapter pointed out that, rather than proposing an alternative political route or taking a definite stance, their ideas were aimed at ongoing debates

on the Turkish left. Thus, their novels are also marked by numerous trends, including left-Kemalism, socialism, and left-of-center politics.

The idea of educating the people and modernizing their culture rather than dismissing them or their values bears parallels with Kemalist-modernist principles,²⁰² under which the peasants and their traditional values are deemed valuable but at the same time primitive and in need of modernization. Since they understood this modernization to be part of what they called “awakening the people,” left-Kemalists criticized Kemalism for its inability to touch the people’s lives and its lack of adherence to the principle of populism. This kind of criticism can be found in the village novels,²⁰³ but it remained a soft criticism in the sense that it merely accused Kemalism of not living up to its promises. After Makal’s *Bizim Köy*, however, the dissonance between Kemalist-modernist principles and the people’s actual way of living has been subjected to critique. For instance, in *Bizim Köy*, Makal criticizes the national dress code:

Üst başa gelince... Onu anlatmak değme babayiğidin harcı değil. Neresini anlatayım bilmem ki. İşlikte koltukların altındaki o kömür karasını mı? Omuz başlarından dışarı vuran kirini mi? Yoksa aklına estikçe cartadan bir kenarından yırtarak parmağına sardığı donunu mu?

Bir de uygarlığın istemlerine uygun kılık kıyafet yasa çıkarmamış mıyız!²⁰⁴ (1970:80)

In this sense, Makal’s focus is on the insufficiency of modernizing laws to lead the peasants out of their backwardness. Similarly, in *Tütün Yorgunu* Apaydın concentrates on the role of intellectuals and one of the intellectuals who supports the people criticizes the new state in terms of its lack of contact with the populace:

Kurtuluş savaşından sonra kurulan devlet halkın devleti olacaktı. Halkın yaşamını düzeltecekti. Giderek yozlaştırdılar, halktan uzaklaştırdılar. Halk dağda belde gene

²⁰² See Necmi Erdoğan, 1998, Popüler Anlatılar ve Kemalist Pedagoji, *Birikim*, 105-106, p.117.

²⁰³ For left-Kemalism’s criticism of Kemalism, see Gökhan Atılğan (2002), *Yön-Devrim Hareketi*, İstanbul: Tütsav Yayınları, p:81, 117, 212.

²⁰⁴ When it comes to his appearance, I don't even know where to start. Shall I start with his armpits? They were black as a coal while he was in the workshop. His dirt looked as if it pushed itself out from his body, which was visible from his shoulders... Or shall I tell you about his underwear, the underwear that he had to tear into pieces, when he needed a bandage for his finger? Did we not obey the rules of civilization and follow the dress code law?

dayanaksız tutanaksız kaldı. Bu neyi gösterir? Devletin halka hâlâ ulaşamadığını gösterir.²⁰⁵ (Apaydın, 1975:75-6)

On the same topic, Baykurt mentions the necessity of the “infrastructural revolution” championed by Ecevit, because the people’s way of living cannot be changed simply by reforms to the alphabet, measurements, or clothing (Baykurt, 1969:1). Thus, it was necessary for the government to touch the people’s lives. However, neither Atatürk nor those who came to power after him were successful in this and the people’s lives were never changed for the better. In *Kaplumbağalar*, the wise man says of this issue:

[Kurtuluş Savaşı’nın üstünden] otuz, belki daha fazla yıl geçti. ... bizim halimiz işte! Otuz, belki daha fazla yıl önce neyse bugün de o! Kuyumuz, suyumuz aynı! Günümüz, kölgemiz, arpamız, buğdayımız aynı! Kıracın üstünde belki daha da kötü olduk. Algılar vergiler arttı. Gâvur içimize yeniden doldu. Şih deye tutuklarımız şeytan çıktı. Kurtuluşumuz daha da zorlaştı. Şu yediğim aşı, içtiğim çorbaya, hükümetin jandarmasına, tahsildarına bakıyorum da, biz daha kurtuluş savaşına başlamadık; Kemal Paşa caydı mı, ne yaptı; bizi öyle bir savaşa çağırmadı derim. O unuttu, yerine gelenler unuttu.²⁰⁶ (Baykurt, 2008:73)

Also, Baykurt’s novels have the unique trait of not necessarily characterizing supporters of Atatürk as progressive figures. For instance, the big landowner Kabak Musdu in *Tırpan* oppresses the peasants and exploits their labor, but he is a strong supporter of Atatürk and does not permit anyone to disparage him (2003:97). By looking at the political discourses of the 1960s, Aydınöglü (1992:39-40) argues that Kemalism became a meeting point for defenders of the existing order and those who aimed at a new order. Among the works of all the institute graduates, Kemalism’s contradictory character is most apparent in Baykurt’s works.

²⁰⁵ The state that was established after the War of Independence was promised to be the people’s state. The people’s way of living was supposed to improve. ... But they corrupted it over time and they fell away from the people. The people were left without any support and nothing improved in their lives. ... What does this show? It shows, my friend, that the state is unable to come to the level of the people

²⁰⁶ It has been more than thirty years since we won the Independence War, and here is our situation! We are exactly the same as we were 30 years ago. Our water is the same, our day and night are the same. Our product is still the same. You could say we are even worse than we were now. We have more taxes and we need to buy more things now. Foreigners infiltrated us in different ways. The people we trusted and praised turned out to be evil. Our salvation became more and more difficult. When I look at the food I eat, and the military police we have, and the government tax collector, it seems to me that we have not even started our War of independence. I would say that both Kemal Pasha and his successors forgot about the war and no one took part in it.

Secondly, the dominant bloc in the novels, consisting of the state, the bourgeoisie, and the big landowners, is a product of the authors' leftist and socialist ideas. Without exception, all of the village novels suggest that the dominant forces are in league with each other and constitute the underlying cause of the corrupt social order. The state officials, domestic and foreign capitalists, and *ağas* in the novels are seen as enemies of the peasants, as in Ecevit's discourse; however, to the extent that they have strong ties with each other and constitute a dominant bloc against the peasants, they are seen as something like "compradors," as in the Turkish left's discourse. In some situations, these forces are given specific descriptive names according to the plot. For instance, the "snakes" in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* and the "local and foreign exploiters" in Apaydın's *Define* function in this way. In *Yılanların Öcü*, there is a story about Irazca's husband's experience with snakes. In the past, when everyone in the village was afraid of snakes but did nothing about them, Irazca's husband killed the leader of the snakes, Şahmaran. From that day, the snakes sought revenge. They went into houses and tried to bite the peasants. In this sense, they are real snakes that frighten the villagers. However, in the story the snakes also represent the dominant forces (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969). After Irazca and her family are treated unjustly by the *muhtar*, who is a big landowner and supporter of the DP, and the state forces such as the gendarmerie, Irazca's statement, "The snakes take revenge!"²⁰⁷ identifies the dominant forces with the snakes. Similarly, in Apaydın's *Define*, in which the peasants are tricked by a deputy, a domestic capitalist, and a foreign capitalist, the village teacher defines them as local and foreign exploiters.

Another reflection of the authors' leftist and socialist ideas is the broad space given to explanations of exploitative relations of production and inequality of resource distribution in their works. In particular, Apaydın's *Ortakçılar*, *Emmioğlu*, *Yoz Davar*, and *Tütün Yorgunu* provided detailed narrations of the working conditions of the peasants. These are stories of peasants who work all year for the big landowners but do not get what their labor deserves and those who have small lands to produce and whose products are undervalued by the state. So the peasants are presented as

²⁰⁷ "Yılanlar öç alıyorlar"

being exploited by the big landowners, the state, and the moneylenders. Baykurt, on the other hand, tells the stories of peasants whose lands are seized by the state and the big landowners in *Yılanların Öcü*, *Onuncu Köy*, and *Kaplumbağalar*.

In line with the priorities of the leftist movements of this period, the necessity of organizing against the dominant forces is brought to the fore in the village novels. Getting rid of these forces requires a collective struggle. However, significant resistance remains elusive in the novels and this is mostly because of the authors' belief that the struggle should remain within legal boundaries. As explained in the second chapter, the authors' understanding of socialism bore significant parallels with Aybar's libertarian socialism and they argued that because the 1961 constitution allowed for a socialist struggle, the masses should become capable of exercising their collective will and putting an end to the corruption of the existing order within the limits of the law.

In addition to the Turkish left's impact on the village novels, the impact of these novels on the Turkish left must also be examined. Not only the village novels written by institute graduates, but also those by other authors had a significant impact on the youth who wanted to go to the villages to mobilize the peasantry for a revolutionary struggle in the late 1960s and 1970s (Türkeş, 2001:220). Türkeş states: "The stories of the poor peasants and exploitative relations of production narrated in these novels did not change the state's negative policies towards the peasants but constituted an evidence for the necessity of a revolutionary struggle for the leftist movements so that, more than the Marxist-Leninist classics, these novels were 'reference books' for everyone who established a relationship with these movements" (2001:226). As mentioned above, although village novels were not only written by institute graduates, these graduates played a significant role in the village novels' rise to popularity among readers all around the country (Türkeş, 2007:1056). Indeed, the peasants' producer meetings and land occupations organized by DEV-GENÇ at the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s could be seen as realizations of the authors' hopes for their novels. As early as 1960, Baykurt wrote the story of peasants who succeeded in taking their land back from the *ağa* in *Onuncu Köy*. Again, in

Kaplumbağalar, he narrated the struggle of peasants against the state to rescue the land of the village on which they produce together for themselves, not for the state. In addition, In Apaydın's *Defîne* and *Tütün Yorgunu*, the peasants as agricultural producers could not subsist on agricultural production because of the state's negative policies and in *Ortakçılar* and *Emmioğlu* he discusses the big landowners' domination over the peasants. Although they did not achieve their goals, the peasants in these novels inwardly sought to struggle against the dominant forces. In fact, the authors not only wrote novels about the collective struggle of the peasants or the possibility of such a struggle, but also gave supported real peasant unions, producer meetings, and land occupations.

