

Nationwide Literacy Campaign Initiated By Community Centers Andcase of Bitlis Community Center

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Abstract

In the context of the new order that was started with the republic, the reforms of the alphabet, the language, and culture were especially important. As it is well-known, the Turkish Alphabet was accepted on November 1, 1928 and was based on the Latin Language. Then, on November 24, 1928, it was decided that schools with the name of "Schools of the Nation" would be opened to spread literacy and the new alphabet. The "Schools of the Nation", for whom the president and the head teacher was Atatürk, started education on January 1, 1929. Those who graduated from these schools, which had two steps, were given literacy certificate. "Schools of the Nation" made over one million people acquire literacy in Turkey within a short time period. However, the education was limited in these existing educational institutions, and new institutions were needed. The Community Centers, which were founded in 1932, undertook important missions to serve this purpose. The Community Centers were indispensable corporate institutions of the literacy campaign in early period of Turkish Republic, and achieved remarkable success with the literacy courses they opened in The Community Courses and Courses Branch. Document analysis was used as a model in research. Document analysis model, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in order to evaluate the literacy courses and the results obtained in Bitlis and in the region. Because, according to the frequency of use as a data collection technique in qualitative research, observation and written documentation and documentation methods are used respectively. It was asked in the instructions sent to The Community Centers by the secretary general of the CHP that courses would be opened and every citizen who could not attend schools would be taught how to read in these areas. As it was the case all over the country, a literacy campaign was also started in Community Center in Bitlis province, and these centers taught the locals how to read and write. Between 1932-1951, more than five thousand individuals learned to read and write in the Bitlis Community Center. Starting from this study made of the Early Republic Period community centers operating as formal education institutions in Turkey concluded that the impact on the literacy rate of the population.

Keywords: new Turkish alphabet, Bitlis community center, the community courses and courses branch, reading-writing course

1. Introduction

The idea of public education in Turkey is based on very old. For example, the Tekke, Zaviye and Ahî organizations that emerged from the 13th century, when Anatolia began to Turkishize, can be considered as public education institutions of the period. In the last period of the Ottoman Empire, in addition to the madrasas to eliminate the existing gap in education in 1865, Cemiyet-i Tedrisiye-i İslâmiye, which was founded. The Darüşşafaka, which was considered as an important step in the history of public education in 1873, was opened to Islam. As a matter of fact, Cemiyet-i Tedrisiye-i İslâmiye / Darüşşafaka; was founded by Yusuf Ziya Pasha, Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, Vidinli Huseyin Tevfik Pasha, Sakizli Ahmet Esat Pasha and Ali Naki Efendi with the Sultan's decree. Its aim was to support the education and training of the poor and orphaned children. The Association which had many Ottoman Pashas and intellectuals as its members became the first example of civilian organization in the field of education in Turkish history. (Soydan, 2003:250 vd).

Those taught reading and writing in the schools of Cemiyeti-i Tedrisiye-i İslâmiye developed their own method of reading and writing to the adult education. This method they developed was far ahead of the methods followed in the formal education institutions of their time. In fact, the name of the Aksaray branch of the Association was known as "Elifbeci (Arabic letters) Cevdet Efendi School" by the public (Şahbaz, 2008: 30). When the methods developed by the instructors were examined, it was observed that the instructor used the techniques in which the active learner was passive in the process. At the beginning of this lecture, lecture, question-answer, discussion and demonstration. During the Constitutional period, a large number of associations have been established to deal with public education. While a

political institution along with educational issues that holds the first plan of Union and Progress in many parts of Turkey's name is known to the Union and Progress Schools are open free schools. The Turkish Power Association (1913), the Ottoman Power Associations (9 April 1914), Young Associations (Gürbüz Association and the Dinç Association), which were established under the auspices of the Union and Progress Party, carried out serious studies in the field of public education.

Türk Ocakları (Turkish Hearths) opened in 1912 are also known as an important institution dealing with public education. In addition, the National Education and Training Association (Millî Talim ve Terbiye Cemiyeti), which was founded on August 1, 1915 and led by Süleyman Nesip Bey, was also an organization that mainly deals with public education. Briefly movement for public education in Turkey's Anatolian yet Turkified began to start from the 13th century, the Constitutional period continues uninterrupted for centuries has become a more common (Baltacıoğlu, 1950: 22-26; Toprak, 1985:531-536; <http://w3.balikesir.edu.tr/~mozsari/Halkevleri.htm>). Literacy activities have been a topic that has occupied educators since the Ottoman period.

One of the important difficulties of the Early Republican Period Turkish Educational System was the educational heritage which it inherited. Although there were efforts in the late period of the Ottoman State to spread western educational institutions in the Turkish Educational System, these efforts were weak, and the institutions that provided education-training in western style could not be spread. The Madrasah Education continued its activities throughout the country. For this reason, there were no serious improvements in the educational levels of the individuals. In the late period of the Ottoman State, the rate of literate people to the general population was 8% in men, and 3% in women.

In the context of the new order studies initiated with the Republic, the alphabet, language and cultural revolution have an important place. As it is known, the new Turkish Alphabet, which was based on the Latin Alphabet, was accepted on November 1, 1928; and right after this, it was decided that the Nation Schools would be opened on November 4, 1928 to teach the new alphabet in order to expand literacy rates (the Ministry of National Education, 1940: 4 et al.; Yüceer, 2002: 24). The Nation Schools, where Atatürk accepted the position as being the general manager and headmaster, had begun teaching. Literacy certificates were given to those who were graduated from these two-level schools (Yüceer, 2002: 22, 30). Nation Schools graduated over a million literate people in Turkey in a short period of time. As of 1936, the Nation Schools continued their activities for the education of the people until 1950 as Ulus (i.e. Nation) Schools (Ergun, 1982: 105). However, since the education-training provided by the existing formal education institutions were limited, new institutions were needed. In addition to the Nation Schools, efforts were spent to teach the new Turkish Alphabet to the people under institutions such as Turkish Hearths, Teachers Unions, Military Units and Community Houses (Kılıç, 2017: 207).

