

Education and Identity: Rebuilding of the Kurdish Identity within and in Spite of Turkish Education System*

Perwerde û Nasname:
Avakirina Nasnameya Kurdî li Hember
û bi Pergala Perwerdeya Tirkî

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between education and identity in the light of Kurdish political actors' educational experience. It is a qualitative study based on literature review and interviews. The participants of the study include 30 Kurdish political actors who experienced schooling before 1970, during 1970s and after 1980, respectively. Identity is a concept/phenomenon under constant construction rather than a concrete asset. Thus, this study investigates students' attitudes towards the "official identity" built by schools and how they rebuild their

* In this study, data from my doctoral thesis titled "Relations to School and Knowledge during Subjectivity Process: A Research on the Educational Experiences of the Kurdish Political Actors" were used.

I acknowledge invaluable contributions of my distinguished advisors Seçkin Özsoy and L.İşıl Ünal from Ankara University.

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identities. The students noticed the identity being built by the school by means of language, some instruments and othering, and attempted to build their own identity. Kurdish students turned the school's process of building a contemporary Westernized Turkish identity into a process in which they rebuild their identity.

Keywords: Building of the Kurdish Identity, Education, Identity, Turkish Education System.

PUXTE:

Armanca vê xebatê, li gorî tecrûbeya perwerdeyî ya sîyasetmedarên Kurd veçîrandina têkiliya di navbera perwerde û nasnameyê de ye. Ev xebateke çawanî

ye ku bingeha wê li ser hûrbûna lîteratûrê û hevpeyvînan ava bûye. Beşdarên xebatê 30 siyasetmedarên Kurd in ku berî salên 1970yî, di salên 1970yî û piştî salên 1980yî perwerde dîtine. Nasname, dîyardeyê her dem berdeyam e, ne ku di carekê de tê avakirin. Lewre, ev xebata hanê reftarên xwendekaran li hember “nasnameya fermî” ya ku ji aliyê dibistanan ve tê avakirin, vedikole û lê digere ka wan nasnameya xwe çawa ava kiriye. Xwendekar, bi rêya ziman, hinek alav û “yêndinkirinê” hay ji nasnameya ku ji aliyê dibistanan ve tê avakirin bûne û hewl dane ku nasnameya xwe ava bikin. Xwendekarên Kurd, pêvajoya dibistanan a avakirina nasnameyê Tirkî ya Rojavayî wergerandine ser pêvajoya avakirina nasnameya xwe.

Bêjeyên sereke: Avakirina Nasnameya Kurdî, Perwerde, Nasname, Pergela Perwerdeya Tirkî.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, there are abundance of discursive explanations on identity, and the concept has been criticized. Discussions on identity are explained with the notion that the concept of identity has some political and conceptual paradoxes and tension. Identity debates are considered as a process of change that “displaces the central structure of modern societies and processes and goes beyond individuals’ settled social frameworks. Identity is related with defining in cultural terms of class, gender, sex, ethnicity; race and nationality, all of which offer individuals a status in the society” (Hall, 1992). According to another approach, identity is the outcome of the post-1968 “multi culturalist” liberation policy reflecting the desire to recognise social groups’ demand and criticism getting concrete on the basis of political participation, economic reward, social recognition and cultural legitimacy, post-modernist approaches and critical academic attitudes (İsen, 2005:143). This means that the central body and processes are being reshaped according to class, gender, sex, ethnicity, race and national cultural demands. It also causes above-mentioned social groups to disintegrate and clash with each other.

Another dimension of the concept is defining “individual,” a product of modernization, by his identity and his relationship with the society. According to Kılıçbay (2007:161), the process implies becoming the same and disappearing of the individual whereas it is independent, as a subject. Likewise, İsen (2005:143-144) says “a stereotypical way of knowing is made dominant in giving the meaning to the subject, as well as others and its relations in the social world as a consequence of ostracization of individual differences against identity-based categorization. In addition, “since differentiation must be emphasized on a collective basis and individual freedoms must be compromised at action or ideological level on behalf of the group, the identity is restrictive instead of emancipator, in essence”.

According to Hall (1996c), identity is not an “essentialist” phenomenon, rather a strategic and positional one. The concept of identity does not indicate a subject which remains unchanged throughout the history; it is a part of the essence, which is the same forever, or remains identical. Hall thinks “identities are not integrated or single at all, but are subject to multiple shaping along with crosscutting and opposing discourses, practices and positions”. Besides, identities go through a radical historicization and constant change and transformation. The identity itself does not remain unchanged; rather it might change and be transformed in a way to include individuals’ or groups’ interests. Furthermore, Hall also states (1996c) that identity is concerned with “what we could be, how we are represented and how we can represent ourselves, not who we are or where we come from”.

Diversity/something diverse is needed for delineating the borders lost as a consequence of identities’ becoming the same, and borders are marked against what is diverse (Kılıçbay, 2007:162; Hall, 1992; Hall, 1996b). In other words, founding element of the identity is the “other”. It is built upon the relationship established with the other. What it is not and what it lacks is identified within the framework of its relationship with the other. Identities are clashing. Clashes are both external and internal, taking place in the community and individuals’ mind, respectively. As identities change depending on the way the subject is represented, the process of gaining an identity does not take place automatically. It is something acquired or lost, and politicized.

Recently it is seen identity debate has reflection on education. The literature provides many studies on this matter. For example, studies can be found on education for anti-racism (Lawrence & Tatum, 2011; Lawrence, 1997; Tatum, 1997), extending of high British identity values (Brett, 2011), and investigating the citizenship identity in “Civil Schools” in the USA (Owen, 2004). Education or school naturally is reproduced as an area of identity politics. Subjects also react to other identity stimulators they are exposed to with their own identity in school context.

In the context of Turkey, “ominous” topics such as “education-identity” relationship have been put aside due to the predominating instrumental aspect of educational sciences. On the contrary, there is a growing body of research on education and identity relationship at global scale and significant contributions are made regarding defining the educational reality and highlighting some aspects. The aim of this present study is to analyse the relationship of Kurdish students with Turkish Education System, which aims to build up a new identity that can be summed up as “Westernized, contemporary and Turkish”.

Since this study focusses on analyzing education experience of opposing Kurds in reference to identity and education, a relevant methodology is proposed to this end. The study is carried out with the “new educational sciences” considering stu-

dents as subject instead of popular educational science approach, which considers students as object (Ünal & Özsoy, 2010: 181). According to the approach in our study, the concept “field” is a key concept. The term is referred to by Russian Tynianon, psychosociologist Kurt Lewin, Norbert Elias, Sapir & Jakobson, Dumézil & Lévi Strauss in their studies in social sciences. Today, the term is used in several studies such as education, theatre and gender (Bourdieu, 2007a: 87; Ünal etc., 2010: 1; McNay Lois, 1999; Altun, 2007). The concept of the field indicates locating subjects with multidimensional positions and different capitals in such positions. Thinking based on the field term is thinking in relational terms (Bourdieu, 2007a: 79-80).