4.4- Village Novels, Folk Literature, and Socialist Realism

The novels of the institute graduates can be read as a significant break from the dominant relations of literary production in Turkey in terms of bringing the peasants' stories to the literary field as stories of the exploited and oppressed parts of the society and making a significant contribution to the creation of a village literature tradition with a close relationship with the Turkish left. In this regard, the two primary sources of inspiration for the authors' literary approaches were the folk literature tradition and socialist realism. While their relationship with the folk literature tradition does not constitute a common point in literary criticism of these novels, the authors' goal of writing novels in the tradition of socialist realism was frequently discussed.

On the one hand, the authors believed in the people's capacity to struggle against the dominant forces and for them it was possible to find examples of this ability in struggles of the people in folk literature. However, the extent to which this inspiration was reflected in the village novels is open to question. Certainly, many motifs of the folk tradition, including the people's traditions and everyday life practices, as well as their ways of life and speech, are given a significant place in these novels. However, in terms of highlighting the people's capacity for struggle, it can be argued that the institute graduates' novels were weak in comparison to the

folk literature tradition. Even though the authors state that they drew inspiration from the stories of folk heroes such as Koroğlu, Dadaloğlu, and Pir Sultan Abdal in their literary approach (Apaydın et al, 1971:7), the characters they portray in their novels do not reach the level of these heroes' capacity for struggle. In comparison to Yaşar Kemal's characters, who converge with the folk tradition in their insurrections against the state and big landowners, the figures in the institute graduates' novels remain rather passive. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the authors never dismiss the folk heroes, unlike Kemal Tahir. Instead, they always show their respect for them. Although the figures in their novels succeed in occupying lands that have been seized by big landowners -- especially in Baykurt's novels -- there is no insurgency against the state or its forces. In many situations, the peasants recognize the state's unjust attitude towards them, criticize it, and come up with strategies for collective struggle against it; however, this does not take the form of an attack on the state. Even though the authors focus on revolution and socialism, their characters avoid the use of force or violence against the state. The influence of Aybar's ideas on the authors' vision of peaceful socialism is obvious. They aspire to change the existing order, but believe this can be done within the boundaries of existing legislation as long as the people are awakened and able to protect their rights. In line with these ideas, the state is not to be abolished totally, but must be transformed into a state that consists of the people themselves and protects its citizens from exploitation and oppression.

On the other hand, in accordance with the authors' engagement with socialist ideas, as previously mentioned, they define their literary approach in terms of socialist realism. In fact, it can be argued that the organization of their village novels shows many parallels with socialist realism. As Oktay (2008:50) argues, the narrative structure of socialist realism is based on three categories: the victim, the guilty, and the messiah. Looking at the institute graduates' novels, it may be argued that the peasants fill the role of the victim, the dominant forces take the part of the guilty, and the village teacher figures as the messiah. For this reason, Bayrak (2000:63) and Özkırımlı (1991:122-4) see these novels as examples of socialist realism. However, as Timur (2002:381) rightly argues, despite these novels' parallels with socialist

realism, they cannot be treated as perfect examples of socialist-realist novels because socialist realism was born in an atmosphere in which socialism was being actively constructed and the Marxist worldview was dominant. Therefore, the “positive hero” or the messiah in socialist realism symbolizes the vanguard of the proletariat (Timur, 2002:382). But in the period when the village novels were written, there was no such atmosphere in Turkey to pave the way for the creation of a hero as a vanguard of the proletariat in literature (Timur, 2002:381-2). Nevertheless, even if these novels do not entirely fit the framework of socialist realism, they still bear some common themes. Although the village novels are not full-fledged works of socialist realism, they express crucial social realities under the influence of socialist realism.

As mentioned previously, the realism of the village novels was a common point of contention in discussions of whether or not they constituted works of socialist realism. For Kaplan (1997:560) and Çankaya (2013:61), these novels present an unrealistic and romanticized²⁰⁸ image of the peasant who is capable of taking collective action to secure his interests. Such characters are dismissed as “puppets” for the authors’ own ideological-political views or as “mouthpieces” presenting propaganda on behalf of their authors. In Baykurt’s novels, the peasants are mobilized by the village teacher for a collective struggle and in Apaydın’s novels, they do not give such a struggle but dream of acting collectively. As Timur (2002:156) argues, in the village novels realism is intertwined with romanticism and the peasants’ image bears romanticized features, especially in regard to their political discussions of social problems and their ability to act on or think of a vision of collective struggle. However, the idea of a politicized peasant and the peasants’ collective struggle were not literary myths in the period when the novels were written or in the following decade. Therefore, the peasant characters in these novels were also influenced by the real politicized peasants of the period. They were not unrealistic. They represented a rare but nonetheless valid social reality. A significant

²⁰⁸ Criticism of romanticized images of the peasants is used to dispute these novels’ claims to socialist realism. In other words, this criticism tries to show that they have romanticized their subjects and therefore cannot be considered socialist-realist works. However, romanticism, in Lukacs’ terms “revolutionary romanticism,” is prominent in socialist realism in its broad sense, distinguishing socialist realism from naturalism and critical realism. For further information, see György Lukacs (1971), *History and Class Consciousness*, London:Merlin, p.590.

example of this influence can be found in Baykurt's *Turpan*. It is clear that K r Celal in this story is based on a real peasant, Hamdoş, who was a T P supporter in the 1960s.

As mentioned in the second chapter, the authors participated in the T P's election campaign in 1965 and contributed to radio programs in which politicians, journalists, and writers spoke on behalf of the T P. In the same programs, the T P also featured a peasant from Gaziantep who was working for an *ađa*. As Aren (2006:119) notes, the T P found a peasant named Hamdoş, who had already been associated with the party through his friends. However, the party wanted to ensure that he could speak in an appropriate manner for the radio audience. Therefore, after listening to his story, Baykurt guided Hamdoş by writing his speech and coaching him on how to read it (Aren, 2006:119).²⁰⁹ Some parts of Hamdoş's speech were as follows:

Onlar diyorlar ki, "BEŞ PARMAĞIN BEŞİ BİR DEĐİL... ALLAH SİZİ IRGAT, BİZİ AĐA YARATMIŞ... .. [Ç]evir kazı yanmasın- K yl  iőçi uyanmasın". ... Onlar istesin istemesin biz uyanacađız. Bizde okuyacađız adam olacađız. Onların çocukları en y ksek r tbeleri g r rken, bizler hududtta n bet beklerken, biz n betimizi bekliyoruz, o mektebi bitiriyor. Bizim koruduđumuz g zel yurdumuzda, onlar ađa oluyor, patron oluyor, biz de iőçi ırgat oluyoruz. Bunun b yle olması i in kanunda emir mi yazılıymıő? ... Artık zaman deđiőti,  ilemin sonu geliyor. G zlerimiz a ılıyor. Ben zannederdimki ađam beni besliyor. Onun i in boyun kırardım. Ama  yle deđilmiő.  ğrendim ki ben ađamı beslermiőim. ... Bunun k lelikten ne farkı var kardaőlarım?²¹⁰ (1965:28-29).

Ama T RKİYE İŐÇİ PARTİSİ fakirlerden, iőçiden, k yl den kurulduđu i in b yle olmayacaktır. ... T rkiye İőçi

²⁰⁹ Hamdoş (Hamdi Dođan) wrote his memoirs nearly fifty years later, in 2014. In his book *T rkiye İőçi Partisine Aőık Oldum*, he expresses his sincere thanks to Baykurt and writes that he inspired and encouraged him to write his memoirs (Dođan, 2014:7).

²¹⁰ They say, "God created you as laborers and us as masters." Yeah go on, try to wriggle out of it, try to keep things secret from the worker peasants. No matter how they want to cheat us, we will wake up to the truth. We will get educated and enlightened, too. Their children get educated, while ours do military service. While ours wait for the service, theirs complete their schools. Their kids become the masters, bosses of the country that ours have been guarding. And we become the peasants and workers. But is this a rule or what? Does it have to be this way? Is this cycle the law of nature...? The worm is turned now, our misery ends now. Our eyes are opening. I used to think that my boss is the one who feeds me, so I thought I had to obey. However, I figured out that I am the one who feeds my boss... Can you tell me my friends, how is this different from slavery?

Partisi'nin listelerinde bir çok fakirler ve ırgatlıktan kalma arkadaşlarımız vardır. Milletimiz için bütün akıllarını sarfeden, fakirlerin halini çok iyi bilen okumuş kardaşlarımız vardır²¹¹ (1965:31).

Although the story, which consists of working for an *ağa*, supporting the TİP, and becoming aware of exploitation, is Hamdoş's own, it is clear that Baykurt modifies his speech by adding the necessity of education and being "awakened" against exploitative forces -- concepts that marked the discourses of the institute graduates and their novels. As it was, Hamdoş ended up sounding like a figure from Baykurt's novels. Indeed, several years later, Baykurt gave a place to a TİP supporter in *Tırpan*: Kör Celal, who makes his living playing the zurna. He is known as Kızılıbik because he supports the TİP. Someone in the village describes him as follows: "For your information, you know blind Celal from the Workers' Party, you are better off getting that dog watched closely. The reason is that he is poison! He says, 'We should act together and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat!'"²¹² (Baykurt, 2003:266). In another part of the novel, after the wise woman Uluguş puts up resistance against the *ağa*, Kör Celal declares: "Hurray Uluguş Nine!... We should let you talk on behalf of our party for the elections on the radio!"²¹³ (Baykurt, 2003:280). Under these circumstances, the character of Kör Celal is shaped by the author's political and ideological views, but he has his real roots in Hamdoş's story.