The Community Houses, which were established in 1932, had important duties in covering this need. Community Houses, which were indispensable corporate institutions of the education-training campaign initiated in the Early Republican Period, had important success with the "literacy" courses or with the "fight against illiteracy" courses in their Public Courses and Training Branches (CHP, 1940: 11-12; CHP, 1942: 9).

Around the same time with Turkey, extensive work on adult education was carried out in various countries of the world in parallel with Turkey's endeavours in adult education. Especially in the third world countries that were former colonies of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and other countries, bilingual adult literacy courses were opened. These courses were carried out under the leadership of UNESCO (Gray, 1975: XXX). According to Unesco's research data on 109 countries carried out in June 1954, the proportion of illiterate people worldwide was around 55%. This ratio reveals that illiteracy was not only an important issue in Turkey, but also it was a worldwide problem with the exception of Northern Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan (Gray, 1975:19-21).

It was asked to teach how to read and write to each citizen who could not go to schools in the relevant areas in the instructions that were sent to the Community Houses by the Secretary General of CHP (CHP, 1935: 15-16). The purpose of the Branch was to ensure that the people furthered and improved their literacy; to increase the culture level and make them acquire the practical knowledge they could use in their daily lives (CHP, 1942: 10-11). The courses that were opened by these branches were free of charge. The courses they had to open were Turkish reading and writing courses i.e. literacy courses; courses on positive sciences such as physics and chemistry, sewing, embroidery, accountancy, house management, clear starching, ironing, hat making, floristry, beekeeping, viticulture, being electrician, olive cultivation, firefighting, building, telegraphy; and for those who asked, foreign language courses (Toksoy, 2007: 435).

Although what kind of courses would be opened changed according to the characteristics of the area, climatic structure, and needs; reading-writing courses were opened in every corner of the country. Such as, Bitlis, Van (Sahin, 2012: 109; Pınar, 2013: 14-15), Ağrı (Aydın, 2018: 1493), Urfa (Pınar and Özdurgun, 2016: 875-876), Burdur (Ozer, 2015: 34-347), Denizli (Inan, 2000: 145-146), Mus (Yuca, 2015:241-242), Siirt (Olgun, 2013: 297-298) and Eskisehir.

As it was the case in all over the country, a campaign was initiated in Bitlis Community House against illiteracy, and many citizens were taught how to read and write in literacy courses.

Purpose of the Study

The important issue that should be dealt with in terms of National Education policies in Early Republican Period was increasing the literacy rates of individuals, and to disseminate the primary school education. For this purpose, new schools were opened throughout the country, teachers were appointed to schools that lacked teachers, and a literacy campaign was initiated that stretched from cities to villages.

In the context of educational campaign, not only the formal educational institutions had important duties, but the common education institutions and other institutions that supported Public Education were also involved in the process. In this way, it was also ensured that the individuals who were over the age of 15 were provided with education-training as well as children who were at school age.

With the alphabet change made in 1928, reading-writing courses with the new Turkish letters became one of the priorities of the Educational Organization. In the present study, the purpose was to reveal that the State in the Early Republican Period performed an educational campaign with limited opportunities, unlike what is claimed, and thus, tried to reach the cities, towns and villages in the Eastern part. The opening of Community Houses and Community Chambers, which were opened with the opportunities provided by the Ministry of National Education even in villages and the contribution to the education of individuals were investigated in the scale of Bitlis in the present study.

2. Method

Research Design

Document analysis model, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in order to evaluate the literacy courses and the results obtained in Bitlis and in the region. Qualitative data analysis; There are three basic stages of regulation of data, summation of data and interpretation of data (Büyükoztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2009). Document analysis includes the analysis of written materials with information on the facts and events that are intended to be investigated. The stages of document review can be categorized under five headings: Accessing documents, controlling authenticity, understanding documents, analyzing data and using data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006) The basic condition of a successful archive survey is to find and examine the relevant documents and in order to make necessary arrangements to reveal the opinions and reach a synthesis (Karasar, 2008: 183-188).

The Review Model, which is one of the Qualitative Research Methods, was used to evaluate the literacy courses and the results that were obtained in Bitlis and its surrounding area were evaluated. Firstly, the archive documents were reviewed. The archive documents that were in the Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry State Archives, General Directorate of the Republicin the CHP Archives were examined. The documentsin Bitlis Community House, which is included in the collection of Community Houses that were under the control of General Secretariat of the CHP, and which had rich documentation, was reached in the context of the study.

The documents of Bitlis Community Center (Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1) included the correspondence that belongedto the Community Courses and Courses Unit, information on the centers where courses were opened, and information on the teachers and students. Again, in these documents, it is possible to see the results of the courses that were opened in those times.

In addition to the archival documents, the books and brochures, which were published by the General Secretariat of CHP, and which included the organizations and activities of the Community Houses, were also reviewed. In addition, the general and specific studies conducted on Community Houses were also referred in the context of the study.

3. Findings and Interpretations

Community Houses and Community Chambers Opened in the City of Bitlis

Bitlis Community House was opened in February 23, 1934 (CHP, Summary of 1934 Activity Report of Community Houses, 23). Initially, there were Language-History and Literature Branch, Sports Branch, and Library and Publishing Branch; however, in a short time period, the number of the branches increased (Kardaş, 2013: 373).