This study employed the qualitative method, which enables individuals to become subjects in the research process. Guidance or manipulation was not made during the interviews so that the interviewees could share their experience as they prefer. Two types of data collection instruments were used. First, literature review was carried out on papers, studies and memories concerning education and political experience of the 30 “opponents” participating in the study. Thus, it is an analytical study based on documents. Secondly, semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with all of the 30 participants both individually and collectively. The interviews were recorded and then were transcribed. The collected qualitative data were analyzed by using the literature regarding opponents and the period they lived in.

A semi-structured interview form was developed as a data collection instrument for in-depth interviews. The questions on the semi-structured form were divided into three groups. The first group includes demographic questions such as birth place, age, school and year of graduation, boarding/day education, occupation, place of living, ethnic-regional origin, religion and sect, political identity as well as education background/level of the family. Those having a historically important mission or coming from a feudal family pattern were addressed additional questions. The second group consists of questions investigating their education experience. There is one main question with some sub-questions concerning “relationship with the school, school administration and rules, relationship with official school culture, relationship with teachers, relationship with knowledge and friendship relationships. Further questions were asked during the course of the interviews to explore experiences of the individuals deeper as the need arose. Of the thirty participants, twenty-three people were interviewed one by one, and a focus group discussion was held with the rest of seven participants.

Study participants were selected by using purposeful sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Kümbetoğlu, 2005: 98). Purposeful sampling had to be preferred so that interviewees could be “opponent subjects”. The study group was composed of thirty participants whose schooling and intellectual background shaped

in different time periods. The participants were selected among Kurdish opponents since their subjectivity was expected to be more visible at school. The Kurdish people have resisted citizenship-building efforts of the Turkish Republic the most and for the longest period as the Kurds have their own language and culture. In order to find out whether or not their relationship with school and knowledge changes over time or how it changes the participants were selected among three generations: the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s. The first group consisted of those who were students during the single party regime, the transition to the multi-party system and the period under the political influence of TİP¹ and TKDP². They were coded as “**Sixty**” in the study. The second generation experienced schooling during the political movements of the seventies and were referred to as “**Seventy**” in the study. They predominantly include political actors who were involved in political groups or student associations of that period. Some of them were imprisoned or fled abroad to escape imprisonment due to such political activities. Educational opportunities in the “**Seventy**” decade were better than the preceding decade. For instance, high schools were opened in some districts.

The third generation of interviewees reported experiencing schooling in a period characterized by military coup, economic liberalization, growing political activity, violence, and unidentified murders in the region, and such political parties as HEP, HADEP, DEP and DTP³, which were focused on the Kurdish question and acted for a long time as sort of single representative of Kurds regarding the issue. These participants were coded as “**Eighty**” in the study. It represents a period when educational opportunities were uncomparingly better than previous decades. High schools started to open in all districts.

The study group was coded by means of letters, numbers and writing. As an example, “Sixty01M” stands for Sixty, the most senior age, and male (M), respectively. Another example is “Eighty03F”, which shows an interviewee from the eighty’s generation having the 3rd eldest age and female (F).

28 male and 2 female interviewees participated in the study. The study group was heterogenous in terms of profession, as there were lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers, economists, anthropologists, and authors/publishers. One former parliamentarian and two general vice presidents from different political parties also participated

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- 1 TİP: Workers’ Party of Turkey
 - 2 TKDP: Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey
 - 3 HEP: People’s Labour Party,
HADEP: People’s Democracy Party,
DEP: Democracy and Labour Party
DTP: Democratic Society Party

in the study. While most of the interviewees are graduates of general high schools, one participant from the post-eighties generation is a graduate of science high school and one of Anatolian high school. Three people from this group have master's degrees, one is studying for doctorate and two doctors have medical specialties degrees in medicine. Two of the participating doctors are in the "Sixty" group.

The interviewees' responses for the same question were placed one after another along with their relevant context. The transcribed texts were re-read to clarify their relevance to the question. Irrelevant ones were removed for thematic coherence so that the parts under the same theme could be analyzed together. It was tried to figure out what "subject" strategies were used by the students for safeguarding and rebuilding their own identity against the school's attempt to build an identity. The context of becoming subjects was resolved in a context in reference to their situation and their relationship with the other subjects. Similarly, an attempt was made to locate identity components of the subjects in a context.

The participants were given the opportunity to be subjects in the qualitative study. The same was done at utmost level during the analysis and interpretation, too. While reviewing any topic, direct statements of the interviewees were used as much as possible. The interviewees' direct statements were also used while describing the context of experience. In this way, the fact that some were "invisible", or "ignored" despite being in the education system for around fifteen years were shown. Thanks to the interviewees' own phrases.

2. REBUILDING OF THE KURDISH IDENTITY: WITH AND IN SPITE OF EDUCATION

This study was carried out to explore students' perceived school experience in relation to their identity at school as a means and venue of building of a new identity by the Turkish Republic by posing the questions "whether they regard themselves as a part of the "us" promoted by the school, whether they faced discriminative actions such as "we" and "the other", what they did despite the school's opposition, how they used representations/symbols, and how they achieved to be themselves at school."

2. 1. "Official Us" and "Us": The Process of Noticing the Official Us

The concepts "official us" and "us" are used to resolve students' experience regarding Turkish Republic's producing a new identity by means of school. As a response to the Republic's "official us" containing such qualities as Turk, contemporary, secular and Western, Kurdish students defined "us" as members of a traditional, conservative and Oriental society. The analysis was done taking into account the students' noticing the "official us", interaction and changes taking place in "us".