Another feature of these novels that has often been found unrealistic and romanticized is the teacher figure as a vanguard of the peasants. From the right-wing point of view, this figure is a result of undesirable ideologies, as in Peyami Safa's critique, because it is a product of the Village Institutes. From the left-wing perspective, as Belli (1976:102) and Boran (1976:104) argue, this figure was problematic because he represented part of a superstructural institution and therefore

²¹¹ As the Turkish Workers' Party consists of the workers and peasants, things will be different. The Workers' Party has a lot of people who used to be very poor and who used to be labourers. And the Workers' Party also has educated members, who know a lot about the situation of the poor and thus try to think about how to improve our society.

²¹² "Yalnız haberin olsun! O işçi partili Kör Celal var ya. ... Ardına bir adam taksan iyi edersin itin! Nedenine gelince, çok zehir saçıyor! 'Verelim el ele, proleterya diktatürası kuralım!' diyormuş!"

²¹³ "Yaşsa Uluguş Nine! ... Seçim zamanı seni götürüp bizim parti adına radyoda konuşuralım Uluguş Nine!"

should not have been extolled to such an extent. While Belli and Moran's criticism holds some water, it is important to recognize the two types of teacher represented in these novels, as discussed in chapter three. Particularly for this reason, these two figures are distinguished as 'the village teacher' and 'the teacher in the village' throughout this study. The village teacher figure is extolled in the novels because he is of the people, works with them on the land, adopts their problems as his own, defends them against the dominant forces, gives them the cultural and technical resources to defend themselves against these forces, and tries to mobilize them to defend themselves. As such, he is a member of the educational realm, as a superstructural institution, but is more like Gramsci's "organic intellectual" who aims to transform this superstructural institution itself. There is some debate over the extent to which this figure reflects a social reality in the particular case of Turkey in the 1950s and 1960s. However, as discussed in the second chapter in detail, in the 1960s the teachers who worked in rural areas and unionized under the TÖS converged to create such a figure by establishing close relationships with the peasants in their workplaces and making an effort to mobilize them against the dominant forces, as understood from their support of DEV-GENÇ's efforts to establish peasant unions and organize producer meetings and land occupations (Babuş, 2003:55).

As a common point of criticism, almost all critics accuse the village novels of "schematism," especially with respect to the authors' socialist-realist approach. As Moran (1990:182) argues, it is possible to find the following schema in the village novels: the poor peasants, the reactionary forces who oppress them and exploit their labor, and the redemptive figure who supports them. In every novel, society is divided into the "good" and the "bad." However, contrary to the claims of Cantek (2001:195), Safa (1972:42), and İlhan (1975), this cannot be characterized as a schematic division between the good-hearted peasant and the malevolent *ağa* or between the idealist teacher and the exploitative *muhtar*. Instead, many characters have both good and bad representations. For instance, there are good *kaymakams*, as in the case of Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* and Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu*, who are populists that take the peasants into consideration and help with their problems.

There are also bad *kaymakams*, like those in Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı* and Apaydın's *Define*, who only think of their own interests and participate in the state's negative policies towards the peasants. Especially in terms of these populist *kaymakams* and good state officials, Oktay (1990:71) sees these novels as reflecting their author's loyalty to the state despite their criticisms of it. However, for the authors, the state acts in accordance with the bourgeoisie, not with the people. Nevertheless, its elements are not homogenous, so there are still democratic petit-bourgeois state officials within it and those stands by the people (Tatarlı and Mollof, 1969:230). Therefore, rather than indicating the writers' loyalty to the state, such characters highlight the contradictory structure of the state and constitute the "good people" in corrupt institutions. In addition, the previously mentioned *muhtar* figure also has good and bad representations in these novels. Whereas the *muhtars* in Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* and *Irazca'nın Dirliği* and in Apaydın's *Tütün Yorgunu* and *Define* are oppressive defenders of the government's policies, those in Baykurt's *Kaplumağalar* and *Amerikan Sargısı* are portrayed as united with the peasants and sharing their fate. Even the peasants, in whose defense the authors wrote these novels, are given good and bad representations. For example, some peasants acknowledge the aims of the oppressive forces' and try to act in unison against them, as in Baykurt's *Tırpan* and Apaydın's *Ortakçılar*, while some of them think shrewdly and become instruments of the oppressive forces. To conclude, even though it is possible to qualify these novels as schematic in terms of their organization -- i.e., poor peasants, reactionary forces, and populist intellectuals -- many of the characters, such as peasants, teachers, and intellectuals, do not show same tendencies in every situation.

4.5- Concluding Remarks

This chapter aimed to clarify the village novels' intertextual context. To this end, it started by defining the chronotope of the village novels to see what kind of connection between time and space can be found in the novels and how this defines the plots and characters. It concluded that the village novels can be seen within the framework of modern versions of the idyllic chronotope. As such, the narration is

focused on the common places in which peasants live and work together during the time of work and their public time. Since the modern versions of this chronotope bear ideological aspects, it was argued that the narrative of the village novels is indexed to a social order in which the peasants are exploited. Therefore, it was understood that the main characters in these novels are defined within this chronotope not as consumers but as producers who are exploited by the dominant forces who are the sources of disharmony in the village.

The reciprocal relationship between the village novels and the Turkish left was also discussed. It was stressed that the authors' emphasis on exploitative relations of production and the oppression of the peasants in their novels coincides with their engagement with leftist ideas. In accordance with their political-ideological stances, as understood from the texts of the TİP and the TÖS, as well as the authors' memoirs, the authors position the characters generally within two groups with respect to the social polarization in the country and make them speak in line with their own views. As such, it was concluded that since the authors' political-ideological stances are so strongly felt in the characters' positioning and voices, these novels cannot be evaluated as dialogic in the Bakhtinian sense. Nevertheless, it was underlined that, particularly under the influence of socialist realism, these novels bring the oppressed and exploited parts of society into the literary field in a realistic manner and, as such, can be seen as heteroglossic in their intertextual context. Also, the relationship between folk literature, socialist realism, and the village novels was examined. It was acknowledged that the village novels are closer to socialist realism than folk literature in terms of their content and organization.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has aimed to examine the village novels written by Village Institute graduates between the years 1950 and 1980 in an intertextual context. It has attempted to understand how the village novels interacted with the socio-political atmosphere of the country at the time and with their narrators' political-ideological discourses. To this end, the thesis has tried to analyze the relational organization of the village novels and look at their characters in relational terms.

Attempting to examine the socio-political context in which they were written, this study has drawn attention to the developments that paved the way for the village novels. Two experiments of the early Republican period, the People's Houses and the Village Institutes, with their focuses on modernization and enlightenment, are crucial for understanding the background of the village novels. The People's Houses, and especially their Peasant Branches and People's Rooms, were the extensions of Kemalist-populist-peasantist ideology. This ideology was marked by an elitism aimed at establishing relations with the peasantry from above. However, these institutions' special focus on educating villagers to create a modern nation from the country's rural population gave rise to the foundation of the Village Institutes. The Village Institutes were still a continuation of Kemalist-populist-peasantist ideology, with which they attempted to imbue the peasants. However, they succeeded in establishing close relations with peasant children by taking their living conditions into consideration and improving their lives both culturally and technically. In these circumstances, the authors, as Village Institute students, were indoctrinated with Kemalist-populist ideology and they developed their cultural background in these institutions, which made it possible for them to write their novels.

This thesis has been sensitive to how the authors' political and literary perceptions took shape within the socio-political conditions of the country. Amidst the transition to a multi-party regime in Turkey, the rise of the DP opposition, the RPP's decision to close down the Village Institutes, employment discrimination against institute graduates, and political pressure against their literary works led the authors to more radical views. With the help of the 1961 constitution, which provided relatively more freedom for political organizing, their leftist tendencies crystallized in the 1960s in their support for the TIP and their struggle under the TÖS. In this period, the authors produced texts, i.e. TÖS declarations and journal articles, and compiled works laying out their social and political critiques, in which they clarified their points of view. At a time when political-ideological polarization between the right and the left took hold in the country, the authors consistently sided with the left. The variety of positions that marked the debates of the Turkish left in the 1960s, from Aybar's libertarian socialism to the left-Kemalists' non-capitalist mode of development and Ecevit's infrastructural revolution, colored their discourse in the texts they produced. Furthermore, the authors' articulation in the political field did not remain at an intellectual level; rather, they used and supported leftist methods of organization in practice. More importantly, the relationship between the authors as organized teachers and leftist organizations (especially youth organizations) became symbiotic in terms of providing mutual support in the field of struggle.

In addition, the authors' literary attitudes and leftist perspectives developed along parallel lines. By the 1960s, they started to defend socialist realism and tried to adopt a socialist-realist point of view in their literary works. For them, the socialist-realist trajectory was capable of leading society on a revolutionary path. Within the realm of socialist realism, they highlighted the class character of literature and argued for the necessity of telling the stories of the working classes, who constituted the poor majority of the county, unlike the prevailing literature in Turkey. In that sense, in addition to their goal of transforming the political field by supporting leftist parties and organizations and struggling as teachers under the TÖS, their goal was to transform the literary field for the sake of this majority. In line with these aspirations, they saw their novels as a "means for struggle."

Under these circumstances, even though the Kemalist-populist-peasantist ideology, in a sense, made the village novels possible, these works were largely shaped under the influence of the Turkish left. As opposed to the Kemalist ideology, which rejects the existence of classes, class conflicts, and social hierarchies in society, the village novels narrated the stories of the oppressed and exploited classes, as well as the conflict and hierarchy between them and their oppressors.