One year after the founding of the Community House, there was an administrative change, which was in relation to Bitlis. Bitlis, which was a district of Muş before, was converted into a city by the law no 2885 on December 25, 1935 (TBMM Records Journal, 1935: 173; Bitlis City Almanac, 1967: 15). When Bitlis became a city center, the works of the Community House and therefore, the activities of Community Courses Branch also became widespread (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1121 - File No: 89 - Order No: 2/20).

In those times, Community Houses, and then, based on the administrative distribution, Community Chambers were

opened after 1940 in the district centers and sub-districts of Bitlis. The Community Houses and the Community Chambers, which were opened upon the need, are given in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. The Community Houses opened in Bitlis and Surrounding Area

The Community Houses Opened in Sub-district and Township Centers of Bitlis	Opening Date
Ahl â Community House	20 February 1938
Adilcevaz Community House	19 February 1939
BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 953 - File No: 691 - Order No: 3/35; BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 952 - File No: 690 - Order No: 1/35; BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 919 - File No: 579 - Order No: 3/2	

Table 2. The Community Chambers Opened in and Around Bitlis

The Sub-district and Township Centers in Bitlis Appendage Where Community Chambers were Opened
Hizan Sub-district
Tatvan Sub-district
Mutki Sub-district
Hivris(Simek) Township
Tap (Huyut) Township
Hivriz Township
Norşin (Çukur) Township
Şetek (Duhan) Township
Purhus (Misk) Township
Reşadiye Township
BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/140-142

The Literacy Courses Opened in Bitlis and Its Sub-districts

For the first time, Turkish Literacy Courses were opened in 1939 by Bitlis Community House Public Courses Branch as two-level courses for those who were over the age of 16 in Bitlis (Kardaş, 2013: 379; Bitlis Yurd Yolu, 1939, 27 January, 1). The second important work of this Branch in this field was in 1940 with the opening of literacy courses for prisoners in Bitlis Prison, which served the increase in the number of literate individuals (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1006 - File No: 882 - Order No: 1/36; Yurd Yolu, 1940: 2 October, 1). For the same purpose, the Branch also opened “mobile village courses” in which courses of sewing, embroidery and home management were provided as of 1945 to contribute to the economic and cultural development of women living in villages (BCA Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052). - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/164).

The literacy courses that were opened in the Community Houses at the Public Schools and Courses Branch were provided in two groups as in the National Schools; (A) and (B). Those who had no reading skills were included in (A) courses; and those who had less literacy or those who wanted to improve their literacy skills were trained in (B) courses (CHP, 1946: 5).

The Turkish Literacy Classes for adults provided in Community Houses in Bitlis and its districts and in Community Chambers in Mutki-Huyut Sub-district, Çukur-Norşin Sub-District and Şetek (Duhan) Sub-district became prevalent in 1945-1950 Academic Years. The literacy courses and the educational campaign in the area were followed-up and encouraged closely by CHP Secretariat General. As a matter of fact, in line with the orders sent by CHP General Secretariat to the Presidency of Adilcevaz Township Community House on October 3, 1944 with the number 5/2568, it was asked that Nation Schools would be opened to teach women and men between the ages of 16 and 45 (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/188).

As a result of the efforts in Bitlis and Adilcevaz sub-district, literacy courses were started. In a text written by Nusret Onat, who was the president of Adilcevaz Community House, on November 7, 1944, to CHP General Secretariat, it said: “Your high orders were received by us about Community Courses. Relevant work was started by attempting to do this in the school building in the City and Township”, and it was added that the lighting and heating of the building that was needed for the courses were taken care of (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/188).

With the orders of the CHP General Secretariat on January 24, 1946, and with the number 5/2727, which was sent to the Board of Directors Presidency of Bitlis CHP and the Presidencies of the Community Houses, and with the orders on February 18, 1946 with the number 5/2788, which confirmed the previous order, work was started in the city center as well. The course that was opened in 1945 in Adilcevaz Sub-district School by representative teacher Mehmet Korkmaz and Dursun Gülmez attracted great interest, and 94 students were enrolled in the courses (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/185).

According to the information in the document with the date March 15, 1946, which had the signature of Bitlis Community House President Ziya Geboloğlu, it was mentioned that there were people who could not speak Turkish in the city center; however, it was decided in cooperation with the Governor and the Directorate of National Education that two literacy courses would be opened as one in the Prison and the other in the Community House according to the Items 79-88 of the Community Houses Working Instructions to “*eliminate the deficiencies of the citizens who were out of the age of compulsory education and who did not know how to read and write*”.

After the registration of 60 citizens, who registered their names with the application they made, was completed, the course was initiated with two teachers who were appointed by the Directorate of National Education on March 15, 1946, Friday at 18 o'clock. After the announcements were made by the Municipality and other means, the ceremony was started with the participation of the Governor and other village and neighborhood headmen, with the National Anthem, which was played by the band, and the course was opened. In this ceremony, the Community House President, the Director of National Education and the Director of the Secondary School mentioned the aim and the benefits of the course; and the ceremony was ended when the course teacher started teaching on the board that was prepared and the teachers and the students were left alone. The lessons would be on 3 days a week, two hours aday, and attendance was compulsory.

On March 15, 1946, a ceremony was held for the course to be opened in the Prison. The lessons would be between 14.00-16.00, 3 days a week and during daytime in the Prison. A total of 24 prisoners were planned to be taught how to read and write here. Meanwhile, the Bitlis Community House presidency covered the needs for the alphabet and chalk with the 1946 budget for the Community Courses.