The mission attributed to school by Turkish Republic regarding building a new

society did not use to be noticed by students in the past. The reasons for students' failing to notice the new "us" differ. Some of them report that they could not notice the "official us" as they took school as "a procedure in the way of a compulsory process", while some others explain the same phenomenon with lacking awareness. They tell their personal history regarding how they realized "us" in subsequent steps. "I have never felt like a part of it. However, it was more visible among those coming from boarding school" says Sixty07M. He noticed "we and they" quite late, at university. "I noticed we and they" through that banner saying –Communists and Dogs, go off! I have always been on the opposing side". Sixty01M says he could not distinguish the new identity the school was trying to build since he studied between 1938-1950, when it was "as quiet as grave" as he calls. For participant Sixty01M, the warning signs given during in Dicle Students Dormitory under the authority of politicized Kurds such as Lawyer Faik Bucak, who would be the TKDP Chairman later, helped "disclose everything" during the university years:

Have I ever seen myself in Turkishness?" No, because I cannot make it yet. I mean I had to finish school like everybody else. Then I would be a civil servant, start working somewhere. I wasn't sure about what I could be because there was not a person to take as a model. I hadn't met such a person till university. But things became clearer in Dicle Students Dormitory. Things were like that in Turkey. Sheikh Said Rebellion, followed by Ağrı rebellion and Dersim rebellion were all feudal movements. Those acts ended in 1938. In 1950, there was absolute silence in Kurdistan. I was schooled in that period covering between 1938 and 1950. We call it the twelve-year silence like graveyard. But things started changing as of 1950. The conditions changed a lot after the Democratic Party was founded in 1946". (Sixty01M)

Sixty02M has a similar experience like Sixty01M's distinguishing the "official us". He was not disposed "not to take up the pattern the school is trying to doctrinate" in discussions with his friends. He has not been a Kemalist; rather he "took up a mentality safeguarding democracy due to being a Kurd":

I was not aware of it. Even if I say I was referring myself like that, I was not aware. It is a procedure. I am following my way in that procedure. But how did it want to shape me? On my own or with my friends, I was in a mood not to take up the French style Kemalist model for which I was being prepared. But I had the opinion that Kurdish people should be progressivist for Kurds. Still, I have not been strictly secular or religionist since the beginning. I understood that I should not have fallen down to such people. Maybe I was guarding democracy due to the spirit of being Kurd. (Sixty02M)

"You are not aware that the state is trying to build a certain identity until you finish high school; but you represent it. You are as it wants you to be. At least in outlook, or maybe in mentality, too" says Sixty05M. As I reminded that they used to laugh

on 10th November, which is the death anniversary of Atatürk, he said “Because we were not loyal enough then”. Sixty05M explains the low level of loyalty with the conflict between the culture offered by school and neighbourhood or rural culture, and shares some parts from his own neighbourhood’s culture and its implications on him as the source of conflict:

You are cultured at school and also your neighbourhood or village. A society is the culture of anecdotes. On one hand, you learn the official history including heroic stories which you have to parrot in examinations. On the other hand, you live in a neighbourhood, people chat at winter nights; for example, my uncle’s home. His memory is so strong. Past stories are told in his house. For example, “Seyidxane Kero”⁴ is a famous anecdote. It was a myth, a symbol of heroism in my mind. He was a friend of my uncle. They tried passing to Syria after the Ağrı riot, Ferzende and so on. Once you show interest in them, you conceive them as a hero each. You are at odds with it. Your essence lies there, in your neighbourhood. You are inevitably affected by it. (...) The anecdotes, many historical events narrated. Also there was one thing in those stories. I don’t forget it. There is a family. Halit Bey⁵ of Hesenan is caught on his way back from Iran. It was in 1926 or 1928 as far as I remember. He is brought to Muş prison. One Muş man spits into his face. When I heard it, I did not know who Halit Bey of Hesenan is or what he did because I was a child. But think of a rebel, his heroic actions are narrated, too. He went as far as to Iran. Then you see that such a big hero is arrested and despised. I felt like hating that family. Hatred against the kids or family of that man. (Sixty05M)

Some students could notice the “official us” the school was trying to build since elementary school. While describing the school climate, it is seen that the students see school as “a distinct world”. This could be the reason for which some of the students could see the new “us” at school in early ages. Sixty06M, as one of them, points out that he “has never favoured” the identity being built due to “what our senior people narrate to us”, and even tried to be an “alternative”. He adds that he adopted “such values as modernity, Western, etc” within norms, formats and parameters related with socialism” rather than “Kemalist or Kemalism”:

I have not been a Kemalist. I have never favoured it at all. Even at elementary or secondary school. Maybe it was partly due to what the elder people used to tell us. I mean they used to tell that Kurds were exposed to bad treatment. Therefore, I did not have warm feelings [towards Turkish national identity]. But as a matter of the fact, I learnt value judgments like modernity, Western, so on in the context of Socialism formats and parameters instead of Kemalism’den. On the contrary, I did not use to appreciate Kemalist Western movement or Kemalist Revolutionists because I was a socialist revolutionist soon. Socialist revolution was an alternative or I was going

4 Seyidxanê Kero and Ferzende are narrators (dengbejs) involved in the Mount Ararat Riot between 1926–1930 (Dit, 2010).

5 An Ottoman officer from Hesenan clan. Involved in the Sheikh Said Riot (Sever, 2010)

to be a Kurd revolutionist. I preferred taking the alternative for Kemalism. A sharp distinction can be seen in this matter after high school; Kemalists on one side, we are on another side. (Sixty06M)

Not seeing himself as a part of the “us” the school projects, Sixty08M reinterprets basic components of the Turkish Republic’s society project like modernization and secularization within the framework of his own society’s needs. In his discourse, there are expressions such as “my people’s being as passionate about science as religion”, “their stepping forward in social life”, “religion is static but science is liquid”, and “religion must be made dynamic”. In this way, he recalls the positivist discourse said during early years of the Republic:

I have always regarded myself as a potential Kurd. (...) I was not involved in the “us” the school tried to build. I would like my public in the East to be a bit more modern, conscious, and show interest in science as much as in religion. I would prefer they go forward in social life. (Sixty08M)

Not seeing himself within the new “us” due to the “Turkish ethnicity act”, Sixty09M says “Modernity and secularism is a great thing for Kurds as long as it is at European level”. Besides, as in previous interviews, he is seen to have some reserves. Especially as for secularism, he holds similar views as previous ones. They have in common about secularism in that they are against bans and pressure about religion and belief under the guise of secularism. This is quite understandable because Kurdish community is, as Sixty08M points, “loyal to religion”. Kurds also brought up religious leaders of the early Kurdish political movement such as yh Ubeydullah Nehri, Şeyh Mahmut Berzenci, Şeyh Said, Seyyid Rıza and Molla Mustafa Barzani:

I cannot see [myself in the official us]. There was the Turkish ethnic event. First of all, Turkishness does not apply. For me, modernity is good. Secularism is not the same secularism the Republic or Kemalism speaks out. But what is Europe holds as far as we learnt about secularism? Everyone has freedom in belief. People with religious feelings must be free, they should not get under pressure. Religionist Republicans suffer a lot due to religion in Turkey. The state challenges them. Even there are many bans on this. I don’t like this. If it were as in Europe, I could say that modernity and secularism is something great for Kurds. Kurds must be secular and modern. But it shouldn’t be like the Kemalism religion. (Sixty09M)

Seventy01M has always found himself unusual in the school context but not minded. Then he formed the “we and they” categories based on the differences. Bearing in mind that identity is the sum of differences, we can see the variances/components of the Kurdish identity accumulating at school:

Maybe I did not use to label myself as a distinct one, still I am unlike others, and they are unlike me. Teachers are different at elementary school, governor of the subdistrict

is different, military commander is different and his children are different. I mean those representing the state are different no matter they are civil servants, military commanders or civil workers, teachers, or healthcare staff later. It has been on the ground since then. We are one way, but they are another way. Men of any age can describe this. But such a mentality exists. It turned to a kind of political categorization after the secondary school You start categorizing then: These are like me, but those are not like me or I am not like them. It happens then, it has always been like this after then. I mean “we and they”. (Seventy01M)

Seventy04M describes the identity formation project of the Republic as “creating its Muslim, religionist, communist, Turk model”, and has never seen himself within the Republic’s “us”. He sounds like defending his preference and argues that the Republic’s project “bombed” saying “though some still resist, this monist opinion -unique language, unique nation, unique sect- fell down”.