In accordance with the points explained above, this thesis has tried to present the organization of the village novels in relational and comprehensive terms. The novels written by the institute graduates known as the "three peasants of Turkish literature" are representative examples of the village literature tradition. They can be considered within the framework of the idyllic chronotope, in which the time/space matrix takes the common times and spaces of the peasants' lives and labor into consideration. In line with the modern forms of this chronotope, the village novels highlight disharmony in the village. These novels build their narrative around an antagonistic relationship between the oppressed/exploited peasants and the oppressive/exploitative segments of society. The themes of these novels vary by agricultural sectors (rice growing, tobacco farming, or shepherding) or incidents that arise in village life (struggles for land, water conflicts, or grape harvests). No matter how varied the themes these novels, however, they are always structured around this basic antagonism.

The oppressed and exploited side of the antagonism refers to poor villagers who are smallholders whose land is not sufficient for their subsistence. Therefore, in many cases, it is necessary for them to work as laborers, sharecroppers, or shepherds on the lands of the big landowners. Since the time period in which these novels were written saw the rise of migration from rural areas to urban areas, the villagers in these stories are also seen being obliged to migrate from their villages to urban areas where they work as porters, doormen, or maids. On the other hand, the oppressive and exploitative side of the antagonism refers to a dominant bloc containing several

components. The first component corresponds to the state and its bureaucratic extensions, such as state personnel and state institutions. In the novels, the state worsens peasants' economic and social conditions by implementing ineffective policies or undervaluing the products of their labor. Other components of the power block fall within the scope of the state but have their features represented in specific characters. The *muhtar*, for instance, is portrayed as the government's representative in the village. For the authors of these novels, the state in general and the government, as its executive force, mesh with an unjust and corrupt order so that this character who gains strength from the government brings unjust relations into the village. Similar to the *muhtar*, the *ağa*, the *bey*, and Americans coming to the village are parts of the corrupt order, but their mission is tied to domestic and foreign capital in these novels. Whereas the *ağa* symbolizes a relic of feudalism, with its primitive and repressive features, relatively more modern reflexes compatible with capitalism characterize the *bey*. Nevertheless, these two figures represent different aspects of the agrarian bourgeoisie and domestic capital, which are crucial for the capitalist transformation of agriculture. On the subject of foreign capital, American merchants or American state officials occupy a significant place in the novels. They are portrayed as coming into Turkish villages thanks to the Marshall Plan and oppressing peasants under the pretense of "aid" or "support." Another important component of the oppressor side of the antagonism corresponds to religious figures such as the *imam*, the *hacı*, or the *hoca* in the village. These characters are depicted as being supportive of the oppressive forces and making the peasants submissive to the corrupt order by exploiting religion. The last component consists of urban intellectuals who ignore the people in general, and the peasants, as the majority of the country, in particular. Although they do not directly oppress or exploit villagers, they pave the way for the domination of the peasants by distancing themselves from them and ignoring their problems.

Even though an antagonistic relationship characterizes the village novel, it should be noted that this antagonism is not a rigid one. In spite of the corrupt order and its corrupt institutions, there are still good people in such institutions who do not become instruments of this order. Although state personnel generally take a negative

attitude towards the peasants in these novels, some of them are seen as supporting the peasants. For instance, the *kaymakam* is generally portrayed as a character who carries out the state's negative policies; however, there are also *kaymakams* who take the peasants' problems as their own and give them support. The same is true for *muhtars*. Even though the *muhtar* is identified with forces outside the village, namely the government, in some cases he is depicted as one of the villagers, not as opposed to them. Furthermore, regardless of the writers' obvious opposition to the US, even an American character can be seen as a good person -- the best of a bad bunch -- who understands the peasants' difficult conditions and criticizes American-Turkish cooperation. These characters are rare in these novels, but they exist nonetheless. In the case of urban intellectuals, the authors are more optimistic about their support for the peasants. Some petit bourgeois intellectuals, such as the *müfettiş* and the doctor who pass through the village, struggle for the peasants or try to find solutions to their problems. Within this bilateral antagonism, there is one character who is always seen on the peasants' side: the village teacher who is originally a villager and devotes himself to the peasants' emancipation from the corrupt order.

As one of the main focuses of this thesis is to point out other texts to which these novels are connected, it has shown how the authors' leftist tendencies are reflected in the organization discussed above. The narrative shifts in the village novels have been highlighted for their links to the authors' own political paths. In this regard, it is important to see that after the authors' leftist tendencies crystallized in the 1960s with their support of the TIP and their organization under the TÖS, and after their adoption of socialist realism, there were significant shifts in the narratives of the village novels. Firstly, whereas the natural difficulties confronting village life were at the forefront of the novels written before the 1960s, from the 1960s onwards they focused on difficulties created by the state. Secondly, the novels written before the 1960s show the peasants being oppressed by the big landowners, but they do not explain this issue as based on exploitative relations of production. But starting in the 1960s, the narrative of the big landowners becomes tied to the narration of the inequalities of exploitative production and distribution relations. Thirdly, the village

teacher, as a figure who struggles against the dominant forces for the sake of and together with the peasants, becomes prominent in the novels written in the 1960s. Fourthly, the novels which portray the peasants in an actual collective struggle or as thinking of engaging in such a struggle also coincide with the 1960s. Finally, an anti-imperialist narrative also starts to mark the novels written in this period in which the authors developed their leftist perspectives.

The influence of the authors' political-ideological stances on these novels' narratives also resulted in the characters being imbued with their own perspectives and speaking in line with their points of view. For instance, the village teachers in the novels behave in accordance with the TÖS's principle of "revolutionary education." While equipping the village children with cultural and technical means, the village teacher figures also tend to imbue them with political consciousness. Parallel to the TÖS's arguments, these teachers do not "teach" worthless information but "educate" their students in order for them to be able to see social realities. Furthermore, their duties go beyond the bounds of the school. They also confront the problems of the village and try to "awaken" the peasants and mobilize them against the dominant forces. As such, he resembles what Gramsci calls the "organic intellectual," as do the authors themselves.

The dominant forces are also portrayed in a manner that reflects the authors' critical attitudes towards them. In addition to their alliance with each other, their clientelistic ties, and their exploitation of religion to pacify the peasants, they are shown with a hostile attitude towards the peasants' education. For instance, the big landowners are opposed to sending their children to school, the state's educational system is for the sake of the rich, not for the poor peasants, resulting in an educational hierarchy, the men of religion dismiss the educational focuses of the village teachers, and the teachers appointed to the villages from outside are not interested in the peasants' education but concentrate on their own interests.

The peasants are also portrayed in accordance with the authors' political-ideological perspectives. On the one hand, they are portrayed as passive agents stuck between the oppression of the big landowners and religious superstitions, and compared with "blind moles," "worms," and "sheep." The peasants in the novels behave and speak in ways that re-produce such images. However, it is emphasized that these peasants are degraded in this way by the dominant forces. Furthermore, the authors' show resentment toward the peasants for their inability to struggle collectively against these forces. On the other hand, in some situations, the peasants are portrayed as "wise" and "capable" of taking action or thinking in terms of collective struggle. In accordance with the authors' leftist tendencies, the peasants' wisdom and capabilities are connected not to some national essence, as understood by Kemalism, but to their potential for such struggle.

This obvious ideological intervention in the behaviors and voices of the village novels' characters also results in muting the characters' voices. The characters' voices may not always coincide with their authors' voices, but they are always tied to the authors' views intrinsically or extrinsically. Consequently, the village novels cannot be deemed dialogic, as this requires the possibility of independent consciousness and the placement of the characters "in a zone of potential conversation with the author" (Bakhtin, 1981:45).

Nevertheless, it has been argued in this study that these novels retain heteroglossic features in their intertextual context. First of all, they tell the stories of "the others" in society. By way of these novels, the peasants, the neglected part of society, entered Turkish literature with their hard life conditions, their poverty, their oppression and exploitation, their traditional values, their own way of living, their sorrows, and their own dialects. Secondly, these novels express the "otherness" of the peasant image, an object of humiliation and spite in Turkish society. Indeed, the authors themselves confronted such an image by being dismissed as "lumpen" authors and "semi-intellectuals" because of their "peasant" origins.

This thesis has also stressed the social effects of the village novels. These novels succeeded in drawing the attention of society to village issues with a broader readership. In particular, the authors who were also village teachers when their novels were written played an important role in bringing their novels to several regions in Anatolia. Furthermore, they played an important part in the creation of a village literature tradition in a country in which the peasants were the majority. More importantly, these novels not only turned the readers' attention to village issues but guided those who believed in the necessity of mobilizing the peasants for revolutionary struggle. For the revolutionary youth of the period, these books had a more practical meaning and became reference books even more than the Marxist and socialist classics. In this sense, these novels were not only affected by leftist ideas, but also affected the Turkish left practically.

As Eagleton (1996:11) argues, to read any literary work is also to re-write it in a different context. In his words, "There is no reading of a work which is not also a 're-writing.'" In this sense, this thesis has attempted to read the village novels with other texts as far as they permit and to re-write them in an intertextual context. Hence, it has not made any pretense of presenting the most true or accurate reading of these novels; rather, it has attempted to propose an alternative reading of them.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

NOVEL SUMMARIES

This study examines 14 novels written by Village Institute graduates in between 1950 and 1980. In addition to Makal's *Bizim Köy*, seven novels by Apaydın, *Sarı Traktör* (1958), *Yarbükü* (1959), *Emmioğlu* (1961), *Ortakçılar* (1964), *Define* (1972), *Tütün Yorgunu* (1975), and *Yoz Davar* (1976) and six novels by Baykurt, *Yılanların Öcü* (1959), *Irazca'nın Dirliği* (1961), *Onuncu Köy* (1961), *Kaplumbağalar* (1967), *Amerikan Sargısı* (1967), and *Tirpan* (1971) are examined in this study.