Among the courses, which were organized as A and B, the A course was opened in the first stage, and it was announced that the B course would be opened when there were students.

The literacy courses were decided to be on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 18.00 to 20.00 as 3 days a week. In addition, national games and folk dances were organized with music as a meeting day every week on Saturday at 19.00 (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/180-181). The courses would be inspected by the primary school inspectors in the area (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/3).

When the financial dimension of the courses is considered, it was determined that 390 Liras were sent by General Secretariat of the CHP to be spent on the costs of these courses. A total of 50 Liras of this money was to be spent on the primary school inspectors that would inspect the courses, and 20 pounds would be spent on the notebooks and similar needs of the people who were in need for these. It was decided that the remaining 320 Liras would be distributed equally to the teachers who actually handled these courses. These amounts were deposited to the Central Branch of İşbank at the beginning of each period; and when the courses started, the relevant amounts were transferred to the units through Ziraat Bank in the area on a regular basis (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/174-175).

According to a correspondence sent by the Ministry of National Education to the Directorate of National Education in Bitlis, Ahlat and Adilcevaz Community Houses in 1946, it was stated that 510 Liras were given from the Party Center to cover the expenses of these courses to be opened. It was reported that 20 Liras of this money would be allocated for the needs of those who would continue these courses such as notebooks etc.; 50 Liras would be given to the primary education supervisors; and the remaining 440 Liras would be given to the teachers involved (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/172).

A total of 6 courses were opened as 1 in Bitlis Province Center, 1 in Simek and 1 in Çukur Community Chambers; 2 in Ahlat; and 1 in Adilcevaz; and they served the community with the name “Night School”. The number of the students at night schools was 300. In addition to these, it was decided that a literacy course would be opened at the Community House for the headmen of villages and neighborhoods in addition to the night schools and course centers, and these people were told to come to these course (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/172).

In the correspondence with the date February 8, 1946, which was sent to the General Secretariat of CHP with the signature of Bitlis CHP Provincial Administrative Board President Arif Özdemir, it was said “*Since there was a clause about speaking Turkish in your order, the general delegation of Bitlis, Ahlat and Adilcevaz people is Turkish. They have been speaking Turkish for centuries. The places where Turkish is not spoken are the villages.*”

It was said that “*It would be a better job to open courses in villages and to provide that the people speak Turkish to save*

them from the situation they were suffering”, which was an accurate statement. It was also emphasized that the courses should be spread in villages rather than city centers.

In the same correspondence, it was also pointed out that 6 courses should be opened in Simek, Çukur, Tatvan/Reşadiye, Hizan and Mutki/Huyut, which are under the jurisdiction of the city center. It was also stated out that these courses that would be opened in these areas would be successful because Community Chambers were opened in these mentioned places, and there were schools and teachers. It was stated that in case teacher appointments were made for these courses, which would be opened, positive results would be obtained in the area. It was also pointed out that literacy courses that would be opened in some areas should be started by providing “speech lessons” as they did not know how to speak Turkish (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/172-173).

With the experience received from the courses in 1945 and 1946, CHP General Secretariat started the preparation of the course for 1947, and sent an order to Bitlis CHP Provincial Administrative Board Presidency on 10 December 1946 as well as to all units throughout the country. It was stated in this order that “Turkish Reading and Writing Courses” should be opened in 10 centers in the city of Bitlis. For this, the units were asked to start and complete the preparatory works as of January 1, 1947. This was an indication that there would be more comprehensive works for the courses, which were increased up to 10 in number in 1947.

Table 3. The Places Where Reading-Writing Courses would be Opened in Bitlis and Surrounding Are

<i>The Places Where Turkish Reading-Writing Course Would be Opened</i>	
Bitlis	Community House
Ahl â	Community House
Hizan	Community Chamber
Mutki	Community Chamber
Tatvan	Community Chamber
Hivris (Sinek)	Community Chamber
Norşin (Çukur)	Community Chamber
Purhus (Misk)	Community Chamber
Tap(Huyut)	Community Chamber
Adilcevaz	Community House

BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/142

The centers where courses would be opened in 1947 are shown in Table 3; and the authorities were asked to find appropriate classrooms or saloons for these course centers. It was also asked that the teachers would be selected by the Director of National Education from among the experienced and successful teachers in primary schools. It was stated that the courses in the first term would last for five months, and after a one-month interval, the same course would be opened for the second five-month period, and after the exam that would be held at the end of the year, the education-training would be completed.

The educational principles that would be applied in the courses were mentioned in the Turkish Reading and Writing Guide (CHP, 1946: 1-15); and the teachers were asked to follow the rules and recommendations in this guide. The teachers who would give the courses would be paid 25 Liras a month by CHP including the holiday months. This money would be paid by the provincial or district chiefs of Bitlis upon the instructions that would be received from the CHP regional inspector (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/140).

CHP General Secretariat had allocated 50 Liras for the period to cover the heating and lighting expenses, tuition tools and the stationery costs of poor students by considering the winter conditions of the area where the Community House and the school was located. This money would be spent by the course teacher and the document of such expenses would be sent to the Party.

A new course would not be opened if a Turkish literacy course was ongoing that was opened with local opportunities. The ongoing course would be supported. However, the teacher who provided the course would comply with the principles set out in the Guide. The course teacher would be paid in line with this program; and the allowance would be allocated for the cost.

The General Secretariat of the CHP asked to complete the preparations of the courses that were planned to be opened for the Community Houses or Community Chambers for 1947 in line with the principles given above, and to announce the date of the course immediately. In the order, the duties and responsibilities of the course teacher were also emphasized; and it was asked to find a certain number of students for the courses. The teacher who could not collect at least 10 students for the course at the end of the first month would either be replaced with the order of the district inspector of the CHP or the course would be moved to another area (BCA.Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/141).