Some participants argued that they could stay unaffected from the school effect thanks to reasoning. For example, Seventy08M said that their current identities as opponents are as they are “despite the state” still “it has traces on us”. Some participants have in common with the “us” the school aims to construct, and think it is not something to bother. In their opinion, school makes major contributions despite its “assimilating” function. Seventy06M explains these contributions as “There were modernizing activities for daily life in our time. Take men and women equality as an example. There is struggle over women rights. For example, the public training center introduced schools to film projector. Also they taught how to wash hands and face, take a proper bath and brush teeth.” He identifies himself as a real secular and thinks it is not something to mind if “it is a value of the Republic and contribution of school”:

To give an example, I am secular. It is not as explained in the Constitution or as it is performed in Turkey. But I am a real secular. Religious affairs should definitely be separated from state affairs. Religious affairs should be arranged by individuals without putting pressure on another. The state’s intervention should be absolutely egalitarian. Turkey announces itself as a secular state but there is an authority of religious affairs for the Sunni only. The Alevi don’t have djemevis. In some examples, the state forces for building mosques in some villages. For example, I am a secular person. I don’t mind if it is introduced as a value by the Republic or contribution of school (...) I should say assimilation is not something to be favoured, but there are some good outcomes as well. We cannot deny it. I mean it is not realistic to take anything entirely good or bad. Do you think you can label something as entirely bad? Or entirely wrong? (...) School, thinking the situation in Kurdistan, introduced positive aspects besides assimilation for me[in my opinion]. (Seventy06M)

As Seventy06M mentions, one “contribution” of school is, no doubt, secularism, which is the basic feature and goal of Republic schools. Seventy07M lists his norms

as “modernity” followed by “secularism, democracy and human rights”. On the other hand, “he does not feel the existence of those norms in Turkey” because Turkey perceives secularism “in a way to manage all religious affairs through the religious affairs authority related with single sect.”

2. 2. Otherness and Entity Forms against Othering

Other or otherness is among founding elements of the phenomenon of identity. Identities define their own components in reference to others. In one sense, identity sustains its existence thanks to the other. It needs the other; it defines itself in reference to the other. Identity delineates its own borders and places marks between itself and those remaining outside to define itself and others. The marks are “differences”. Identity can be described as the sum of differences in a sense. The differences distinguishing “us” from others define “us”, while those distinguishing “them” from “us” define “the other”. “Other” as a complement of political or cultural identity is one of the key terms of modern identity discourses.

The problem of “othering” the prevailing culture or another community with other qualities in social relationships are exposed is paraphrasing of exposure to discrimination. Building of political identities can be achieved by defining an “other”, which is definitely distinct from them. In this sense, the “other” referring to the one dissimilar as a requisite of identity also delineates boundaries of any identity. The central identities imposed by nation identities during the modernization process led to arising of many identities of otherness and a rooted awareness of otherness due to their policies targeting to largely assimilate local varieties and create a nation-wide homogenous culture (Aktay, Aktay, Kızılkaya, Osmanoğlu, Kaan and Yurdakul, 2010: 21). Othering is built upon the principle of perceiving of identity differences as innately given dissemblances. The idea of othering ignores identity characteristics emerged as a consequence of social processes, and takes the argument as an undisputable fact that a characteristic peculiar to any social group constitutes an “essence” which is strictly restricted to that group, shared by all members of that group, and natural, innate, permanent and constant. Therefore, it is likely to hear generalizations as a part of othering movements such as “black people are aggressor”, “women are liars”, “European people are immoralist”, “Muslims are potential terrorists”, “the Jewis are cunning” or “Mexican people are terrorists” (Yılmaz, 2010).

Nation states build monoist identity on uniform religion, uniform language and uniform ethnicity, which necessarily leads detracting, ostracising and discriminating of others from school. Building of a Turk, Muslim, Sunni, modern and secular identity in Turkey inevitably “otherised” those lacking mentioned identity elements. The reason is that it tries to build its own identity by means of “ostracism” as one of

the most common ways of othering as it excludes from school everything specific to those not having the same identity elements. The interviewees experienced otherness differently from each other and tried to develop counter strategies.

2. 3. Marks Separating “You and We”

Some of the study participants need certain marks in order to feel otherness in the school environment cleared from differences. For instance, not noticing the Republic’s new identity building, Seventy02M did not realize being exposed to othering either. Despite the challenges related with language, he told that he had not be exposed to othering because most of the teachers came from Diyarbakır and the rest of the teachers “could be integrated into the town”. However, political opponents’ propagandas turned into harsh marks as a result of their reflection on secondary students’ essays as well as teachers and school principals’ panic:

I remember a friend, Şerif E. He came from a very poor family. A doctor used to teach Turkish lessons then. He was getting us to write an essay. Şerif’s elder brother was among the first samples entering university. He was studying at Ankara Higher Teacher Education School in the 60s. He was interested in Şeyh Said’s family. Probably he taught a bit to Şerif. Upon this, Şerif wrote in his essay ‘You are always looking down upon us’ for the first time. The teacher, who was a plump guy, read the essay to us. ‘How come can you write such a thing?!’ he asked. Then, he called for the school principal. After, Şerif wrote [in his essay] ‘You are eating the meat but throwing the bones to us’. He meant something like this. The principal came in. After that, Şerif was suspended from school for two weeks. It was the first event at school one can call political. It was on agenda for a long time. (Seventy02M)

For the Turkish-speaking civic students, they felt otherness due to separation of spaces shared with school mates and getting back of spaces they used to occupy before. Sixty05M says he experienced trauma because of that. In reaction to this, he published a paper on this issue in their review:

We were neighbours to military people and policemen, and were friends with their children in our district. We were grown up together. (...) We used to visit our friends in their houses. Then, lodging buildings were built, and they started moving there. Our classmates were living in those houses and we used to visit them. But after a while, they blocked the street with soldiers in two ends. Then I felt that I was the other. I was a student in high school. Imagine how I was influenced by the time I started university. I can’t forget two events. I took a photo of it. We issued the Peçe Journal as Muş Cultural Association. A paper of mine was published there, but the governor got angry with it. The other event was took place during my childhood. There was a playground, and there were some chin-up bars and a swing in it. We used to go to play there when we were elementary school children. It was just in front of the Government Building, and I could go there recently. Let’s say I went there for a few times during the period when I was allowed to go out alone. One day while I was

amusing in the swing and chin-up bars, the soldiers chased after me. I did not know it was changed as the military mess. They turned the playground into the military area. It was so traumatic for me! I could not forget it. (Sixty05M)

The most important component of ethnic identity is language. It has a large decomposing power because it separates individuals' social world by means of special codes. The monoist attitude of school related with language leads alienation among students. The students not only feel like the other due to their language but also use their own language as a means of existing or counter othering:

We were definitely the other, in every area. It was impossible not to feel it. Language is the most important criterion which decomposes. It's influential enough. I deeply felt that we were the other. I was not treated badly as an other so often maybe because, as I said, I did not let it happen. On the other hand, I received warning several times for not speaking Kurdish. My Kurdish was limited by school and class. I could not speak Kurdish with my Kurdish mates in break time, in street or town or at home. Some of us forgot to speak English as a result! Not to speak Kurdish to be a good student... For example, there was a fascist teacher in the H. village. He was like an enemy of Kurds. He used to punish Kurdish speaking ones. Also he assigned Kurdish children for denouncing those speaking Kurdish, interestingly all of them were Kurds. Furthermore, he sent people for following houses closely to check if children were speaking Kurdish at home. I could speak it freely since I was not a student in the village then. He could not interfere with me either. Even I used to promote the students "You should speak, too". (Sixty06M)

Another reason for othering in school environment is denominational differences. Sixty02M recalls how Alevi students, "the qizilbash" were otherised because of their sect in Erzurum High School. Also being an Alevi himself, Sixty08M says he was not otherised as an Alevi but his friends were. According to what Sixty08M tells, otherising is applied to students if they belong to the minority group on the basis of their sect. Accompanying politicization also leads students to challenge their religious attachment. Sixty08M said "I am against many rules of my sect despite being an Alevi" and added that he was otherised in Tunceli, where the number of Alevi students was relatively higher:

I was not treated as [the other] but many Alevi friends were. I was not treated so because I had good relations with all. Everybody would communicate with their close friends. I was not a cheater at all. I was called as Kızılbaş Ş... (meaning Alevi Ş...). I was essentially a Qizilbash even though I was fasting, I was not otherised. The other Alevi individuals were otherised, but in classrooms where Alevi were in majority, the Sunni students were otherised. I am an Alevi, still I am against many aspects of the Alevi. I was exposed to otherising in Tunceli, but not somewhere else. When I spoke as "What is a patriarch? He is as a simple human being as I am." in Tunceli, they blamed me for turning into Sunnism. I was otherised in the Alevi section in Tunceli. (Sixty08M)

City-dwellers who cannot speak Turkish felt as the other, which takes place along with discovering their Kurdish identity. Taking into consideration of the other students' experiences, nonexistence of language, poverty and nationalist propaganda as a source of otherness accounts for that. Eighty04F studied in Gaziantep in a time period when "Kurdishness, of which she was not aware then, and her hometown" did not pose a problem. Her leftist views were more visible than her being Kurd till high school. Leftism had traces on Eighty04F in that she rejected obeying the school and rules. She was lucky enough to "be politicized" and "act as leftists" as a result of the pass grading system: "We read these [Mücadele Journal]. A slogan was written in one of our regular journals 'Go ogg, police partner administration.' Imagine you write it on the board. It's a kind of politicizing yourself. I started noticing Kurdishness when I was the 2nd grader in high school. I am not it. You say you are not the one who is Turk and right." It is seen that Kurdishness exists in more even leftist contexts as a blended model of the two:

As you read and realize further, you start feeling like that. Education system functions in coordination to this end. I am a person who notices her own awareness only. I perceive myself as the other. They never told me that I am a Kurd because I was grown up in city and did not speak Kurdish... After I noticed it myself, I started feeling uneasy. I started questioning our (national) oath and Atatürk's address to the Turkish youth, and it gradually turned into hatred. The relation to Atatürk and the education system. I went through such an inquiry. (Eighty04F)

Similar to Eighty04F, Seventy01M also experienced politicization by means of feeling otherness. Always feeling being the other in school environment, Seventy01M did not have negative connotations about it earlier. However, as a consequence of the politicizing process upon noticing his dissimilarity, the student somehow transformed such "psychology" as "these are not from us" into a political category. In other terms, the feeling of distinguishing turned into the idea of distinguishing.

2. 4. Strategies against Otherising

The students use as counter strategies "successfulness", "docibleness" and "being hardworking" against otherising acts in the school environment. Schooling in an environment where Kurds and the Alevi were otherised, Sixty02M was "Sunni and docile", maybe because "he was a well-behaved student". The Kurds were the other, but he was not:

I was a Kurdish student, not the other because I was a good student. Maybe the main reason was that I was not spoiling for a fight. Or the dominance of Sunni Turk in Erzurum High School, where I studied. In Erzurum High School, the Alevi Kurds were discriminated as "they". I remember some boys in my first year. Everyone wanted to beat them. I asked "Why is that?" They were qizilbash.. They were laughing as I asked "so what?" Kurd and Turk discrimination was not so obvious then. I came and

studied in Ankara for one year. For example, one day when I was a student with wet hair, I said “Why did you do your hair wet?” They all just bursted into laughter. Such things happened a lot, but Turkish Turks could not speak Turkish [well] either (...) When I studied [at university], it wasn’t common. Less Kurds studied. There were only 4 or 5 Kurds in 200. 3 or 4 were in our class. The Kurds were in even minority in minority. They were so poor (Sixty02M)

One way students adapted for coping with otherness is their relationship with Kurdish teachers and their support. In a school environment under the dominance of Turkish nationalists, the students offend Kurdish ones who cannot speak Turkish fluently. Seventy01M was not “insulted” for not being able to speak Turkish well as he was “hardworking”, still he was offended. He recalled his Zazaish speaking teacher by saying “the teacher’s speaking Zaza language was a gift for me”:

Except for the Turk teachers, a novice lawyer used to teach English when we were in the 1st and 2nd grade in secondary school. He is called Abdulkadir S. There was a boy from Sancak (a town of Bingöl) in the class. The students laughed humiliating every time he attempted to speak. One day it happened in Abdulkadir S.’s class, but he told off the students for laughing. I am not sure if he pronounced the word Kurd, but defended by saying “He cannot speak Turkish because he has another mother tongue. He doesn’t have to speak good Turkish. He is different from you. You have to respect him. You are laughing at him, but this is humiliating.” Following this, I had a walk with him for a few times outside the school. He used to speak in Zaza language with me. It was a gift that the teacher spoke Zazaish to me. I was in a good relationship with most of the other teachers because I was a hardworking one. I don’t mean a unique relationship. For example, I could get on very well with an English teacher in the high school. It was both because I was hardworking and he had leftist views. He had to leave after the 2nd grade. Since most of the other teachers were for MHP, I did not establish a special relationship with them. They did not make a brilliant impression either. But there wasn’t a problem owing to that I was a hardworking student. Exceptionally, there was a physics teacher. He was Turk and worked as the education director during the MHP period. He was specifically at odds with me although I was hardworking. (Seventy10M)

Most practices under the education system arouse a feeling of otherness among students, which causes uneasiness. It, in turn, results in some behaviours such as “obstination” and counter otherising. The phenomenon of counter otherising is based on Gramsci’s (Crehan, 2006:146) “hegemony” meaning dominating against the dominating one. It is about establishing hegemony by means of otherising the one who otherises the hegemony built upon otherising, discrimination or humiliation. Sixty09M explains the uneasiness with building of the education system on Turkishness; and lists such aspects as “My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence”, “How happy is he who can say I am a Turk”, “Hanafism”, and “dressing” as “reverse sides”:

The schooling is [built upon] Turkishness. No one needs to call us “you”. One thing is really annoying. Doesn’t a Kurdish child have difficulties? He surely does. Sometimes I feel as if it is an insult to say “My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence!” “How happy is he who can say I am a Turk!” They made us recite it every morning. Believe me we sometimes shouted irrelevant things. Not only me, all of the rest of the children in the village. They said it by changing as a reaction. We were forced to recite it, so they did it secretly. It is not good. Moreover, there were some misfitting things in belief issue due to my being a Sunni Shafi. The education is in Turkish. One can easily see that we are the other against principles of national education. In my opinion, this can be seen in all of the Kurdish provinces. It is the opposite of course. Dressing is imposed, Hanafism is imposed on us. How nonsense! (Sixty09M)

Sixty09M preferred reacting to the annoying values by means of “counter otherising”, “dressing and language”. They despised the way their teachers were dressed because they tell that they mocked at the female teachers’ way of dressing by saying “tanko” meaning “naked” in Kurdish: “Tanko, in our opinion, their core values were not so high because our perspective was like this. I mean we used to consider civic dressing as I explained above. What we used to wear was unrevealing clothes called ‘deri’ referring to woman’s dress in Turkish. No need to mention, but we ‘labelled one of them clean, and the other unclean’

The counter otherising applied by Sixty09M by means of language causes harsh quarrel and fights among students. He was “boarded at his own expense” in Erzurum High School Students’ Hostel, and sang Kurdish “klam” [folk songs] at night in order to “annoy”, “obstinate” and to “disobey” in his own terms. He even ended up in school administration as a result:

I used to lie on my bed and sing Kurdish “klam” to the fascists, Turks in the boarding school all of a sudden at night. There was a boy called Ömer of Tortum, he was an extremist. We fought so harshly that we smashed each other’s face twice. Six of them attacked me at night. As a response, I would sing Kurdish songs. I was just being stubborn. We were annoying each other. Disobedience was in question, one could feel it. For example, referral to disciplinary in the evening... I committed a serious crime, Kurdish at school.. We were sent, and the teacher, God blesses him, was a leftist one. He took my statements. I poured out, so he was very upset. He criticized me saying “Do you think you are doing right?”, “Are you in all good conscience? Near so many fascists?” We were saved from expulsion (being kicked out from school) thanks to that teacher’s taking statements. I think we were going to be kicked out because of the serious fight; think about the blood, broken nose, etc. We had other fights in the street for many times also. (Sixty09M)

Kurdish nationalism, which became stronger in late eighties and early nineties in southern parts, also had an influence on students. The students whose relations to school were shaped accordingly displayed political acts such as collective actions. For instance, Eighty05M and his friends “boycotted” even clothes. “Once we

held a collective action but I can't remember what we did it for. We boycotted the lessons. We boycotted the school. Sit-in act for a few times for the sake of politics. The 2nd and 3rd graders in my period, there was heavy pressure as it coincided with that period." The students did not feel otherness thanks to having power over the atmosphere. As in the other interviewees, the neighbourhood the school is located in comes to the front as an important factor revealing otherness. The school, we denied it. "Our reason for being there was not acquiring all values from school because we rejected it. We were there for the sake of literature, poetry, etc. But you cannot deny that you have got to take exams and finish school. You have to pass exams, you study for it, and you come to agree it." Eighty05M could not notice that the school founded a new "us" as he was focused on being sovereign and his specific goal. "We could have noticed it [otherness] if we had been here [in Ankara]. If we had been in another setting, I mean. Maybe it was because we were into each other" he says. But their specific resistance on language, in fact they faced otherness in the setting where they were "by ourselves", too. As a response, they try to "discard everything school gives outside". If some students seem as sensitive as school towards speaking Turkish, they "attempted to somehow restrict the school culture uncounsciously" by saying "Look! He has been a Turk, a boy of Istanbul. He will speak Turkish with mom and sisters, too. Here is a Turk!" Language is pointed as the most important item the students used for describing their position as the other specifically. It could be because it is the most visible component of identity. Eighty05M reports that he was otherised due to language by all groups at university. He continues saying "even Turkish, leftist and prayerful ones who said they respect us reacted to greeting in Kurdish such as "çavanî baş î?"⁶ by saying "I don't understand what you say." But he replied "Come on! You don't have to understand".

Heavy political propagandas triggered some students for harsh reactions. In the seventies, Turkish nationalist groups used to hold activities and go into classrooms in Elazığ to propagate such as "There is no nation as Kurd especially in that high school", "There is no language as Kurdish" and "They want to separate Turkey with conspiracy theories." Seventy10M said "it aroused reaction in my mind", so he could notice "I was not in that we" and "he was not a part of that system". I was a bit more radical then. We denied the society, that social structure, the education system, that's what they were trying to build, in a radical way. We were after a completely different world":

I was spotting otherness, I was feeling it. Due to that, for example, I have never supported the Turkish national football team. We used to dispute at university or in those times. We were angry with some singers like İbrahim Tatlıses who Turkishized

6 How are you?

Kurdish mucis. We are a distinct community, we have a profoundly distinct culture. We are a different nation; that means we have nothing in common with that specific social order, that specific state, or that system at all. We are completely different, and we were all detached psychologically. Imagine we would chat with our own circle of friends in hidden places at high school and university because we were weird, we were aliens there as we felt. (...) We were clearly wishing to revolutionize in those times. In that period, I was dreaming of, it might sound weird now but, a Kurdish state. I can definitely say that. We were thinking that we could get rid of the pressure only if we could found our own state. In my belief, the only way to independence was founding our state. This was what we used to talk over with friends outside school. We were thinking that Kurds, Kurdistan was a dominion then. To us, Kurds were a nation. We were going to pull through that oppression once we could found our own state, and we were preparing for that. (Seventy10M)

In early years, Seventy01M went under the political atmosphere of TKDP, which had been dominant across that area following the secondary school, and were searching for strategies in order to exist “among them”. Like him, “all of his mates were disadvantageous individuals in economic, social and other terms”. They were using the school’s cultural activities in order to exist within school. In his terms, they were pursuing “a latent war” against others. From this event he shared “for the sake of existing”, it is seen that his group was interested in making use of every opportunity. As an example, a poetry competition was held at school. “A poem was so popular among us then. It is called *Nataşa* by Necati Siyahkan. We obtained it illegally. Maybe from Diyarbakır but I don’t remember exactly where we got it from. We copied that poem by hand writing, and most of us already memorized that fourteen-verse poem. Mellifluous, feverish and patriotic it was. Describing the poem “written with the sense of leftism and Kurdish patriotism”, they had a mate “with a microphonic voice” recite it. During the activity, the “poem” which the audience “could not understand” gained much interest. After, however, they were warned by their “elder comrades” not to “risk” themselves:

The cultural activities within the İmam Hatip environment, as I said before, did not take place without our participation. But it is not an assimilated existence, as they say. While we were taking our place there, were were existing as a representative of an entity which put up with belittling, despising and suppressed for being on our mettle, putting ourselves forward, and pushing our existence through some way. In addition, we exist differently in this sense. In short, although we were behind those living in the city, who were well-off, had a higher social background and Turkish children, we have always been ahead from cultural aspects, being hardworking and participating in cultural activities; there is a hidden war. (Seventy01M)

Being Kurds from the Central Anatolia, Seventy04M and Seventy07M, studied in places where Turkish students were in majority. Both had similar experiences

concerned with otherness, and schooled “by subduing their Kurdishness”. Nevertheless, while Seventy04M coped with otherness by grouping and “speaking Kurdish”, Seventy07M concealed his identity and delayed expressing it till experiencing the grouping at university:

Otherness was there, of course. One could feel it when together with Turks. You had Turkish friends but you had some adverse feelings in the beginning, even some of them felt repellent. The case was the same at school, too because you cannot express your identity there. You go there after covering your identity. You live it only in your family, like an open prison. You do not present your identity before teachers at school, you show it only when you go home back. Do you think it is a good mood? (...) We would get in groups by ourselves. We would speak Kurdish by ourselves. We would speak Turkish with Turks but we always spoke Kurdish in our own circle. Even we were reported to the school administration due to this for many times. We would lie in that case. (Seventy04M)

I always felt as the other. I have accepted that I am the other since I started thinking myself as a Kurd. I was driven to feel it by many things. Well, I never faced a situation where I felt as a Kurd until high school. Almost no one in high school knew it. It was not discussed, either. No one learnt it. It started in there, at Gazi University. (Seventy07M)

Among some students, the feeling of otherness is felt not only related with ethnicity but also “the economic status as an origin of social class”. In situations where otherness becomes layered, the mitigating factors such as teacher’s favour or care do not work. Attributing his otherness to “the conscious of language and economic status”, Seventy11M, even for his teacher who showed him deep compassion, says “I was feeling as the [otherness] even by him. It’s a horrible tension”. To relieve from that tension, they “would speak Kurdish and play truant and play in the neighbourhood”. Similarly, Seksen03K studied in Diyarbakır after the gloomy 80s. She speaks as “School has always offered the official identity. Some individuals were naturally affected, but it has not been convincing to me because there was an obvious conflict between my real life and what was taught to me. As a simple example, I would start speaking Zazaish and forget everything as soon as I arrived home”. On the contrary, Seventy11M sees today’s modern values overlap school’s values. The socialist nature of the grouping he went into during the school period encouraged him to consider the school’s values as “bourgeois morals” and thus reject them. He adds that the university teachers following the 1980 coup d’état had no chance to be inspiring as they were “soldierlike”. Thus, he explains his current modern values “mostly with the books and newspapers he read and the kind of music he took up”.

2. 5. Otherness That Does Not Bother

The state authority was not obvious in the political setting of the seventies, and Seventy03M refers to the “de-facto” dominance of political groups and the folk “regardless of the curriculum”. Since the othering party does not represent the sovereign identity, he, unlike the other interviewees, did not feel otherness in any way. Seventy03M has a superior position at school; therefore, he “simply doesn’t care”:

My son ranked twenty-second in Turkey in the examination. He could not answer two lightweight questions about Turkish revolution history, for which I felt so happy. He would have ranked first if he had answered them. But I was happy with the result because I had been cautioning him to ignore that subject. This is what we also did in the past. History is so boring for me. The doctrine of history, course books, whatever... Take mathematics! One may not need it everytime. But it is the opposite for history. It is even beneficial for you to learn history. We wouldn’t read history a lot because we did not feel like due to that thing. Or maybe because we studied it reluctantly, because we knew it already. This is a manipulated history. This is not our history. So, we were against it. On the other side of the coin, it is about education. Not everything is narrated badly. Except for some rituals and it is in Turkish, but you use it in parenthesis. Except for that, Kurdish is everywhere in the classroom, among friends, in the street, in the town, and so on. In the last instance, I should say that it wasn’t oppressive in my environment. (Seventy03M)

In places with a large Kurdish population, the students’ otherness feeling is not disturbing. This is a relief “thanks to the fact that everybody was the other”. But this is only a mitigating factor because such students’ describing school as “imposing” also implies the degree of uneasiness. As for Seventy08M, his statement about the identity school imposes gives implies the role his family played during the Sheikh Said Riot of 1925 and subsequent dramatic happenings. In his opinion, “one is supposed to be Turk, secular and loyal to the state by that curriculum”. He doesn’t feel comfortable with “Turkishness or loyalty to the state” as he has many reserves about the same. Seventy08M reacts to the school’s “imposing manner” with “symbols, Kurdish or another instrument from time to time”.

2. 6. Rebuilding of Identity and School

In spite of those preferring to discard everything school indoctrinates, especially members of the post-eighty generation places emphasis on the school’s impacts on them. Eighty03M says “In my opinion, school managed to educate us as it wished. It managed to shape us as it liked, but it could not instill all what it wanted to. Because we are not still pronouncing what they are pronouncing. We have acquired other values, we have different values”. According to him, it is a partial success that school could detach them from their identity and “alienate” them. On the other hand, he talks about the success as “I suppose the education system achieved its

goal because we are already here.” It can also be said that he does not accept it as complete success because he says “it brought up something which is not typical”. It can be suggested that he thinks the system detached him from his origin, still could not turn him to the exact thing it wants. Similar hints can also be seen in Sixty07M. He points out the “degenerating effect” of the education system and details as “In my opinion, we could neither stay as we were nor resembled it; as a result, we are amorphous stuck somewhere in between”. It is understood from both Eighty06M and Eighty08M’s remarks that they were influenced by the school from their saying like “it assimilated us” and “it succeeded affecting all of us”. But, Eighty09M draws attention to another aspect of the education process. In his opinion, the education system is more successful in regard to Turks. He supports his view as follows:

Think about the impact of the education system on Turks. A twenty-year old graduate Turk is not able to discuss “Why shouldn’t Kurds have education in the mother tongue?” or “Why shouldn’t Kurds have education in Kurdish?” One day, I was making an announcement in English. Not even one single competent brain does not ask “There are 80 thousand Zazas there, so why shouldn’t there an announcement in Zazaki?” You have individuals who are not able to interrogate this. (Eighty09M)

Perceived Kurdishness of the Kurds with a shorter education life in the Republic’s school differs from “scholars”. For example, Sixty04M went there only for three years and is among founders of KDP, which is one of the oldest and most traditional Kurd groups. His Madrasah background of his family means to him. Among Kurds, “Madrasah is a popular background, they sometimes are involved in politics. It has a particular contribution to the Barzani movement. Upon the Barzani movement, for example, Deceased Said [Elçi] attracted many madrasah mollahs and sheikhs in Bingöl. People list them as X molla or Y sheikh. That movement merged with Kurdish nationalism in the KDP.” After placing emphasis on the role played by madrasah in Kurdish politics, he turns to the effects of Republican education as another factor in rebuilding of Kurdishness. Founders of the KDP talk about it as “The five of us are feeling close to madrasah in traditional terms but we are not mollahs. Still, we are in that culture”. Proximity to the madrasah described above is also associated with proximity to the “Kurdish matter” because he points out that the Kurds studying in the Republic’s schools gradually became distant from the “matter”:

Normally we are gradually going far from the matter; we aren’t going closer to it, the opposite. Consider cyclical facts and other things around the world. Pay attention, Kurds are not in it. Kurds do not have consensus in this matter, there is not consensus, a common idea does not rise. For instance, there are 20 parliamentarians, I don’t believe that they have a common opinion. There must be one common departing point, but it does not exist. Kurds must be viewed as Kurds, and the route to Kurdis-

tan must be followed. The Kurdistan route must be detailed about benefits for the people next. I want a federal state. Outcomes of a federal state must be elicited for both Turkey and the specific region. Or what if I want autonomy. Specific benefits of autonomy must be listed. But, there is not such an act. It hasn't taken place so far, either. (Sixty04M)

According to Sixty04M, "education is largely influential" on Kurds' getting away from themselves and the opposite would be possible if Kurds have education in their own language. In addition, he argues that Mustafa Kemal caused a serious memory loss as a result of closing madrasahs and abolishing the alphabet overnight: "Kurds lost their memory. The people can hardly make right decisions once they lose their memory. Turkey lost its memory, too. Not only Kurds. One millennium year-old culture is disappearing."

Sixty04M went to the Republic schools only for three years; accordingly, what he expresses significantly differs from the others. Sixty04M criticizes harshly those studying in the Republic schools for their attitude and opinions regarding Kurds and Kurdish question. Considering the fact that he is one of the founders of the TKDP, one of the oldest Kurdish parties, his critics sound more meaningful. He did not object to the Turkish education system at all. Rather, he encouraged the students and applied to them for his political activities. It is seen that the interaction with the education system inevitably supports concerns of Sixty04M. It is obvious that the Kurds are not as Kurd as Sixty04M although they did not lose their Kurdishness.

3. CONCLUSION

Being both a cause and effect of modernization process, modernizing of education accompanies the state's centralization. It was developed as an education project that individuals coming from different ethnic, social background and culture are transformed as the state requires. The project is about changing "national subject" to "citizen". In other words, it involves standardization of social plurality under the single "citizen identity". Overall objective of the project is to ensure that "school" becomes capable of fulfilling such mission. In this study, unlike the popular educational science approach, which considers the student as input and educational experience as a one-way process, a multi-directional relation is found due to the strategies developed by subjects in order to realize their specific aims in the education area created in line with monoist and homogenous social fancy of nation states.

The students exposed to the transformation at school experienced schooling as subjects instead of passive objects. The Republic set the meaning and functions of schooling at macro level to political, economic and social ends. However, the students set the same variables at micro level. In other saying, they redefined

school in line with their specific goals and social attachment feeling. Different stimuli and experiences of the students break the ground for the identity school wants to build.

Students' experience regarding language constitutes another factor determining students' relation with school, teacher and knowledge. The students' relation varies depending on whether they learnt Turkish before. Those who learnt Turkish early did not have much difficulty and could become more successful at school. Those students in the school where Kurdish speakers were punished used "Turkish knowledge and being hardworking" as an existing strategy. However, the others who don't know Turkish have traumatic experiences because their mother tongue is forbidden and they learn the education language by force. With forbidding of the mother tongue, the language became political and the students gave reaction from time to time by means of the strategies they developed within school.

The students noticed the "official us" school attempts to build throughout the education process with the help of some signs and othering. It caused students to discuss school experiences invisibly. It is understood that the students have a covered, overt or silent attitude towards the official identity depending on the period they were schooled. The students' feeling the existence of the official identity helped them to distinguish their own identity. Rebuilding of the Kurdish identity took place as a consequence of that concretizing effort. The students managed to rebuild their own identity while school was building an official us. It is not by accident because it is supported by the Cyprus example. As in Bryan's (2002: 20) study titled "Modernity and Nationalism in Cyprus from National Subject to Citizen", Cyprus Muslims and Christians were transformed to "Citizens", Muslims and Christians were transformed as Turk and Greek as a result of formal education. It is obvious that participant Kurds are not as Kurd as their ancestors although they did not lose their Kurdishness.

Recommendations

1. School should notice the social plurality in which it lives in order to overcome the "identity blindness" caused by traditional monoism.
2. School should allow variety of students taking into consideration students as subjects bearing and transferring different social belonging instead of homogenous entities.
3. To prevent trauma or failure rising from discrepancy between the mother tongue and education language, school should be transformed into a multilingual setting also covering education in the mother tongue.

4. Curriculum should be developed with regard to social culture and values and school principals. Teachers, parents, students and specialists should be involved in curriculum development.

5. The school's image as a process in which social conflicts are produced and individuals dissent should be replaced with one that builds and develops societal peace, and it should be transformed into a setting where the repressive and exclusivist hierarchy does not exist among cultures and languages in the society.

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