In *Bizim Köy*, Makal tells of his own experiences in two Central Anatolian villages. The first is the village of Demirci, which is Makal's hometown and also where he taught after his institute education, and the second is Nürgöz, where he was appointed after his time in Demirci. The events of the book are told through the eyes of a fellow villager and a village teacher. In both situations, Makal tries to describe the village from within. The book has several sections presenting different scenes from the everyday life of the village, such as the peasants' struggle for subsistence, their beliefs and superstitions, marriage customs, public affairs in the village, and medical issues. In every section, Makal concentrates on the village's economic and cultural backwardness.

Apaydın's *Sarı Traktör* tells the story of the young Arif's love of tractors and his struggle to persuade his father to buy one. In the village of Özeler in Central Anatolia, the peasants live by cultivating the land with their own hands and a few

oxen. In a period when the mechanization of agriculture was gathering speed and the number of tractors in the village had increased, Arif believes that the tractor would make their work easier. However, his father has difficulty going along with Arif's desires and ideas and defends the old agricultural ways. The events of the novel center on the conflict between the modern, represented by Arif, and the traditional, represented by his father.

Yarbükü concentrates on land and water conflicts in the village of Yapılı. The peasants live by growing rice and irrigation water is, therefore, essential for them. Since the government has done very little to implement its policies aimed at providing accessible water, i.e. building a dam in the village, the peasants have to secure water by their own means, which gives rise to conflicts among them. In the meantime, a conflict arises between the main characters, Remzi and Haydar, over land in the village. In addition, the old stories of the pressures faced by the peasants under Kocaağa -- the village's old *ağa* -- are also told in the novel.

The events of Baykurt's *Yılanların Öcü* occur in the village of Karataş and the plot is based on a conflict between two villager groups: Irazca and her family, on one side, and the *muhtar* and Haceli on the other. The conflict stems from the *muhtar*'s decision to sell the land in front of Irazca's house to Haceli, one of the rich villagers. Every time Irazca and her son Kara Bayram stand against this attempted landgrab, they confront the violence and pressure of the *muhtar* and Haceli. The building of the house in front of Irazca's house is prevented only after Irazca asks the kaymakam for his support.

Irazca'nın Dirliği is the continuation of *Yılanların Öcü*. In this novel, the conflict between the two villager groups continues in a different form, by way of the sons of the villagers. The events in the novel start with the *muhtar*'s son and Haceli's nephew attempting to rape Kara Bayram's son. In this novel, the kaymakam who

supports Irazca's family is reassigned to another village. Therefore, even if Irazca and her son ask the state authorities for help and try to take legal action against the *muhtar* and Hacı, there is no one to support them. State authorities and the gendarmerie take sides with the oppressive characters. In addition, Kara Bayram is still subjected to the violence of these characters. Under these circumstances, Kara Bayram and his family do not want to stay in the village and decide to migrate to the city. In the end, Irazca stays alone in the village and her livelihood is destroyed.

Apaydın's *Ortakçılar* tells the story of Sefer, a Village Institute graduate, visiting his father over a school holiday. His father works as sharecropper in the fields of Hilmi Bey. Since Hilmi Bey's wife is a relative of Sefer's family, he stays in Hilmi Bey's house. There, Sefer is subjected to various humiliations as a Village Institute student and a villager. In the background of Sefer's experiences in Hilmi Bey's house, the stories and working conditions of sharecroppers occupy an important place in the novel.

Apaydın's *Emmioğlu* also concentrates on sharecroppers' stories and working conditions. Kır Ağa, a peasant in the village of Yapılı, leads the peasants to work as sharecroppers in the paddy field of Hakkı Bey in a different village. While the peasants are going to the other village by train, the main character, Battal, gets off the train in a district. Subsequently, the novel is divided into two stories: Battal's experience in the district where he works as a porter and a laborer and the sharecroppers' stories in Hakkı Bey's paddy field.

Baykurt's *Onuncu Köy* tells a story that takes place across three different villages. The first is Damalı village, in which the *ağa* Durâna oppress the peasants. Durâna is a powerful big landowner who has many friends in the bureaucratic cadres. Therefore, when the village teacher makes an effort to rescue the peasants by raising their consciousness, he is forced to leave his job. Then the village teacher goes to

another village and starts to work as a blacksmith. In that village, he tries to awaken the peasants whose lands have been seized by Kara Bey and his sons. However, he is again forced to leave that village and goes to another village, Yaşarköy. In Yaşarköy, the village teacher is seen as an unemployed person and tries to awaken the peasants against the religious superstitions that have oppressed them for a thousand years.

In *Kaplumbağalar*, Baykurt tells the story of peasants who turn a steppe in their village into a vineyard with the help of the village teacher Rıza. After the peasants build the vineyard, state personnel working under the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre come to the village and expropriate the vineyard. In order to take their land back, the wise man Temeloş, the *muhtar* Battal and the village teacher Rıza attempt to find legal remedies. However, they do not get a positive response from the state authorities.

In Baykurt's *Amerikan Sargısı*, an aid commission set up under the Marshall Plan chooses the village of Kızılöz for a Turkish-American cooperation project. The project is to include initiatives such as the creation of a "Turkish-American Friendship Garden" in the village, the planting of new crops, and modernized livestock farming. Although the peasants do not recognize what is going on in their village in the beginning, they come to see that project is harming their village and themselves. Consequently, a conflict arises between the Turkish-American officials and the peasants.

Baykurt's *Tırpan* tells the story of a young girl, Dürü, who is forced to marry an old and wealthy *ağa* from the neighboring village. Dürü, the daughter of Velikul and Havana, considers hanging herself but Uluguş, the wise woman of the village, talks Dürü out of it and helps her to change her fate. The novel tells the story of the struggle of Dürü and the other villagers to save Dürü as well as the other young girls of the village.

Apaydın's *Defîne* tells the story of Seyit Ali who devotes himself to finding a treasure beneath the land of his village, whose people are poor and have no hope apart from finding treasure. While Seyit Ali and his friend search for the treasure, they are not aware of the troubles that await them. While attempting to sell valuable objects in the city, they are tricked by a deputy and Turkish and American merchants. In this novel, Apaydın tells the story of Anatolian peasants who must use any means available to find subsistence and are cheated thanks to their superstitious beliefs.

Apaydın's *Tütüin Yorgunu* tells the dramatic story of Osman, a tobacco farmer whose life is absorbed by the difficulties of tobacco production. When he cannot get the necessary price for his tobacco in spite of efforts, he begins to lose his mental health. His fellow peasants' traditional solutions reveal their helplessness and they eventually take Osman to a doctor in the city.

Apaydın's *Yoz Davar* tells the story of Musa, a shepherd who leaves his village in search of land for his flock. He is an honest, courageous, and hardworking shepherd whose main objective is to return the sheep in his care to their owner. However, the meadow he finds is infertile and Musa finds himself in the middle of a rivalry between the two *ağa's* of the village. No matter how much he tries to stay out of *ağa's* fight, he suffers from it while he performs his duty with honor, persistence, and responsibility.

APPENDIX B

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Köy Enstitülü yazarlar -- Talip Apaydın, Fakir Baykurt, ve Mahmut Makal -- özelinde köy romanları, anlatılarını ezilen/sömürülen köylü kesimiyle ezen/sömüren egemen kesimler arasındaki antagonistik ilişki üzerine inşâ eder. Mekân olarak, küçük meta üreticiliğin yapıldığı, birbiriyle belli oranda benzerlik gösteren İç Anadolu, Batı Anadolu ve Orta Karadeniz bölgelerini seçen bu romanlarda ezilen/sömürülen kesim, az topraklı ya da toprağından yetiştirdiği ürünle kendini geçindiremeyip başka köylerde ortakçılık ya da çobanlık, kasabaya veya kente gittiği durumlarda da ırgatlık yapan yoksul köylü kesimidir. Sömüren kesim ise, ağalar – “ağa” sıfatı bütün köye ve köydeki tüm ilişkilere hakim olan bütünüyle feodal bir yapıya değil, feodal ilişkilerin kısmen çözülmesine rağmen köylerde hâlâ büyük toprakları elinde bulunduran feodal bir kalıntıya tekabül eder --, beyler -- tarım burjuvazisinin romandaki temsilcileridir, köylüleri çalıştıran çiftlik sahipleri için kullanılır --, muhtar -- sömürücü düzenin kurumsal taşıyıcısıdır --, imam ya da hoca -- dini kullanarak köylülerin sömürücü düzene boyun eğmesinin yollarını yapan ve sömürücü güçlere çıkarları doğrultusunda kolayca eklemenebilen karakterdir --, Amerikan turistler -- Amerikan emperyalizmini köye taşıyan, köylünün mallarına ve ürünlerine çeşitli yollarla el koyan yabancı sermayeyi temsil eden turistlerdir -- ve devlet görevlileridir -- bu görevliler köylüyü doğrudan sömürme bile köyde tuttıkları tutanaklarla onların haklarının gasp edilmesinin önünü açarlar --. Tabii bu, karakter kadrosunun en geniş halidir; seçilen konuya göre yeni karakterlerin romana eklendiği ya da birkaçının romandan çıkarıldığı görülebilir.

1950 ve 1980 arasında gündemde olan bu tür romanların konuları sektörlere göre (çeltikçilik, çobanlık, tütüncülük vb.) ya da köyde gelişen herhangi bir olay üzerine (su çekişmeleri, toprak kavgaları, bağ bozumu vb.) kurgulanır ve anlatı yapıları bakımından homojenlik gösteren bu romanların konuları bakımından belli bir heterojenlik gösterdiği söylenebilir. Fakat konular ne denli çeşitli olursa olsun, bunların neredeyse hepsi, sömüren-sömürülen üzerine kurulu temel antagonizmayı

anlatmada birer dekor işlevi görmesiyle benzerdir. Yazarlar, seçtikleri konunun özgül taraflarına değinmişlerse de, her konunun ana fikri köylü kesiminin, sömüren-sömürülen ikiliğinin güçsüz, ezilen, sömürülen kısmında bulunduğudur.