As it may be seen in the order dated December 10, 1946 and in Table 4, it was stated that the expenses of the first five months of the course that would be opened in Bitlis and the wages of the teachers for four months for 1947 were sent. The CHP sent 1500 Liras to Bitlis through İşbank for one period course; and asked that the amount spent at the end of each six-month period would be documented and sent to the General Secretariat to check whether the expenditures were made properly (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/142).

Table 4. The Fees that were Sent by the CHP General Secretariat to Community House and Community Chambers in Bitlis Area

Course Wages for Teachers	Course Expenses	Total	Community House/Community Chamber
150 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Bitlis Community House
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Ahl â Community House
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Adilcevaz Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Hizan Community Chamber
100 Liras	50Liras	150 Liras	Mutki Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Tatvan Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Hivris Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Norşin Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Purhus Community Chamber
100 Liras	50 Liras	150 Liras	Tap Community Chamber
TOTAL: 1000 Liras	500 Liras	1500 Liras	

BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/37

The General Secretariat of the CHP also prepared a printed document as seen in Table 5 and sent it to the course centers; and asked the genders and the number of the students who attended and graduated from these courses and wanted to know the statistical information of the students.

Table 5. Sample Form for Reading-Writing Course Demand Sent by the General Secretariat of the CHP

The Name of the Community Chamber that Opens the Course:					
City					
District					
Sub-district					
Village or neighborhood					
Date of the Course					
Building of the Course					
Number of the Students Enrolled at the Course			Number of the Students Receiving Certificates		
Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Considerations					

BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/89.

In the correspondence with the date December 25, 1946, which was sent to the General Secretariat of the CHP by the Presidency of the Provincial Administration Board of Bitlis CHP organization, it was stated that the duties that were given to them were fulfilled with success. It was also stated that there were 10 Turkish Literacy Courses in Bitlis, 3 in the Community Houses and 7 in the Community Chambers; the CHP Regional Inspector, the Governor and Director of National Education were contacted, and successful teachers were provided for these courses. On the other hand, it was announced that the participants should apply to the teachers "to have their names written" until January 1 (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/137). The course schools in the district and sub-district centers were identified and education-training activities were started.

In the same correspondence, it was stated that although there was no Community House building in Tatvan, works were started there; and to eliminate the shortage of place, it was stated that the Tatvan Central Neighborhood Primary School and its teacher were assigned by the Ministry of National Education and the District Governor; and the good news was given that the course had started with 35 students (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/135).

In January 1947 period, the courses were started in Bitlis and its surrounding areas; however, there were problems with the functioning of the courses in the following days. The focal point of these problems was some issues like the absenteeism of the students and the failure in paying the teacher fees on due time. According to some, the durations of the courses were long. When the conditions of the region were considered, it was seen that negative reactions started to come from the guardians of the students because agricultural season had started. When the complaints were received by the Party Center through the inspectors, a correspondence was sent to the Provincial Administration Board President of Bitlis CHP on April 9, 1947 by Tahsin Banguoğlu by the CHP General Center, and it was asked not to compromise from the decisions on the education-training no matter what the events were. It was asked that a two-three-month work period would not suffice for the students to read and write as required; and therefore, the attendance should be ensured and the fees of the teachers should be paid on time (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/133).

In response to this warning dated April 9, 1947, the Bitlis CHP Provincial Administrative Board wrote on April 17, 1933 about the training-education problems experienced in the courses that were opened in Bitlis in detail. It was stated that although it was written with the code “urgent” to Community House and Community Chamber Presidents that attendance of the students to the literacy courses should be ensured until May 1947, the absenteeism of the students could not be prevented.

It was reported that although it was followed by the provincial organization of Bitlis CHP, all of the students left the courses in the sub-district centers, and the situation in the districts were not different from the situation in sub-districts. Since the students who participated in the courses were partly farmers, they were forced to go to the fields by their parents after the start of the ploughing season, which caused that the number of students decreased at a considerable level. With the start of the ploughing season, there were no students left in the sub-district centers; and the number of students in the provincial and district centers decreased to half or even to one-third.

The idea of bringing students to the courses with the sanction of the Police and the Constabulary, and continuing the courses until the exams did not work either. Some teachers even wanted permission for continue the course for 3 months and then hold examinations because the students had benefited from the courses enough to read and write. The Bitlis Provincial Presidency of the CHP thought that it would be beneficial to “collect” the students who had stopped attending the courses and to make them take the examinations; and instructed the district and sub-district presidencies to collect the students for the exams without allowing them to go anywhere else (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/131).

News on similar problems and leaving the courses was also received from the Community Houses and Community Chambers in districts. Similar problems in the area were mentioned in the correspondence sent from Adilcevaz Sub-district Community House President Bekir Yiğit to Ankara on April 25, 1947, and it was emphasized that since the area was an agricultural region, due to the approach of the spring agricultural activities, the students who were enrolled in the courses went for ploughing and for other similar jobs, and therefore, it was impossible to continue the courses. In addition, it was stated that since most of the students who attended the courses were at a level that could take the examinations, they were given examinations and the courses were ended (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/128).

Nusret Onat, who was the Head of the Sub-district Community Chamber of Şetek, mentioned a different topic in his correspondence he sent to Ankara on February 10, 1950, and stated that the center of the sub-district was the village of Duhan, and it consisted of a coffee house, an inn, a police station, a military unit and a school building on Bitlis-Kurtalan road indicating the lack of physical opportunities in the area. He also emphasized that there were no houses in the village, and therefore there were no residents; and explained that the nearest village was located 5 kilometers away. Since the villages were far away, students did not come to school and the school was therefore empty; and in this case, it was not possible to open a course there (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/10).

Another problem was that most of the citizens who lived in the area did not speak Turkish. It was firstly necessary to teach Turkish to these citizens to achieve success in these courses. Only in this way could communication be established and literacy be successful. It is possible to see how the problems could be overcome in the correspondence sent to the CHP General Secretariat on January 19, 1948 by Simek Sub-district Community Chamber President Sırrı Uğural. Uğural reported that 30 students were enrolled in the first term course in Simek Community Chamber, and that they were used to speak Turkish in the first term because their mother tongue was Kurdish, and that they would start teaching literacy in the second term (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/95).

In the course activities in the first term, there were some problems due to the approach of the ploughing season, the target was reached; “*Turkish speaking*” was taught to the students who did not know Turkish, and “*literacy*” was taught to the students who knew Turkish, and those who were successful at the end of the examinations were given certificates.

The General Secretariat of the CHP sent a circular on August 21, 1947 about the literacy courses in the second semester of 1947 by considering these difficulties. In this circular, which was released to prevent breakdowns, it was stated “*the Turkish literacy courses, which were opened in 10 places in your city, reported the results of their works. In order for these works to be more effective, the courses should start at the beginning of the year and continue until the end of April; and after a four-month holiday, they should start again on September 1, and complete their second term until the end of the year*” and made several changes. In addition, it was also instructed that the second term, which was supposed to start in September, should start with course preparations (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Memorandum No:114).

The Provincial Administration Board of the Bitlis CHP was also activated with the instruction of the General Secretariat of the CHP, and started new courses in 10 centers. In this respect, the courses were opened with the teachers who were selected from Bitlis, Ahl â, Adilcevaz Community Houses and Misk and Tatvan Community Chambers on September 1, 1947; and the student enrollments were initiated. It was reported that since the teachers were expected to return from leave and since the appointment of new teachers were expected in areas where there were no teachers in Mutki and Hizan districts and in Mutki and Hizan Simek, Çukur, Huyut Community Chambers, the courses could not be opened until the beginning of October (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/120; BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/114). However, the Turkish Literacy Courses that were planned to be opened in the Hizan, Mutki, and Tatvan and in the Misk and Huyut sub-districts by Community Chambers in the scope of the second term courses of 1947 could not be opened because no teachers could be appointed. For this reason, the 750 TL course fee per 150 TL were added to the income and expense budget of 1948 (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/64).

The courses that were opened in September were completed successfully, and the certificates were given to the graduates after the examinations which were held after a rigorous work. The results of these examinations, which were made under the supervision of primary school inspectors, were prepared as lists according to the success levels of the students, and were sent to the General Secretariat of the CHP. In the correspondence sent with the signature of Izzet Altay, who was the Adilcevaz Sub-district Community House President, on April 14, 1948 to the General Secretariat of the CHP, it was stated that the students who attended Turkish literacy courses in the last four months of 1947 were given their examinations on January 2, 1948; and the lists showing the success status of the students were added as an appendix to the correspondence. It is seen in the list which was prepared by the course teacher that 20 students had succeeded in examinations; and 51 students failed (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/79).

As it may be seen in Table 6, the number of the students who completed the A Course with success as a result of the examination made by teacher Temel Terzioğlu for the students who started the first term A and B courses in 1947 was 8 among a total of 29 students who attended the course; and the number of the students who completed the B course successfully was 3. It is seen that 18 students in these courses from both groups did not have a success that deserved certificate (Table 7, Table 8).

Table 6. The Students who Succeeded in (A) Course and Had the Right to Receive Certificate in Çukur Sub-district

The Students who Received Certificate in (A) Course in Çukur Sub-district	
Name, Family Name	Age
Ahmet Deniz	31
Kerim Kutlu	26
Recep Kutlu	17
Adil Çetinkaya	17
Ali Gülçen	17
Selim Subaşı	25
Mehmet Gorcan(Cihangir)	23
Yusuf Öz	28
Course Teacher: Temel Terzioğlu	
BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/87	

Table 7. The Students who Failed due to Absenteeism in the (A) Course in Çukur Sub-district

The Students who could not Receive Certificate in (A) Course due to Absenteeism in Çukur Sub-district	
Name, Family Name	Age
Hasan Sakinci	24
Muhittin Ural	26
Şükrü Kaya	31
Abdurrahman Deniz	25
Sayıt Sumer	18
Ahmet Sevinç	17
Muhittin Oral	21
Seyfettin Subaşı	26
Abdülkahhar Köroğlu	23
Mehmet Subaşı	25
Course Teacher: Temel Terzioğlu	
BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/87	

Table 8. The Students who Attended the (B) Course in Çukur Sub-district and Received Success Certificates and Those who Failed due to Absenteeism

The Students who Received Certificate from (B) Course in Çukur Sub-district		The Students who Could not Receive Certificate from the (B) Course due to Absenteeism in Çukur Sub-district	
Name and Family Name	Age	Name and Family Name	Age
Kasım Tural	19	Tahir Us	26
Sabri Özcan	24	Abdullah Orgunbay	26
Ali Oral	17	Şemsettin Çağlayan	28
		Necmeddin Us	32
		Nurettin Güngör	19
		Şahabeddin Güngör	20
		Abdullah Başak	28
		Hamza Demirkan	31
BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/87			

The course requests coming from Bitlis and its surroundings continued in 1948-50 period, and these requests were responded by the CHP Provincial Presidency by sending them to Ankara. It was also seen that the courses could not be initiated for various reasons although there were demands. For instance, since the teachers who were appointed for the first term of the Turkish literacy courses which was supposed to be opened by Bitlis Community House and Norşin Community Chamber could not find 10 students, the course could not be started. Again, it was also announced that the courses could not be opened for two terms in Mutki, Huyut, Purhus because the Community Chambers Presidents in these areas had resigned and the teachers could not find 10 students despite the demands (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/68).