Her konunun temel bir antagonizma çerçevesinde örgütlendiğini söylemekle birlikte, yazarların bu antagonizmayı temellendirme biçimlerinde iki farklı dönemde iki farklı eğilim gösterdikleri görülür ve bu bağlamda bir dönemlendirmeye gitmek gerekir. 1950 ve 1960 arasındaki ilk dönemde, edebiyat gerçeğın anlatım aracı olarak algılanır ve toplumsal gerçeklikleri anlatmada bir ayna işlevi görür. Yazarların sezgisel ve gözlemsel bir bilinçle hareket ettikleri bu dönemde köy hayatına dair önemli gerçeklikler dillendirilse de meselelerin derinine inilmez ve anlatılar yüzeysel kalır. Anlatılarda, sömüren-sömürülen ikiliğinden ziyade ezen-ezilen, güçlü-zayıf, zengin-fakir ikiliklerinin iç içe geçmesi durumu söz konusudur. Köylü ağayla doğaya karşı ve kanun önünde güçsüzdür. Köylünün üretkenliğine, ağır şartlarda çalıştığına yapılan vurguya rağmen, anlatıların sınıfsal boyutlarının eksiklikleri nedeniyle, köylünün ürettiği ürüne doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak el konulmasıyla bu dönemde karşılaşmayız. Karakterler kendi topraklarında ve kendileri için çalışan küçük meta üreticileridirler.

Bu dönemde yazarlar, köylünün güçsüzlüğünün, yoksulluğunun ya da ezilmişliğinin temellendirilmesinde iki farklı -ama yer yer iç içe de geçebilen- yola başvururlar. Birincisi, köylü, insan ile mücadelesi ile doğaya karşı verdiği mücadele arasında sıkışmıştır; ağır doğa koşulları, modern tarım yöntemlerinin köye girmemesi - dolayısıyla üreterek hayatını idame ettirebilmek için çok çalışmanın gerekmesi-, yönetici kadronun köyün sorunlarına tatmin edici çözümlerle yaklaşmaması, karşılaştığı zorlukları anlamlandıracağı ve bunlardan kurtulmayı sağlayabilecek bir bilgi seviyesine ulaş(tırıl)mamış olması (“bilgisizlik”/ “cehalet”) gibi bir yığın dertten -hepsinden ya da bir kısmından- muzdariptir ve güçsüzlüğü de yoksulluğu da buradan gelmektedir. Makal’ın *Bizim Köy*’ü (1950) ve Apaydın’ın *Sarı Traktör*’ünün (1958) bu yolla kurgulandığı söylenebilir.

Başvurulan ikinci yol ise, köydeki bazı karakterler – bu karakterler gücünü parasından, devlet ya da hükümetle olan bağından ya da köylü arasında cesur olarak

bilinmesinden alabilir- zayıf köylüyü çeşitli yollarla tâbi konuma getirmiştir. Yoksul köylü üzerindeki baskının özellikle şiddet kullanılarak uygulandığı bu tâbi kılma eyleminin açıklaması doğrudan hükümete karşı bir pozisyon olarak ve onu bu durumdan sorumlu tutarak yapılır. Diğer taraftan sınıfsal referanslardan yoksun olmasıyla ilişkili olarak güçlünün uyguladığı bu şiddet çoğu durumda “keyfi” kalır. Bu tavır en çarpıcı örneği Baykurt’un *Yılanların Öcü* (1959) romanında görüle de, aynı tavrı daha örtük biçimde Apaydın’ın *Yarbükü* (1959) romanında görmek de mümkündür. Her iki romanda da köylü, bu güçler ilişkisi karşısında etken, kolektif bir irade kurmayı başarabilen –ya da bunu özlemleyen- bir kesim olarak karşımıza çıkmaz.

Köy Enstitülü yazarların toplumsal sorun tespitçiliğinden toplumu yönlendiriciliğe doğru yöneldikleri 1960 sonrası dönemde ise, edebiyat artık onlar için yalnızca gerçeğin anlatım aracı olan bir ayna değil, aynı zamanda bir savaş aracıdır. Bu dönemde, eserlerde resmedilen köylü kitlesi, kimi durumlarda hükümetin, karakolun, aydınların görmediği, bilmediği ve bu temassızlık sonucunda ezilen bir kitle olmaya devam ederken, aslında birçok durumda da bu mercilerin ya da kişilerin gördükleri, bildikleri ama sömürdükleri, emeğine el koydukları, yine aynı mekanizma vasıtasıyla kültürel olarak da aşağıladıkları, ezilen/sömürülen bir kitle olarak karşımıza çıkar. Yazarlar bu biçimde betimledikleri sömürücü düzenin karşısında açıkça pozisyon alırlar ve kendilerini bu düzene karşı verilecek toplumsal bir kavganın davacısı olarak görürler. Toplumsal-siyasal alanı antagonistik bir ilişki çerçevesinde kurgulamaya devam ederler ancak bu defa ilişkinin ezilen, yoksul, güçsüz tarafında kalan kitlenin, aslında, üretim ve bölüşüm ilişkileri dahilinde bu hale geldiği ya da getirildiği temel hareket noktalarından birisi haline gelmiştir.

Böyle bir ilişkilendirmenin ilk kaynağı Köy Enstitüleri’nde aranabilir; çünkü onlar ilk kez Köy Enstitüleri eğitimi ile dünyayı anlamlandırma yetisi kazanmışlardır. Köy Enstitüleri, kapitalizme en çok açılan yerlerde; su, hastane, tarla, pazar ve hükümet dairelerine ulaşım imkanları bulunan bölgelerde kuruldukları için bu kurumlarda eğitim görenlerin sınıf mücadelesinin objektif koşullarını daha rahat gözlemleyebilmesi olasıdır. Bu durum bir yandan enstitülülerin kendi köylerinde

karşılaşmadıkları imkanlarla tanışmaları ve eski hayatlarıyla enstitüler esnasında karşılaştıkları iki hayat arasındaki uçurumu fark etmelerine neden olurken bir yandan da bu uçurumla ilişkili bir iç hesaplaşmaya gitmelerine neden olmuştur. Diğer taraftan romanlardan da anlaşılabilceği gibi, köyün geriliğinin niçin ve nasılını sorgulamaya başladıkları oranda, bu karşılaşmalar bir iç hesaplaşmayla sınırlı kalmayıp aynı zamanda aradaki bu farkı yaratanlarla yapılacak bir dış hesaplamayı da beraberinde getirmiştir. Öte yandan, enstitülerin getirdiği kolektif üretim ve kolektif yaşam deneyimleri, her ne kadar politik olarak kurgulanmamış olsa da, burada yetişenlerin bireyci yaklaşımlar yerine örgütlülüğe vurgu yapan sol akımlara doğru yönelmeleri sürecini hızlandırmıştır. Bu bağlamda enstitülü yazarların, 1961 Anayasası'nın getirdiği kısmi örgütlenme özgürlüğüyle de ilişkili olarak 1960'lar itibariyle bir örgütlenme ve örgütlenme çabası içine girmeleri, enstitülerdeki kolektif vurgunun bir çıktısı olarak okunabilir. Fakat daha önemlisi, öğretmenler olarak örgütlenecekleri zemin için, hali hazırda görevde olan, genel başkanlığını Turhan Feyzioğlu'nun yürüttüğü Türkiye Öğretmenler Derneği Federasyonu'nu –hem de 1962'deki kongrede yazarların üçü de federasyonun yönetimine seçilmişken- yetersiz görmeleri ve başka bir örgütlenme arayışına girmeleri ve Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası'nı (TÖS) kurmaları, onların, aslında Köy Enstitüleri'nden getirdikleri fikirlerini harmanlayacakları bir kaynağın arayışı içerisinde olduklarını gösterir. Bu kaynak, 1960'larda ivme kazanan sosyalist soldur. Enstitülü yazarlar, 1960'larda popülerleşen romanlarıyla, Türkiye İşçi Partisi'ne (TİP) verdikleri destekle ve öncülük ettikleri TÖS süreciyle birlikte sosyalist soldan beslenmeye ve aynı zamanda sosyalist solu beslemeye başlamışlardır.

1960'ların politik ve entelektüel ortamında enstitülü yazarların düşünceleri, tutarlı ve sınırları belirli bir politik hat önermekten çok, Türkiye solundaki farklı tartışmalara eklenmiş bir haldedir. Bu bağlamda bu dönemde, yazarların sosyalist solla kurdukları diyalog, kendi politik metinlerine olduğu kadar romanlarına da önemli ölçüde yansımıştır. O nedenle, 1960 ve sonrasında üretilen metinlerde Aybar'ın “güler yüzlü sosyalizminden”, sol-Kemalizm'in “kapitalist olmayan kalkınma yoluna” ve Ecevit'in “altyapı devrimine” kadar Türkiye solundaki farklı tartışmaların izleri bulunabilir. Her ne kadar Kemalist halkçı ve köycü ideoloji Köy Enstitüleri

eđitimi vasıtasıyla bu romanların yazılabilmelerini mümkün kıldıysa da bu romanlar esasen Türkiye solu etkisi altında ve Türkiye soluyla geliřtirdikleri karřılıklı diyalog çerçevesinde řekillenmiřtir. Bu bağlamda köy romanlarını, metinlerarası bir çerçevede okumak ve anlamlandırmak, verimli bir akademik arařtırmanın kapısı aęar ve bu romanlara dair önemli bulgulara ulařmamıza imkan verir.