Some of the regions sent interesting correspondences that should be considered deeply today. For example, in the correspondence sent by Mevlüt Aydoğan, who was the President of Ahl â Community House, to the General Secretariat of the CHP on June 29, 1948, it was stated that there were two primary schools in Ahl â; he also reported that the literacy courses that were supposed to last for two terms starting from January 1948 ending in late April could not be opened because almost everybody had graduated from primary school there (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/75). Today, while there are still intensive works for literacy in many regions of Anatolia, it is possible to claim that there were great improvements in 1948 Ahl â model.

The Adilcevaz Sub-district Community House was more successful than the others in Turkish literacy courses. The

House opened courses in almost every term, and graduated many students. It is possible to see this in the correspondence sent to Ankara on several dates. For example, it was stated in the correspondence sent on May 14, 1948 that the students who attended the literacy course completed the course on April 30, 1948; and after the examinations, the lists of the students who gained the right to attend the (B) course that were organized by the course teacher were sent to Ankara (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/77).

In another correspondence on October 20, 1948, it was said “*Our 1948 second term Turkish Literacy Course was opened on October 1, 1948, Friday. The course was held at Adilcevaz Primary School building. Since works in the fields have not finished yet, only 16 people enrolled in the courses. After one month, the number of the students will be multiplied*” and the list that had the names, family names and birth dates of the enrolled students were presented (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/66).

In a correspondence sent by Simek Sub-district (Hivris) Village Public Chamber President Sırrı Uğural to Ankara, it was stated that only Turkish was taught to the 11 students participating in the course that lasted for three months between October 1, 1948 and December 31, 1948 because their mother tongue was Kurdish; 12 students were found to be successful at a moderate level; and the course results were evaluated. As shown in Table 9, the students were listed as follows in the list that was prepared by the Community Chamber Course Teacher Şükrü Arışan:

Table 9. The Students who were Successful in the Simek Sub-district (Hivris) Village Community Chamber Courses

The Students who were Taught Turkish (A)			The Students who Learnt Moderate Level Literacy (B)	
Order No	Name, Family Name	Age	Name, Family Name	Age
1	Abdullah Işık	24	Şaban Sağlam	17
2	Ömer Erbay	25	Sıdık Gül	17
3	Adil Oğuz	17	Tayip Koçyigit	17
4	Yusuf Karabulut	18	Adal İşlek	18
5	Sait	17	Ali Doğru	23
6	Muhittin Gül	17	Hasan Sağlam	25
7	Adil Tren	17	Şükrü Gül	18
8	Salih Gül	18	M. Emin Işık	23
9	İsmail Güvercin	18	Adil Karabulut	24
10	Haşan Güvercin	17	A, Rahman	17
11	İbrahim Koçyigit	23	Mustafa Gül	24
			Hakim Karakoç	17
TOTAL:11			TOTAL :12	

BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/33-34

In 1949, on the other hand, the first Turkish literacy course was opened in Adilcevaz on January 1, 1949, and was finished on April 30, 1949. During this time, 56 students attended Ulus School and 16 of them were successful at the end of the examinations, and gained the right to receive certificate; the other 40 students were not successful. Two charts showing the successful and unsuccessful students at the end of the exam were sent to Ankara by the Ulus School Teacher (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/22).

On December 6, 1948, in an order that was sent to the Bitlis Directorate of National Education by the Secretariat General of the CHP, it was instructed that Turkish literacy courses should be opened in Bitlis, Ahlâ, Adilcevaz Community Houses and in Hizan, Mutki, Tatvan, Hivris (Simek), Norşin (Çukur), Purhus (Misk), Tap (Huyut) Community Chambers; it was emphasized that Turkish literacy courses were opened as of 1947, and it was stated that all of these units opened courses in the period that lasted until 1948 April, and most of these units could not open any courses in the second terms, which lasted from September till January. In this correspondence, it was questioned in the organization why no courses were opened; and it was said “*We consider that this year, it will be proper that you follow the situations of the courses via teachers. This issue was also reported to the Ministry of National Education*”; and it was asked to eliminate the missing points in a short time (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/65).

After the CHP General Secretariat started to deal with the situation, positive developments were experienced; and Hamdi Türe, Bitlis National Education Director, had approved this positive development in a correspondence he sent to Ankara on December 16, 1948. This correspondence said “*Since primary teachers have been appointed to the schools in our sub-districts this year, Turkish reading and writing courses will be opened in the Community Houses and Community Chambers in the districts and sub-districts written in your order, and the necessary notifications have been made to the National Education offices for the teaching as of the beginning of the year*” (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/58). In the following correspondence with the date February 25, 1949, the good news was given saying that the courses were opened in Community Houses in Bitlis, Ahlâ, and Adilcevaz; and in Community Chambers in Hizan, Mutki, Tatvan, Hivris, Norşin, Purhus and Tap (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/32). The contribution of the CHP General Secretariat in this was great. Because the coordination that was formed by the CHP with the Ministry of National Education had given its fruits; and teachers appointments was given the due care; and in 1949, there were no course centers in the region without teachers (Table 10).

Table 10. The Courses Opened in the Second Term in 1948-1949 Academic Year in Bitlis and Surroundings

The Place Where the Course was Opened	The Date on Which the Teacher Started Duty	Course Teacher	Number of the Students
Bitlis Prison	15 February 1949	Bedreddin Ciray	23
Hirvi Village Community Chamber	11 February 1949	Şükrü Arışan	31
Norşin Community Chamber	1 February 1949	Kenen Öğünç	21
Ahlâ Community House	1 February 1949	Ekrem Bayındır	42
Adilcevaz Community House	1 October 1948	Emin Mavi	30
Purhus Community Chamber	1 March 1949	İbrahim Korkmaz	25
Hizan Community Chamber	9 March 1949	İbrahim Erol	26
Huyut Community Chamber	3 January 1949	Mustafa Şenöz	22

Table: BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/28-29

The positive results of the courses that were opened with great sacrifices started to arrive in Ankara. In the correspondencesent to Ankara with the date January 18, 1950 by İzzet Altay, who was the President of the Community House in Adilcevaz Sub-district where the courses were continued on a regular basis since 1947, he said that at first the literacy rates were very low in the sub-district; and with the precautions that were taken, courses were opened almost every semester with very good results. In addition, he also added that if a literacy course was opened in Adilcevaz in the new term, the course would be organized in the Community House Hall at night, and the number of students who would attend the course that would be managed by İhsan Erdem, who was the headmaster of the Adilcevaz Primary School, would be between 30 and 50 (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/16).

One of the places where literacy course was opened as of 1947 was the Prisons. The courses were regularly organized via Community Houses until 1950. It was observed that 60 prisoners attended the course that was opened in Prison in 1950, and Kazım Paşa primary school teacher Bedri Giray was appointed as the teacher (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/12).

On March 1, 1950, the General Secretariat of the CHP decreased the number of Turkish literacy courses in Community Houses and Community Chambers to one term per year; and the duration of the course was considered to be three or four months (BCA. Fund No: 490 1 0 0 - Box No: 1052 - File No: 1041 - Order No: 1/5).

As of this date, the literacy campaigns continued in the form of various corporate identities as was the case throughout Turkey.

4. Results and Discussion

The first important problem dealt with in the context of the educational policies of the Early Republican period was the problem of literacy, which concerned 90% of the population. Because, the educational legacy which was inherited by the new Turkish state from the Ottoman State was not very pleasing. Education-training campaign was necessary throughout the country.

The Ministry of National Education firstly regulated to Turkey the primary education problem with the “Educational Pact”; and then tried to solve the problem of literacy of the individuals over the age of 16 with Nation Schools. Because of the existing inadequate educational institutions, other institutional structures were made use of in the system to overcome this problem. One of these institutions was Community Houses.

Community Houses reached out to the villages in coordination with the Ministry of Education, and became an

indispensable element of literacy campaigns. Community Houses achieved great success with the literacy courses that were organized in the Public Courses and Courses Branch. In this context, Bitlis Community House and Community Chambers in the area participated in the literacy campaign, and many local people were taught literacy.

The courses were opened upon the correspondence and instructions sent by the General Secretariat of the CHP to Bitlis CHP Provincial Presidency, to the National Education Directorate, and to the Presidency of Community Houses, and every citizen who could not go to school in the area was taught literacy. The courses were started by paying extra 40 Liras per month as tuition fee in addition to the salaries of the teachers of the Ministry of National Education. The courses started with individuals who could not speak Turkish; and firstly, Turkish speaking-comprehension lessons were given to the students; and then, Turkish literacy courses were started. Between 1932-1951, more than five thousand individuals learned to read and write in the Bitlis Community Center. Starting from this study made of the Early Republic Period community centers operating as formal education institutions in Turkey concluded that the impact on the literacy rate of the population.

The literacy courses were continued in 10 centers besides the formal education in Bitlis and its surrounding area. Tatvan and its villages were the most important areas where literacy courses should be opened intensively in and around Bitlis because the literacy rates were very low in Tatvan. On the other hand, Ahlat announced that a course was not necessary. The justification for this announcement was that there were two primary schools in Ahlat and that the school-age children went to these schools. Another important factor was that the majority of the local people spoke Turkish and there were very few citizens who could not read or write.

The courses that were opened in the villages with great sacrifices in areas, which were known as areas of deprivation, partially reached their aim. However, due to the traditions and customs that showed their effects in the area, the problem of not sending girls to schools and courses could not be overcome; and many of the male students did not attend these courses. Although the state brought educational services to the doorsteps of the citizens under difficult conditions, the problems such as leaving the courses because of the ploughing season and similar reasons and the problem of absenteeism show the importance given by the local people to this subject. Based on the results obtained in the present study, and based on the fact that the desired targets not being obtained in the area in terms of literacy rates, it may be claimed that it is necessary for the people of the area to make self-criticism.

Around the same time with Turkey, extensive work on adult education was carried out in various countries of the world in parallel with Turkey's endeavours in adult education. Especially in the third world countries that were former colonies of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium and other countries, bilingual adult literacy courses were opened. These courses were carried out under the leadership of UNESCO. According to Unesco's research data on 109 countries carried out in June 1954, the proportion of illiterate people worldwide was around 55%. This ratio reveals that illiteracy was not only an important issue in Turkey, but also it was a worldwide problem with the exception of Northern Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

When the studies on the world are examined, the differences between the methods stand out despite the similarities with this study. Thus, when we look at the findings of the study, with no opportunity to benefit from an adequate level of formal education institutions in Turkey 16 years and up are teaching literacy to adults. In UNESCO and other countries, it is seen that activities for literacy based on bilingual education are given to the local people in the countries under the domination of developed countries.

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