Bu bulgulardan birincisi olarak 1950’lerde ve 1960’ların ilk yarısında romanlarda öne çıkan temel bir tavır, köylü insanın ekonomik faaliyetinin ilkel tarım yöntemleriyle geręekleřtirildiđi, köylerin henüz modern tarım tekniklerine geęemediđi ve böyle olunca da köylünün dođa karřısında yenik durumda olduđunun dillendirilmesidir. Aslında bu konu, “köycü” ideologlarca da uzun uzadıya tartıřılmıř, hatta kendisi de bir köycü olan İsmail Hakkı Tonguę, köylü insanının kurtuluřunun ancak insanın dođayı “emebilmesiyle” geręekleřebileceđini, bunu yapacak olanın da teknik araęlarla, gerekli bilgi ve kültürle donatılmıř yeni ve güçlü köylü tipi olduđunu söylemiřtir. Nitekim yazarlar da, *Bizim Köy*’den bu yana, köylülerin ağır çalıřma kořullarını ve buradan kaynaklanan yoksulluk tablolarını uzun uzadıya betimlemiř ve aslında özlemledikleri řeyin tam da Tonguę’un kastettiđi yeni ve güçlü köylü tipi olduđunu örtük biçimde de olsa belirtmiřlerdir.

Diđer taraftan 1960’ların ikinci yarısında, bundan daha kuvvetli bir bařka anlatı ortaya çıkmıřtır. Bu da, köylü insan dođa kořullarıyla bař edip iyi ürünler üretebildiklerinde bile, devletin bu ürünü ellerinden aldıđı ya da deđerersizleřtirdiđidir. Yazarlar özellikle, Demokrat Parti (DP) eleřtirisıyla iç içe geęen bir biçimde, devleti 1950’ler itibariyle güçlülerle, zenginlerle, toprak ađalarıyla köylülere ve yoksul halka karřı ittifak ettiđi oranda patronaj iliřkileriyle örülü olarak resmederler. Baykurt’un *Yılanların Öcü*’nde (1959) sezdirdiđi; fakat *Irazca’nın Dirliđi*’nde (1961) detaylı olarak anlattıđı bu durum devletin ięerisindeki klientelistik iliřkilerin köye sızması olarak okunabilir. Bununla birlikte, Baykurt’un *Kaplumbađalar*’da (1967) ve *Tırpan*’da (1971) ya da Apaydın’ın *Define* (1972) ve *Tütün Yorgunu*’nda (1975) anlattıđı olaylar da sorunun DP dönemiyle sınırlı olmadıđı, DP’den sonra gelen Adalet Partisi (AP)’nin de aynı iliřkiler çerçevesinde örgütlendiđini gösterir. Mesele hiçbir zaman devlet denilen mefhumun tamamıyla anlamsız bulunması ya da

tamamıyla olumsuzlanmasına vardırılmamakla birlikte, mevcut haliyle devletin – hükümet ve örgütsel kadrolarında cisimleştiği biçimiyle- köylünün yararına işlemediği romanlarda iddia edilir ve eleştirilir.

İkincisi bir bulgu, 1950’lerde köyün önemli sorunlarından biri olarak karşımıza çıkan ilkel ve modern ayrımı çevresinde kurgulanmış “aydınlanma” sorununun, 1960 sonrasında, bu kurgudan tam kopmamakla birlikte, aynı zamanda bir “uyanma” sorunu halini almasının bu dönemde yazılan romanların en belirgin özelliklerinden birisi olarak karşımıza çıkmasıdır. Romanlarda görüldüğü biçimiyle “aydınlanma”, modern eğitim ve üretim tekniklerine geçişin ötesinde, köylü kitlesinin içinde bulunduğu ve muzdarip olduğu ilişkilerin farkında olacağı ve bu ilişkileri kendi lehine dönüştürmede söz sahibi olacağı, bu anlamıyla, ancak bu kitlenin “uyan(dırıl)masıyla” gerçekleşecek bir durum olarak okunabilir. Bu dönemde yazarlar, halkın “derin bir uykuya yattığını” söylemiş ve bu bağlamda öğretmenlik mesleğini yeniden tanımlamışlardır. Bu yeni tanım, öğretmenin yalnızca halka bir şeyler öğretmesini değil, aynı zamanda onun yaşamını da değiştirecek hamlelerde bulunması gerektiğini öngörmüştür. Nitekim yazarlara göre, çok boyutlu bir iş olarak tanımlanan halkın öğretmeni olmanın bir tamamlayıcısı da halk edebiyatı yapmaktır. “Halktan kopuk” olduğu iddia edilen divan edebiyatına karşı halk edebiyatı, “halktan kopuk” divan eğitimine karşı da halkın eğitimini savunmuşlardır. Verilecek toplumsal kavga ise bir yönüyle öğretmen olarak verecekleri örgütlü mücadeleyle ve edebiyatçı kimlikleriyle verecekleri muhalif eserlerle pekiştirilecektir. Bunun romanlar açısından en önemli çıktılarında biri, ilerlemeci/aydınlanmacı/devrimci öğretmen figürünün 1960 sonrasında neredeyse tüm romanlarda görülmesidir. Bu öğretmen, eğitim kurumunun herhangi bir temsilcisi değil, bilakis o kurumun kendisini değiştirmeye çalışan, köylülerle organik bağları olan ve bu bağları köylüleri egemen güçlere karşı mobilize etmek için kullanan bir karakterdir. TÖS üyesi öğretmenlerin 1960’ların sonunda ve 1970’lerin başında DEV-GENÇ’in köy eylemlerine verdikleri destek düşünülürse, ilk defa Baykurt’un *Onuncu Köy*’ünde (1961) karşılaşılan ve sonrasında neredeyse her romanda yer alan bu karakter tipi, büyük ölçüde yazarların Türkiye soluyla kurdukları diyalog dahilinde şekillenmiştir. Görevleri okulun dışına taşan (ya da taşıdığı düşünülen) ve politik ideolojik bir hat

doğrultusunda belirlenen bu karakterin, Gramsci'nin “organik aydın” kavramsallaştırmasına büyük ölçüde yaklaştığı iddia edilebilir.

Üçüncü bir bulgu, yazarların söylemiyle klasik Kemalist söylem arasında bir paralellik olduğu açık olmakla birlikte, iki söylemin önemli farklarının da varlığıdır. Bu bağlamda öncelikle enstitülü yazarlar, Cumhuriyet inkılaplarını hiçbir zaman anlamsız bulmasalar bile, yapılması gerekenin toplum yapısının temelini inen “altyapı devrimi” olduğunu söylemişlerdir; onlara göre, altyapıda devrim olmadıkça üstyapıda (yazıda, ölçü-tartıda, sanatta vb.) yapılan değişiklikler toplumsal bünyeyi etkileyemezler. İkinci olarak, köylerin ekonomik ve bilgisel düzeyde geri kalmışlığı, halkevcilerin ve köycülerin söylediği gibi, yalnızca Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun kendi çıkarlarını düşünen yönetici kadrolarının olumsuz politikalarından kaynaklanmaz; Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın üstünden yıllar geçmesine rağmen aynı geri kalmışlık devam ettiğine göre, bunun kaynaklarından biri de o günden beri yönetime gelen kadrolar ve aynı sonuçları üreten düzendir. Üçüncüsü, Enstitülüler için Türkiye, Kemalist terminolojideki gibi “imtiyazsız, sınıfsız bir toplum” değil, bilakis sınıflardan oluşan ve henüz “kaynaşmamış” bir yapıdadır: Bir yanda sayıca çoğunlukta olan halk sınıfları (emekçi sınıflar), bir yanda da sayıca azınlıkta olan egemen sınıflar olarak karşımıza çıkan temel iki kutup hem yazarların söylemine hem de romanların içeriğine damgasını vurmuştur. Yazarların, 1970'lere yaklaştıkça netleştirdikleri haliyle “düzen”, emekçilere işine geldiği kadar kültür veren ve onları ekonomik olarak sömüren burjuva düzenidir; böyle bir düzende “imtiyazsız, sınıfsız bir toplum” ancak gerçek insanlık sevgisinin gerçekleşeceği, her türlü sömürünün olanak dışı olduğu sosyalist bir düzenle birlikte gelebilir. Fakat burada bahsedilen sosyalizm, hedef ve sınırları çizilmiş bir sosyalizm değildir. Daha çok toplumu ve ülkeyi Mustafa Kemal'in işaret ettiği yolda ve yönde “ileri” üretim ve yönetim aşamalarına taşıyacak hamleler konusunda hemfikir olunan, “emperyalizme karşı halk savaşı vermek” ya da “bozuk düzene karşı, işçi-köylü el ele vermek” gibi dönemin soluna damgasını vuran sloganları sahiplenen, bu dönemde gerçekleştirilen gençlik hareketlerine destek veren, sendika olarak gerçekleştirdikleri katılımı yüksek eylem ve boykotlarda görüldüğü üzere bu sol hareketlerden etkilenen ve aynı zamanda yazdıkları romanlarla da bu hareketleri besleyen sosyalizan bir tavra işaret

eder. Nitekim yazarların romanlarının popülerleşmesinde '68 kuşağı için kırların oldukça –kuramsal düzeyde- önemli olması, köy mitingleri ve toprak işgalleri gibi eylemlerle köylü ve gençlik arasındaki diyalogun artması gibi etkenler önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Bu durum aynı zamanda sol hareket içerisinde özellikle gençler arasında köy romanlarının popülerleşmesini sağlamış ve hatta bu dönemde sosyalist solla ilişki kuranların başvurduğu ve benimsediği temel kaynaklar Marxist-Leninist eserlerden çok köy romanları olmuştur.

Dördüncü olarak, 1960 sonrasında romanlarda, köylüler ve karşılarındaki güçler biçiminde oluşturulan iki antagonistik kampın, daha ilişkisel bir biçimde yansıtıldığını söylemek mümkündür. 1950'lerde yazılan romanlardan farklı olarak, bu iki kamp arasındaki karşıtlık yalnızca belirtilmekle kalmaz belirli bir ilişkisel düzlemlerde aynı zamanda açıklanır. Bu bağlamda köylünün karşısında kurgulanan güçlerin (devlet, yerli ve yabancı sermaye, din, feodal kalıntılar) köylüyle ne gibi zeminlerde karşılaştıkları ve aslında birbirleriyle hangi zeminlerde ortaklaştıkları romanlarda yansıtılır. Bununla birlikte, romanlarda köylü kitlesinin kendi kolektif iradesiyle bu güçlere karşı koyduğunun kurgulanması nadir görülse de, bu kitle en azından tahayyül düzeyinde de olsa bir araya gelip bu düzene karşı birlikte tavır koymayı özlemleyen bir şekilde resmedilir. Bir taraftan köylü denilen kitle saftır ve egemenlerin oyunlarına akıl sır erdiremez, dolayısıyla bu gücü alt etmeyi başarabilecek maddi ve zihinsel (mental) araçlardan yoksundur; diğer taraftan da tahakküm ilişkilerine boyun eğse de, egemen güçlere itaat eder gibi görünse de bu kitlenin iç sesleriyle kendisi üstünde tahakküm kuran güçlere karşı dillendirdiği bir itiraz söz konusudur. Diğer taraftan romanlardaki köylü imajının saf, muktedirlerin oyunlarına akli ermeyen, hak aramaktan habersiz, bir araya gelip adaletsizliklere karşı koyamayan bir biçimde betimlendiği bir tablonun orta yerine bu tabloyu değiştirmek adına mücadele eden öğretmenlerin girmesi, bir yandan köylü kitlesinin kendi başına olumsuzluklara karşı koyamayan edilgen tarafını pekiştiren ama bir yandan da başlarında köy öğretmenininde cisimleşmiş bir tür önder olduğu takdirde o edilgen kitleye bir uyanma potansiyeli de atfeden ikircikli bir tutuma işaret eder. Yine de olay örgüsünde bir öğretmenin olmadığı durumlarda köylülerin tahakküm ilişkilerinin farkında olabildikleri, en azından iç sesleriyle de olsa bir itiraz

dillendirebildikleri düşünülürse, köylünün bu ilişkiler karşısında tamamen bilinçsiz olan bir kitleden çok, henüz tam anlamıyla “bilinçlenmemiş” bir kitle olarak resmedildiği söylenebilir. Bu anlamıyla köylü kitlesi romanlarda boyun eğmekle itiraz etmek arasında konumlandırılan bir eşikte tasvir edilir.

Türkiye tarihinde geriye dönük olarak “köy edebiyatı” diye anılan gelenek, temel olarak Türk edebiyatının “üç Kemal”iyle – Yaşar Kemal, Kemal Tahir, Orhan Kemal --- “üç köylüsü”nün – Talip Apaydın, Fakir Baykurt, Mahmut Makal – eserleriyle tanımlanır. Bunlar arasında, üç köylünün -Köy Enstitüsü mezunlarının- yazdıkları romanlar, eğitime yaptıkları vurgu dolayısıyla diğerlerinden ayrılır. Özellikle köy öğretmenlerinin romanlarda yazarları temsil ettikleri açıktır. Bunun dışında, köylülerin kendilerini bir eğitim ihtiyacı çerçevesinde tanımlamaları ya da egemen bloğun üyelerinin köylülerin eğitimini engelleyen karakterler olarak yansıtılması gibi durumlarda yazarların olay örgüsü üzerindeki belirleyicilikleri dikkat çekicidir. Diğer taraftan, Üç Kemal’in yazdıkları romanlar herhangi bir köyle sınırlı kalmayıp Türkiye’nin tarihsel ve toplumsal tarihiyle ve güncel koşullarıyla daha yakın bir bağ kurarken, Enstitü mezunlarının romanları, tarihsel toplumsal meseleleri önemsemekle birlikte onları Orta Anadolu’nun herhangi bir köyüne sızdıkları oranda incelerler. Diğer bir deyişle, bu romanlar, genellikle tek bir köyü alıp onun sosyografisini yaparlar. Bununla birlikte Türk edebiyatının üç köylüsü, Kemal Tahir’den önemli ölçüde farklılaşırken Yaşar Kemal ve Orhan Kemal’le prensipte ortak kaygıları paylaşırlar. Örneğin Yaşar Kemal ve Orhan Kemal gibi “üç köylü” de “sıradan insanın” hikayesini anlatmaya ve bunu yaparken de kendi geçmiş deneyimlerinden ve şahit oldukları olaylardan yola çıkar. Kemal Tahir’den farklı olarak, romanı entelektüel anlamda bir keyfiyet olarak değil, verdiklerini iddia ettikleri toplumsal mücadele için bir zorunluluk olarak görürler. Roman, onlar için entelektüel bir yetiden çok pratik bir araçtır. Sosyalist realizmle kurdukları bağı da tam da bu pratik kaygıyla ilişkili olarak açıklarlar. Roman, bu haliyle kendi başına düzeni değiştiremese de bu uğurda önemli katkılar sunabilir. Yine, Kemal Tahir’den farklı olarak, her ne kadar romanı ve roman karakterlerini kendi politik ve pratik amaçları doğrultusunda araçsallaştırdıkları gerekçesiyle eleştirilseler de, hiçbir durumda topluma ve tarihe doğru geliştirdikleri bir tezi savunmak adına romanlar

yazmamışlardır. Zaten, onların ayırt edici yönlerinden biri de toplumu ve tarihi açıklamakta herhangi bir tezle ya da görüşle sınırlı kalmayıp farklı görüş ve yaklaşımlara angaje olabilmeleridir.

Bu bağlamda, yazarların kendi söylemlerinde açığa çıkan politik ideolojik konumlanışlarındaki çeşitliliğin romanlara yansıdığını görmek önemlidir. Örneğin, yazarların 1960 sonrasında TİP’i destekledikleri düşünülürse, köylü kitlesinin resmedilişinde ve romanların sosyalizan tavırlarında Aybar’ın “barışçıl” mücadele ve “güleryüzlü sosyalizm” tartışmalarının izleri görülebilir. Örneğin, köylü kitlesi devleti ve onun politikalarını eleştirse bile hiçbir durumda devlete karşı bir başkaldırıya girişmez. Bunun yerine, bu kitlenin baskı ve zorla değil, eğitim vasıtasıyla kültürel ve teknik araçlara sahip olup kendini yöneten güçleri seçebildiği durumlarda ya da yönetime gelebildiği durumlarda düzeni değiştirebilmesi öngörülür. 1960’larda Türkiye solunun söylemine damgasını vuran anti-emperyalizm bu romanlarda dikkati çeken temel bir tavidir. Bunun yanı sıra, yazarlar özellikle Doğan Avcıoğlu ve Niyazi Berkes gibi sol-Kemalist düşünürlerin eserlerinden beslenerek, hem kendi politik metinlerinde hem de romanlarında yumuşak bir Kemalizm eleştirisine giderler. Netice itibarıyla, Osmanlı’dan sonra kurulan devlet halka tam anlamıyla ulaşamamış ve “halkın devleti” olamamıştır.

Yine, yazarların eğitime, aydınlanmaya ve aydınlara verdikleri önem, sol-Kemalizm’den doğru da okunabilir. Toplumsal siyasal alanı halk ve egemen güçler olmak üzere iki antagonistik kamp çerçevesinde tasvir etmek dönemin solu ve romanları arasında kurulabilecek başka bir paralelliği temsil eder. Ne var ki, Ecevit’in sol popülizminde görüldüğü üzere – özellikle Apaydın’ın romanlarında -- bu alanın halk ve halkın düşmanları olarak tasvir edildiği de görülebilir. Bu anlamda, romanların söylemlerinde popüler demokratik özelemlerin dillendirilmesi ve sol popülist bir tavrın iç içe geçtiği iddia edilebilir.

Romanların organizasyonu, içeriği ve karakter kadrosu düşünüldüğünde, yazarların kendi düşüncelerinin romanlara fazlasıyla yansımaları söz konusudur. Her olay yazarın kendi bakış açısına göre kurgulanırken her karakter de yazarın kendi sesine göre konuşturulur. Dolayısıyla, Köy Enstitülerinden mezun olan yazarların romanları,

Bakhtin'in, karakterin yazarından bağımsız bir bilinçle ve zaman zaman yazarına karşı konuşmasını öngören diyalojizm kavramıyla birlikte düşünüldüğünde, bu kavramsallaştırmaya göre diyalojik sayılamazlar. Ancak, yazarların köy geçmişleri, köy yoksulluğunu deneyimlemiş olmaları, toplumda bir öteki olarak kabul edilenlerin seslerinin bu romanlarda gerçekçi bir biçimde duyurulmalarını sağlamıştır. Aynı zamanda, yazarların köy kökenleri dolayısıyla yarı-entelektüeller ya da lümpen yazarlar diye nitelendirildikleri ve romanların yine bu vesileyle çoğu zaman yetkin bulunmaması da düşünülürse, bu romanlar, köylü imajının ötekiliğini de dolaylıdır. Sonuç itibariyle, yine Bakhtin'in kavramsallaştırmasına dayanarak, bu romanların kendi metinlerarası bağlamlarında heteroglosik özellikler taşıdığı, yani toplumda hakim olan sesi değil toplumun ötekisinin sesini yansıttığı iddia edilebilir. Köylülük ve köy hikayeleri, bu romanlarda ve bu romanlar vasıtasıyla Türkiye tarihinde hiçbir zaman olmadıkları kadar toplumsal ve kültürel alanda önem kazanmıştır.

APPENDIX C

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Nartok
Adı : Esra Elif
Bölümü : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : An Intertextual Analysis of the Village Novels by Village Institute Graduates

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans D oktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: