

Chapter 5 – Turkification and Planning: New Settlements in İzmir and Elazığ

Building New Rural Settlements in İzmir

An overview of the reconstruction of İzmir during the early republican period shows the intentions behind rural settlement projects in the city. The rehabilitation of İzmir in accordance with republican aims was another focus of the state's agenda, starting from the end of Turco–Greek War in 1922. The first step began after the great fire of İzmir in 1922 that completely destroyed between 20.000 and 25.000 dwellings in the city center. Consequently, from 1924 to 1935 the republican state focused on the restoration of the destroyed area to rebuild dwellings and infrastructure.¹

During the Lausanne Treaty meetings in 1923, the republican delegates met with architect and planner Henri Prost, on whose advice the municipality of İzmir put urbanist Rene Danger in charge of reconstruction, with a priority focus on ruined areas in the center. Between 1924 and 1925, Danger and Prost first introduced a plan for the economic and residential reorganization of the city. The municipality implemented the plan by expropriating former properties for dwellings, as well as by offering new zones for sale to traders, financial associations, and handicraftsmen.

Together with the Municipalities Law of 3 April 1930 (number 1580), and the urbanist initiatives of the new mayor Behçet Uz, the Danger–Prost plan was revised in 1932 and consulted by Herman Jansen, Ankara's urban planner. In addition to the reconstruction of residential areas, and the organization of

1 Cınar Atay, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e İzmir Planları* (İzmir: Yaşar Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı, 1998), 180–92; Hülya Gedikler Gölgesiz, *1950'li Yıllarda İzmir* (İzmir: Şenocak Yayınları, 2012), 69.

the harbor and industrial districts and the main axis of city center, the revision paved the way for formation of the Culture Park, which emerged as the landmark of the republican state in the city. Between 1934 and 1936 the Culture Park, located on an area of roughly 42 hectares and accessible from the harbor, historical bazaar, and ancient agora, was designed for international fairs representing state planning of İzmir and the capital city Ankara.²

The reconstruction of İzmir during the 1930s was also reported on by European scholars such as Lilo Linke, Robert Anhegger and Andreas Tietze. They travelled in the country to observe the Kemalist transformation, not only among the intelligentsia and in the city culture, but also among the people and in the rural landscape. Erik-Jan Zürcher introduces the diaries of travelers that present an important perspective on the circumstances of the country, especially in İzmir:

“Along the railway line from Eskisehir to Afyonkarahisar and İzmir, she [Linke] sees lots of deserted and ruinous villages and both the diaries and Linke describe how, thirteen to fifteen years after the great fire, the old Greek, and Armenian quarters of İzmir are still in ruins. The debris is still being cleared. Some building activity was going on, but it was still very patchy. By the time the Anhegger/Tietze party arrived, part of the old Greek quarter had been turned into a huge “Culture Park” (*Kültür Parkı*) where the international fair was being held (although the international dimension at this time was very modest indeed).”³

The Danger-Prost plan did not account for large-scale urbanization. Therefore, the reconstruction was never implemented completely and systematically. By the end of the 1930s, mayor Behçet Uz attempted to establish an urbanization office within the municipality. This was after he called on Le Corbusier to draw up a master plan for the city center and the surroundings along the gulf, and a development proposal for the hinterland. According to

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- 2 Cana Bilsel, ‘Ideology and Planning During the Early Republican Period: Two Master Plans for İzmir and Scenarios of Modernization’, *METU Journal of Faculty of Architecture*, 16.1–2 (1996), 13–30 (pp. 14–21); Cana Bilsel, ‘İzmir’de Cumhuriyet Dönemi Planlaması (1923–1965): 20. Yüzyıl Kentsel Mirası’, *Ege Mimarlık*, 71.4 (2009), 12–17 (pp. 12–15); Gedikler Gölgesiz, pp. 69–70.
 - 3 Erik Jan Zürcher, “Two Young Ottomanists Discover Kemalist Turkey, The Travel Dairies of Robert Anhegger and Andreas Tietze,” *Journal of Turkish Studies, Essays in Honour of Barbara Flammig* II, 26, no. I (2002): 363.

the agenda, Le Corbusier would prepare the concept and plans, and the urbanization office in the municipality of İzmir would elaborate on and implement the project with his consultancy. Although the parties agreed to the schedule, the project was suspended until 1948 when Le Corbusier visited the city for the first time as up until then he had not presented any plans to the urbanization office of the municipality of İzmir. In early 1949 the architect submitted a master plan including 22 drafts and diagrams. He proposed a larger port capable of importing and exporting goods all over the country and to which the industrial areas would be well connected. Le Corbusier also introduced the "Green Industrial Settlement", extending the existing industrial area, railway line and harbor towards the north of the gulf. According to the project report, the principal "Green Industrial Settlement" concept was based on an organization that embraced the industrial production bases and workers' habitat in a wide green zone. Here the workers would benefit from a clean and healthy environment without needing to leave the domain.⁴

The reconstruction of the city was never completely concluded by the early republican cadre until mid-1950s.⁵ The center was partially built and developed in accordance with the most urgent necessities such as regenerating the harbor area, the bazaar and small production ateliers, and constructing dwellings for locals and newcomers. In other words, the urbanization of İzmir during the early republican period concentrated on the coastal strip, with an emphasis on the city center and its transportation connections to the hinterland. The Culture Park, planned by the office of civil works in the municipality of İzmir, gradually became the most significant component of the reconstruction operation in the city. The project not only followed the European public park model, but also transformed the area into a green plaza and fairground and provided an affordable solution for the ruined district instead of rebuilding the demol-

4 Bilsel, 'Ideology and Planning During the Early Republican Period: Two Master Plans for İzmir and Scenarios of Modernization', pp. 21–26; Cana Bilsel, 'Le Corbusier'nin İzmir Nazım Planı ve "Yeşil Endüstri Sitesi" Önerisi', *Ege Mimarlık*, 31.3 (1999), 13–17; Özlem Genel Altınkaya, 'İzmir Nazım Planı: Le Corbusier'nin Mimarlığı'nda Mekânsal Bir Strateji Olarak Lineerlik', *Ege Mimarlık*, 96.2 (2017), 40–43.

5 In 1951 the municipality of İzmir organized an international competition for urban planning of the city, establishing a jury including the mayor, civil servants, a Turkish architect, German architect Paul Bonatz, and British architect Sir Patrick Abercrombie. Architect Kemal Ahmet Aru won the competition. However, the implementation was postponed until 1955. Gedikler Gölgesiz, 1950'li Yıllarda İzmir, 71–72.

ished houses. It also emerged as a memorial space for the new republic in the city center – rather than representing inhabitants of the former state.

Neither plan – Rene Danger and Henri Prost's plan or Le Corbusier's master plan – addressed agricultural geography and its potential. Both plans lacked a defined strategy for the rural edges of İzmir, despite the fact that the city had a tradition of industrial production based on agrarian goods. This approach reflects the bifurcation of the state's urbanization and countryside rehabilitation agendas. Namely, the reconstruction of the city was not paired with the planning of new settlements in rural İzmir in the demographic, socio-cultural and economic programs of the republican state.

Despite the urbanization politics applying only to a small territory of the city, İzmir was crucially important for agriculture and trade in the early republican economic program. The city was home to an expanding harbor, and at the same time the infrastructure of its hinterland was convenient not only for advancing agrarian activities, but also for the production and transportation of goods.⁶ Furthermore, the rural population was still the majority in broader İzmir.⁷ Along with the state's focus on the economic capacity of the city and its region, Turkish scholars during the mid-1930s studied İzmir and its domain through an academic lens. This work assisted the republican cadre in first forming an economic plan, and later a demographic plan, for western Anatolia.⁸

6 The city and its hinterland started to develop with the Levantine groups in the Ottoman State from the 19th century. British traders in particular concentrated on the agricultural and industrial activities in the region and built the first railway line between the harbor and Aydın – a city in İzmir's hinterland with a remarkable agricultural potential. The line provided for the transportation of industrial raw material and agricultural goods. A second line was constructed between the harbor and Turgutlu – a small town in the hinterland towards the east of the city. Philip Mansel, 'Cities of the Levant – The Past for the Future?', *Asian Affairs*, 45.2 (2014), 220–42 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/03068374.2014.907006>>; Abdullah Martal, *Belgelerle Osmanlı Döneminde İzmir* (İzmir: Ankara: Yazıt Yayıncılık, 2007), pp. 38–61.

7 According to the population census in 1935, 310,063 of a total population of 596,078 were living in the rural towns and villages. 1935 20 *İlkteşrin Genel Nüfus Sayımı; Türkiye Nüfusu, Vilayet, Kaza, Şehir ve Köyler İtibarile Muvakkat Rakamlar – Population de La Turquie 20 Octobre-1935 Recensement General de La Population Par Provinces, Districts, Villes et Villages, Chiffes Provisoires*, Başvekalet Devlet İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, 74 (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1935), p. 1.

8 Danyal Bediz, 'İzmir (Smyrna); Und Sein Wirtschaftsgeographisches Einzugsgebiet' (unpublished Dissertation, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 1935); A. Naim

In addition to this, the administrative structure of the city was also developed in the rural regions. The government plans were uncomplicatedly installed in smaller towns and villages. Thus, the People's House and its Village Affairs Branch actively participated in the rehabilitation of rural İzmir from the foundation of the institution in 1932. The local governor Kazim Dirik, who held this post until 1935, established a committee, including a veterinarian, an agriculturalist, a teacher and a doctor, which started to work in nearby villages.⁹ The Village Affairs Branch worked together with the Village Office in the city governorate established by Kazim Dirik in 1931.

In the same year, the governor and the committee held a conference series in Bornova Agriculture School to instruct 40 village teachers. This group visited the villages in the region to survey the condition of the countryside. During excursions in the following years, doctors and veterinarians worked on public health in the villages, agriculturalists assisted and instructed the villagers, and officials observed the priorities of the rural community. The branch encouraged villagers to trade their agricultural products in the urban markets. Also, governor Kazim Dirik started a series of lectures in 1935 for the village headmen about "Village Affairs in the Turkish Revolution", focusing on administrative and legislative subjects in the village community. Nevertheless, from 1934 the branch engaged in state propaganda in the countryside by requesting the participation of villagers in national celebrations in İzmir and the town centers of the city. The visiting groups also concentrated on republican reforms and programs in the village community.¹⁰

The agenda of Village Affairs Branch of İzmir People's House was to assist the rehabilitation of the rural city at the beginning of 1930s. The focus of the organization shifted from fulfilling the urgent needs of villages to including them in the state's programs. In rural İzmir and its hinterland, the People's House sought to modernize the villages with instruction in sanitation and public health, to develop the economy through guidance in agricultural methods, to consolidate the state's administrative structure with the 1924 Village Law and 1934 Settlement Law, and finally to use education to effect social reforms in the village community.

(Hakim) Öktem, 'Die Stellung (İzmir) Smyrna Im Weltverkehr Und Welthandel' (unpublished Dissertation, Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität zu Berlin, 1935).

9 Yaşar Akyol, *İzmir Halkevi (1932–1951)*, Kent Kitaplığı Dizisi 60 (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2008), 66.

10 Ibid, pp. 120–23.

Together with the surveys, studies and practices of the People's House and the Village Affairs' Branch, the state also intensely focused on the *village* as a crucial social unit, along with the regions and provinces. On 31 July 1936, the Interior Ministry announced five-years plans for villages in every province of the country to implement the 1934 Settlement Law and the 1924 Village Law, and to boost social and economic rural life. The local governors would establish a committee to prepare plans and report to the parliament.¹¹

Early in 1937, the preparation for the Five Years Plan of the Villages in İzmir continued to focus on village schools and education. With the permission of the Culture Ministry a new educational institute for village teachers, which focused on instruction for the villagers in agriculture and socio-cultural topics, began to accept scholars in İzmir.¹² In accordance with the development plan, the governorate provided farm animals and working animals for peasants to improve agricultural conditions in the rural areas. Moreover, the Agriculture Ministry proposed building a modern dairy farm in rural İzmir within the five-year plan. The governorate began to expropriate land in favorable areas, especially in the town of Torbalı.¹³

On 25 March 1937 the Turkish parliament promulgated the "Five-Year Cultural Development Plan for Villages in İzmir Province". To fulfil the cultural agenda of the Kemalist regime in the villages of İzmir, a committee gathered under the cultural directorship of A. Rıza Özkut in the Village Affairs' Branch of People Houses and introduced a program in ten articles addressing the socio-cultural situation of rural İzmir. This program was also designed to also improve the economic circumstances of the city. Thus the development plan included assessments of İzmir's villages as compared to other villages in the

11 'Köyler İçin Beşer Yıllık Plan', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 31 July 1936), p. 5.

12 According to a news item dated 21 March 1937, the Institute for the Village Teachers was scheduled to begin operations in the following academic semester. The institute was one of the first village institutes, which started to open in 1938 and were legitimated by law in 1940.

13 'Mektepsiz Köy Kalmayacak, Beş Yıllık Program Tamamlanmak Üzere', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 16 January 1937), p. 2; 'Beş Yıllık Köy Kalkınma Programımızda Köy Mekteplerinin Tamamlanması İşi Başta Gelmektedir', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 17 January 1937), pp. 1, 7; 'Köy Öğretmeni Enstitüsü Önümüzdeki Ders Yılında Açılacaktır', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 21 March 1937), p. 2; 'Köy Kalkınma Planına Göre Hazırlanan Program, Elli Aygır, Yetmiş Eşek Aygırı ve Dörtüzelli Boğa Satın Alınacaktır', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 21 February 1937), p. 4; 'Modern İnekhane, Yerini İstimlakına Derhal Başlanıyor', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 13 March 1937), p. 2.

country, demographic estimations to plan socio-cultural programs in the villages, evaluation of the culture and demography of the villages, organization of schools in underpopulated villages in İzmir and keeping village instructors for İzmir's villages, cultural politics in İzmir's villages, programs for the assimilation of non-Turkish groups and consolidation of Turkish culture among the immigrants, periodical inspections of village schools in İzmir, development of new maneuvers to connect the village teachers to villages in İzmir, and finally development of new methods for village teachers to assist the government in village affairs.¹⁴

The report noted that in 1937 only 263 villages out of 629 in İzmir had schools that provided primary and secondary education. It therefore suggested the need to construct more educational buildings in the villages, to organize school associations among smaller villages, to supply more teaching and training equipment for the children, and to regulate the village community via a systematized education program with the better assistance of village teachers in rural İzmir.¹⁵

One of the crucial tenets of the program was to integrate the rural population into the nationalization project. The report pointed out that a cultural program for İzmir's villages should emphasize the assimilation and consolidation of Turkish culture. In particular, non-Turkish people and immigrants would be the initial target group. The culture director A. Rıza Özkut advocated the desire "to remove and cause to forget the national classifications of Albanian, Bosnian, Pomak, Cretan, Romanian and Bulgarian", and it was necessary to begin Turkification tactics especially for children. He therefore campaigned primarily for schools and libraries in the new settlements to acquaint rural people with Turkish culture.¹⁶

On the other hand, the demographic character of the city changed during the Greco-Turkish War in 1922. After the Lausanne Treaty and the proclamation of the republic in 1923, it was declared that İzmir should be legitimated as a Turkish city, even though it had never been referred to as Turkish for at least the last two hundred years.¹⁷ However, there were still Turkish villages on the

14 *Umumi Meclisce 937 Yılı Toplantısında Kabul Edilen İzmir İli Köylerinin Kültür Bakımından Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Programı*, vol. 7 (İzmir: Cumhuriyet Basımevi, 1937), 1–2.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 6–10, 12–15.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

17 Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman İzmir: The Rise of a Cosmopolitan Port, 1840–1880* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Bilsel, 'Ideology and Planning During

outskirts of the city. And the abandoned Greek villages – including properties and lands – were the resource for accommodating incoming Turkish people in and around the city. Therefore, the housing programs played a crucial role in the demographic formation of İzmir, starting in the first years of the republic and continuing with the 1934 Settlement Law. Accordingly, at the beginning of 1936 the local newspaper of İzmir, *Anadolu*, announced housing programs for Balkan immigrants in the Thrace region. This article was consistent with the government line that the settling of newcomers was a national duty and a crucial part of the social and economic program in the country. More than 10.000 new houses would be constructed in the following year to “enliven the villages” and “enrich the prosperity of the country”.¹⁸

According to an official document of 1938, Balkan immigrants started to be housed in the city from the end of the Balkan Wars in 1912 to the beginning of the First World War in 1914. The municipality of İzmir under the Ottoman state sought to settle the incomers within the limitations imposed by the war climate and without a well-organized settlement policy. The first Balkan immigrants were housed with the assistance of locals in the city and in the rural expansion of the city. On 8 September 1932, the republican state enacted a new law (number 2664) regarding the former and new Balkan immigrants to record the incoming population and provide them with abandoned properties in the cities and their rural areas. In İzmir particularly, the republican state implemented regulations to house the locals, Balkan incomers immigrating in the city since 1912, and the populace coming into the country from Greece after the population exchange agreement in the Lausanne Treaty.¹⁹

After the enactment of the law (number 2664) in 1932, 5049 households, including 22.207 family members, were registered as Balkan immigrants in İzmir. The local government of İzmir also provided 4629 houses, two stores, six coffee shops, one bakery, 66 small shops, 92 gazebos and stables, 38.919 decares of agricultural fields, 16,353 decares of vineyards, 736 decares of orchards, 3248 decares of fig orchards, and 79.923 olive trees. A total of 14.387 households, including 61.763 family members, were registered as the Turco–Greek populace arriving via population exchange. The local government of İzmir supported this population with 13.150 houses, 79 stores, 23 gristmills, 60 coffee shops,

the Early Republican Period: Two Master Plans for İzmir and Scenarios of Modernization’.

18 ‘Her Göçmenin Evi Olacak’, *Anadolu* (İzmir, 2 February 1936), p. 5.

19 *İzmir Cumhuriyetin 15. Yılında* (İzmir Cumhuriyet Basımevi, 1938), pp. 133–34.

16 hostelries and hotels, four hammams, 59 bakeries, 1240 shops, 11 rendering plants, 209 gazebos and stables, nine factories, three tileries, nine tanneries, six soaperies, 43 warehouses, three music halls, one club, three cinemas, four pharmacies, 18.330 decares of agricultural fields, 34.275 decares of vineyards, 4920 decares of vegetable gardens, 326.314 olive trees, 42.818 decares of fig orchards, and 1328 orchards. In addition, the government provided 833 houses to 932 people whose dwellings were destroyed in the great fire of İzmir in 1922.²⁰

Within the scope of the 1934 Settlement Law, 7383 Turco–Romanians from Constanza and Turco–Bulgarians from Varna immigrated to İzmir in 1936 and 1937, as well as to the other cities in the region such as Manisa and Aydın. Starting from early 1937, the governorate of İzmir received these immigrants in the city and accommodated them in available properties in the city, rural towns, and villages. The governor Fazlı Gülec and the Housing Director of İzmir Tahsin Akgün led the general operation with the assistance of governmental organizations such as The Red Crescent of Turkey, which provided food and the first health control of immigrants in Urla, in İzmir's rural harbor. The state provided the settlers with 1.358.452 kilos of common wheat and 706.365 kilos of wheat seed for the first year.²¹

Officials registered the immigrants and prepared them for transportation to the places where they were temporarily settled. Up until summer 1937, 815 families in rural İzmir were housed in several towns in existing properties: 20 households in Seydiköy, 20 households in Değirmendere, 65 households in Foça, 25 households in Menemen, 180 households in Seferhisar, 60 households in Kemalpaşa, 110 households in Urla, 85 households in Bergama, 200 households in Torbalı, and 50 households in Dikili.²²

Particularly after the arrival of the first groups, new rural settlements, and new dwellings to extend villages were needed due to the conditions of the places where the immigrants were settled. Within the governorate of İzmir, a commission was established consisting of the directors of public health (Cevdet Saraçoğlu), public works (Galip Bey) and agriculture (Nadir Uysal) to determine appropriate areas for new village construction and land provision for the incomers. First, the commission visited Torbalı and confirmed the

20 Ibid, p. 136.

21 Ibid, p. 136; 'Göçmenler Geliyor, Bu Yıl Vilayetimize 5296 Göçmen Gelecek', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 30 June 1937), p. 2.

22 'Vilayetimizde 5260 Göçmen İskan Edilecek', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 6 February 1937), p. 5.

existence of sufficient land for the construction of new villages and agricultural activities. Later, the commission visited and surveyed several towns – in the south Kuşadası and Selçuk, in the north Menemen, Foça, Bergama and Dikili, in the east Kemalpaşa, and in the west Urla and Çeşme – to survey new settlement possibilities and abandoned village houses.²³

At the beginning of March 1937, the local governorate began to expropriate the land in Torbalı and its rural surroundings. Almost 1000 decares were provided for the settlements and 25.000 decares of the Beleric farm in the region were provided for agricultural land. In other towns the governorate decided to construct dwellings as extensions of the settlements, but in Kayas in Torbalı, where the land reclamation had continued since 1936, it agreed to build three new settlements.²⁴

On 13 July 1937 the governorate of İzmir announced a tender offer for the construction of village houses. According to the statement published in the local newspaper, the construction work would include:

“A. In Maltepe Village in Menemen 91 single village houses; the estimated cost is 17.328,22 Liras.

B. In Bergama 20 single village houses; the estimated cost is 3.808,40 Liras.

C. In Dikili 31 single houses, in Çandarlı 158 single village houses and 31 semi-detached village houses; the estimated cost is 46.939,14 Liras.

D. In Foça 17 single village houses and 10 semi-detached village houses; the estimated cost is 6557,64 Liras.

E. In Kızılca and Parsa villages in Kemalpaşa 21 single village houses; the estimated cost is 3998,82 Liras.

F. In Torbalı in Kayas 32 single village houses, in Ahmetli village 156 single village houses and 32 semi-detached village houses, in Havuzbaşı village 54 single village houses, in Taşkesik village 145 single village houses and 16 semi-detached village houses; the estimated cost is 89.631,42 Liras.

G. In Kalambaki Farm in Kuşadası 29 single village houses; the estimated cost is 5522,18 Liras.”²⁵

23 “Göçmen Köyleri, Komisyon Kazalara Tetkikata Gidiyor,” *Anadolu*, January 19, 1937; “Göçmen Köyleri, İnşaatı Haziran İçinde Başlanacak,” *Anadolu*, May 28, 1937.

24 ‘Göçmenlere Verilecek Arazi İstimlak Ediliyor,’ *Anadolu* (İzmir, 3 May 1937), p. 2; ‘Göçmen Evleri, Yakında İnşa Edilmeye Başlanacak,’ *Anadolu* (İzmir, 3 June 1937), p. 1; ‘İskan İşleri, Kayas Çiftliğinde Yeni Köyler Kurulacak,’ *Anadolu* (İzmir, 26 May 1937), p. 2; ‘Yeni Göçmenler İçin Yer Hazırlandı,’ *Anadolu* (İzmir, 14 July 1937), p. 2.

25 “İzmir İskan Müdürlüğünden,” *Anadolu*, July 17, 1937. Author’s translation.

The tender offer was also announced in the towns and villages where the dwellings and settlements would be built. The Housing Department of İzmir Governorate requested stone masonry techniques and timber roofs in the houses, with building materials, such as stone and timber, to be provided to the building contractors. Also, the government would bring the necessary amount of timber from the national forest in Denizli province.²⁶

Since local building contractors did not respond to the first announcement, the tender was postponed until the end of August and the estimated costs increased by 100 Liras. However, still no one applied for the construction work and the Interior Ministry sent a committee from the Housing Department to oversee the operation. After a survey of the committee, the Ministry of Public Health and Welfare prepared draft plans to send to the governorate of İzmir to start the operation.²⁷

By 1938 in İzmir, the state completed 521 rural dwellings out of a planned 931 houses, including the new rural settlements. In all, 74.020 decares land (44.943 decares in 1936 and 29.077 decares in 1937), 1346 ploughs and 1312 working animals were provided to the settlers coming into the province.²⁸

Three New Rural Settlements in the Torbalı District of İzmir

Following the early immigrant housing announcement after the 1934 Settlement Law, Torbalı district in İzmir became the focus of the governorate housing commission's agenda.²⁹ The commission addressed this region because British companies had started to implement infrastructure for agricultural settlements under Ottoman rule in the late 19th century. The area had already been cultivated in the early 19th century and the tradition of agrarian production continued from that time. The first railway line in the region was constructed between 1856 and 1860 with the goal of bridging the agricultural land from Aydın to İzmir and to the harbor. The İzmir–Torbalı line was completed in 1860, making Torbalı an important stop between Aydın and İzmir for the transport of agrarian goods and people, connecting the local rural bazaar to the city. Up until the end of the 19th century, construction of the railway

26 "İzmir İskan Müdürlüğünden"; "Göçmen Evleri," *Anadolu*, May 9, 1937.

27 'Göçmen Evleri Emaneten İnşa Ettirilecek', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 29 July 1937), p. 2; 'Göçmen Evleri, Bir Hafta Sonra İnşaata Başlanacak', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 17 August 1937), p. 2.

28 *İzmir Cumhuriyetin 15. Yılında*, pp. 136–37.

29 "Göçmen Köyleri, Komisyon Kazalara Tetkikata Gidiyor."

network in the region continued, connecting the cultivated area between the lowlands of the Maeander River.³⁰

In 1881 Sultan Abdul Hamid II bought almost 30.000 decares of farmland, including 20 villages and agriculture areas in Torbalı reaching to Tire – another town to the southeast of Torbalı. After this step, the sultan practically owned the land around the railway line passing through Torbalı district, and during the 1890s the Ottoman state built new agricultural farms and villages to serve his interests. When the sultan was dethroned in 1908, the imperial farms in Torbalı district contained an administration office, a guild, a granary and two warehouses (for cotton), two slaughterhouses, two gristmills, seven orchards, 89 shops, 23 gazebos in vineyards, three bakeries, two hosteleries, a hippodrome, an aviary, and a garden.³¹

At the end of the 19th century, Turkish Muslims, non-Turkish Muslims, and Turkic nomads represented the majority of the population in rural Torbalı, and Orthodox Greeks were the minority.³² The dominance of Muslims and Turkic nomads also continued during early republican years. This fact probably made the district even more attractive for immigrants who came into the country within the scope of the 1934 Settlement Law. After an earthquake hit the district in 1928 and caused damage in the settlements, the state paid much more attention to reconstruction works in rural Torbalı in the following years,³³ resulting

30 A. Nedim Atilla, *İzmir Demiryolları*, Kent Kitaplığı Dizisi, 36, 1. Basım (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayını, 2002), pp. 63–65, 89–91, 145.; Atay, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e İzmir Planları*, 83–86.

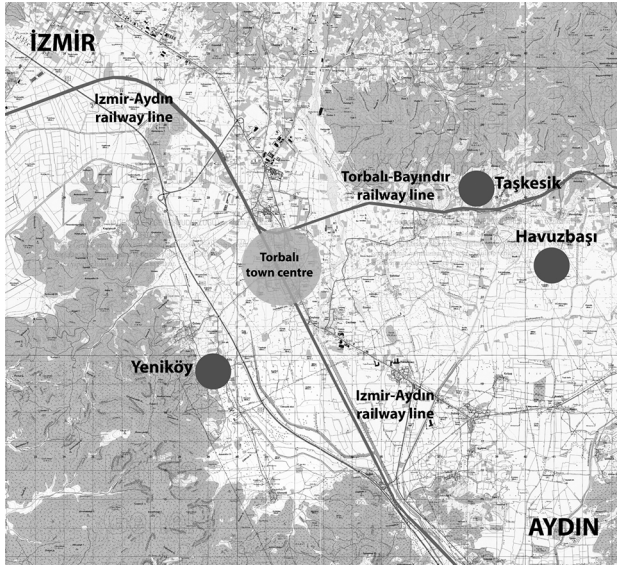
31 "Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi," 1894, 214; "Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi," 1896, 184; "Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi," 1908, 263; Yasin Kayış, *Aydın Vilâyeti Salnâmelerinde Torbalı ve Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in Hayır Eserleri*, Kültür Yayınları, I (İzmir: Torbalı Belediyesi, 2012), 36. For further reading on the extension of the İzmir–Aydın railway line in İzmir's city centre, and the role of British and French entrepreneurs in construction work, see Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman İzmir: The Rise of a Cosmopolitan Port, 1840–1880* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 115–49.

32 "Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi," 1889, 187; Kayış, *Aydın Vilâyeti Salnâmelerinde Torbalı ve Sultan II. Abdülhamid'in Hayır Eserleri*, 63. And, according to official document on population census in 1935, in 1927 the population of the town was 1771, which increased to 1935 in 8 years. 1935 20 İlkteşrin Genel Nüfus Sayımı; *Türkiye Nüfusu, Vilayet, Kaza, Şehir ve Köyler İtibarile Muvakkat Rakamlar—Population de La Turquie 20 Octobre-1935 Recensement General de La Population Par Provinces, Districts, Villes et Villages, Chiffes Provisoires*, 18.

33 İbrahim Hakkı and Hamit Nafiz, 30–31 Mart 1928 Tarihindeki Tepeköy-Torbalı Zelzelesi, Darülfünun Jeoloji Enstitüsü Neşriyatından, 1 (İstanbul: Kader Matbaası, 1929).

in the decision to construct three new rural settlements – Yeniköy, Havuzbaşı and Taşkesik villages – in the area. (Figure 5.1.)

Figure 5.1. Location of Yeniköy, Taşkesik and Havuzbaşı villages.³⁴



According to the report from 1891 in the Ottoman annual, Yeniköy village in Torbalı district had already been established at that time with 26 dwellings and a population of 116. Between 1892 and 1894 a mosque, a fountain with an ornamental pool, and a primary school were built in the public space in the village center.³⁵ Traditionally the mosque referred to the imperial power as well as to the Islamic community in rural Anatolia. It also represented an important social space uniting the people in the village. In Yeniköy, as in other settlements built in the region by the Ottoman authority at the end of 19th century, the school and the fountain with its annexes also emerged as spaces referring to the imperial state, religious community, and social life in the village.

34 Drawn after *Akdeniz Harita* (Office for Cartography and Land Survey).

35 'Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi', 1891, p. 461; 'Aydın Vilayet Salnamesi', 1893, p. 409; 'Aydın Vilayeti Salnamesi', pp. 501–2; Kayış, pp. 65, 113 – 115, 142 – 144, 153 – 154.

The building program included new components that differed from traditional Anatolian villages.

In 1937 construction started on the republican settlement of Yeniköy from the eastern edge of the former Ottoman village. It emerged as a larger settlement in terms of inhabitants and dwellings, but the objective of this republican settlement was to implement a much more comprehensive building program to be finished in the following years by the government and settlers together.³⁶

The new settlement consisted of four main streets, each 10 meters wide, on the north–south axis that crossed five main streets of the same width on the west–east axis. The intersections created building blocks of land spread over nearly 10 decares. Each building block included 10 dwellings located on a 1000 m² site. Two blocks between the second and third streets on the north–south axis, and the first and third streets on the west–east axis, were left for the public area that included shops, coffee house, village office, gendarmerie, and the school that was built in the 1940s with the financial help of villagers.³⁷

The earliest cadastral plan of the settlement was dated back to 1969. This plan consisted of ten complete blocks and two incomplete blocks extended with new dwellings in the north-south direction. The area built in 1937 included 111 dwellings, mostly single houses in a large garden, except for some of the parcels that were divided in two for private use.³⁸

In summer 1937, the Housing Director of İzmir Tahsin Akgün transferred his role to Ziya Fuad, the former Housing Director of Elazığ, who then led the building operation in Yeniköy.³⁹ According to an official document, the arrangement of building plots and construction of the houses were completed in 1938. The houses were 50,5m² (9.1m x 5.5m) one-storey single buildings situated in a 1000 m² garden. They consisted of two rooms, a niche for storage in the entrance, and a porch on the back front. The construction material was mainly stone, and the timber roof was extended towards the porch on the back of the house. Each garden had a bathing cubicle that was also used as a toilet (Figure 5.2).

36 Interview with the settler.

37 Interview with the settler.

38 The earliest cadastral plan of republican settlement in Yeniköy Village, dated 1969, has been found in the archives of the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre of Torbalı.

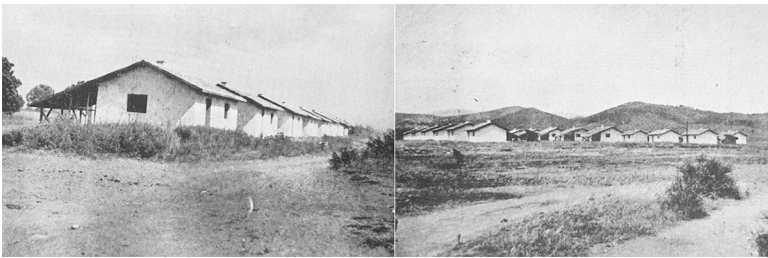
39 'İzmir İskan Müdürlüğü', *Anadolu* (İzmir, 20 August 1937), p. 2.

Figure 5.2. *Yeniköy Village in 1938, after construction.*⁴⁰



The housing programs in the Havuzbaşı and Taşkesik villages were different from the Yeniköy operation. In 1937 it was announced that 54 single houses were to be constructed in Havuzbaşı, and 145 single houses and 16 semi-detached houses were planned for Taşkesik.⁴¹ However, by 1938 only 24 houses in Taşkesik and 28 houses in Havuzbaşı were completed. In both settlements, the dwellings were located along the side of a 10-metre-wide main street. Each house was situated on a 600 m² building plot. The housing typology that was implemented in Havuzbaşı and Taşkesik villages was identical to that of Yeniköy village, though the houses were placed on smaller plots (**Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4**).⁴²

Figure 5.3. *Havuzbaşı Village in 1938, after construction.*⁴³

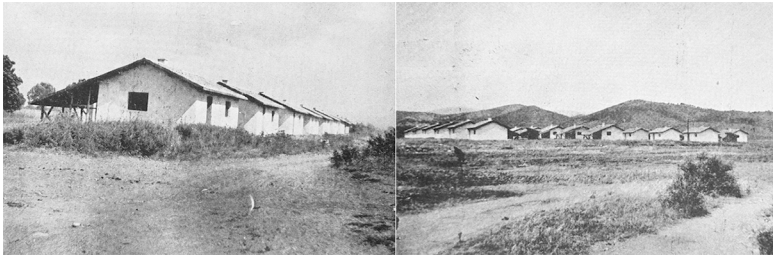


40 *İzmir Cumhuriyetin 15. Yılında*, p. 136.

41 “İzmir İskan Müdürlüğünden.”

42 See in Appendix: “House Typology in Yeniköy, Havuzbaşı and Taşkesik Villages, İzmir”.

43 *İzmir Cumhuriyetin 15. Yılında*, p. 137.

Figure 5.4. *Taşkesik Village in 1938, after construction.*⁴⁴

Building the New Rural Settlements in Elazığ

Zeynep Kezer discusses Elazığ as a “spatial border” in the middle of eastern Turkey, referring to the Turkification and modernization policies of the state in the region, starting in the early years of the republic:

“Elazığ provides a particularly illustrative case in point. During the 1930s and 1940s, the province’s mountains and valleys, streets and squares, homes and school classrooms, as well as the myriad activities these places engendered, revealed how components of physical environment served as social sorters. Spatial practices ranging from innocuous daily encounters between schoolchildren to solemn collective ceremonies or military raids, which accentuated the uneven power relations between the state, its agents, and the local population, generated and reified differences among people, depending on their ethno-religious tribal affiliations and relationship with the central authorities.

... Their [republican cadre’s] interventions profoundly altered this region’s built environment and its broader geography, affecting how local populations and agents of the state engaged with and moved through it, ultimately changing how this landscape was imaged by all.”⁴⁵

Construction began on the “imaged landscape” of Elazığ by the late 19th century when the Ottoman state proclaimed the first constitutional monarchy in 1876.

44 *İzmir Cumhuriyetin 15. Yılında*, p. 137.

45 Zeynep Kezer, ‘Spatializing Difference: The Making of an Internal Border in Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 73.4 (2014), 507–27 (p. 509).

Together with the new legislative form of the state, the administrative framework had to be reorganized in a hierarchical system of provinces (*Vilayet*), departments (*Sancak*), and districts (*Kaza*). In 1879, Mamuret-ül Aziz (later Elazığ and then Elazığ), comprising the Elazığ, Dersim (Tunceli) and Malatya departments, became one of the 29 provinces in the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁶

The ethnic composition of Elazığ had been heterogeneous: the religious, social, and economic structures were abundant and manifold, based on various traditional aspects among the locals who were predominantly Kurds and Armenians. From 1915 to 1916, Armenians and other Christians had been forced into exile and deported under Ottoman rule.⁴⁷ Starting from 1916, Kurds had been forced to leave their homes and deported out of the eastern region in the country, especially after the revolts in 1925 in Diyarbakır, in 1930 in Ararat, and in 1937 in Dersim (Tunceli).⁴⁸ Elazığ, on the other hand, remained loyal to the Turkish state and developed into “a secure” island of the republican regime in eastern Anatolia. The consolidation ambitions of the republican regime shaped Elazığ and its rural terrain during the 1930s.

The position of Elazığ in the state’s interior policy started to become clearer with the Dersim Reports, which were prepared by the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya after his survey of the region, along with the General Inspector of Elazığ and other military officials. On 18 November 1931, Kaya reported on the conflicts between Kurdish tribes and locals, briefly addressing the Kurds as perils for the state and arguing that an urgent repossession was needed in the area. He pointed out that the Aghas – tribal leaders – should be distracted from the city, and the rural people should be deported and resettled in rural Elazığ.⁴⁹

46 Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 63–64; Metin Heper, ‘Center and Periphery in the Ottoman Empire: With Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century’, *International Political Science Review*, 1.1 (1980), 81–104.

47 Majeed R. Jafar, *Under-Underdevelopment: A Regional Case Study of the Kurdish Area in Turkey*, Studies of the Social Policy Association in Finland; No 24 (Helsinki: Social Policy Association in Finland, 1976); Suny, Göçek, and Naimark.

48 Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 124–25; Bayrak, “‘Şark Islahat Planı’ ve TC’nin Kürt Politikası”; Bulut, *Dersim raporları*; Olson, “The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937–8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism.”

49 Bulut, *Dersim raporları*, 265–70.

Nevertheless, the maneuvers first resulted in an administration law for Dersim (Tunceli) enacted at the end of 1935.⁵⁰ Then, in 1937, the state performed a military operation against the rebellions and deported civilians, not only to Elazığ but also to other cities in the region such as Malatya, Sivas, Erzincan, Erzurum, Gümüşhane and Bingöl.⁵¹

From this point of view, the General Inspectorates Conference in 1936 in Ankara was, again, a significant attempt to form the region on the macro scale, and Elazığ on the micro scale. In the meeting with the general inspector of the Fourth Region (which comprised Elazığ, Dersim, Erzincan, Bingöl, and later Muş), Abdullah Alpdoğan presented the works which had been completed on behalf of “public order”, meaning the consolidation of state power in the region. One of the main attempts was to connect Dersim to the surrounding provinces. Therefore, transport to and from Elazığ, which had been already built in the west and south terrains, was important to ease the mobility problem in the tough topography of Dersim. Abdullah Alpdoğan announced that the construction of a bridge in Pertek would be a critical solution to the transport problem, hence ensuring the state’s military access to the region.⁵²

Railway construction had played a key role in the modernization program during the early republican period across the country. The plans for the eastern provinces however, had a central place in the state’s agenda. The intent was not only to develop the region via public works, especially with the “innovated” component of transportation, but also to control the area by equipping the region with agents of modernization. Therefore, the general inspectors and officials of the interior ministry agreed that the priority should be railway construction in the region. But the military capabilities should be also increased by creating seven-kilometer-wide buffer zones on each side of railways to protect the infrastructure from any kind of treason.⁵³

These policies resulted in large-scale infrastructure projects in East Anatolia, focusing on Elazığ. In other words, from the early 1930s the railway, highway and bridge projects started to be implemented in and around Elazığ, with the city as a nucleus. In 1931 the railway was extended to Malatya, while in 1934 the line between Malatya and Elazığ was completed, followed in 1935 by the line between Elazığ and Diyarbakır. In 1932 the Kömürhan–İsmet Paşa Bridge was

50 TBMM, *Tunceli Vilayetine İdaresi Hakkında Kanun*, 1935, pp. 112–16. (number 2884).

51 Bulut, *Dersim raporları*, 369–80.

52 Varlık and Koçak, pp. 136–37.

53 Kezer, ‘Spatializing Difference’, pp. 516–17.

constructed, followed in 1935 by the Keban Bridge on the Malatya–Elazığ highway, and in 1939 the Pertek Bridge on the Elazığ–Dersim (Tunceli) highway.⁵⁴

To keep the centralized position of the city in the east, the government developed a plan for Elazığ–Van railways in the direction of the Iran border. The project started in 1935, together with the Diyarbakır –Kurtalan line. The law numbered 3,813 arranged the financing of the construction of these two lines. However, the construction of Elazığ–Iran railway was postponed until 1941 and not finished until 1947. According to the plan, the railway headed east, passed through the Elazığ and Muş lowlands, and reached Tuğ village next to Lake Van. The conditions of the highways in the area were difficult, and therefore the railroads became the primary solution for transportation.⁵⁵

In addition to the operation connecting Elazığ with its periphery, institutional agents of the state transformed the cityscape during the 1930s. From 1933 to 1937 local governor Tevfik Sırrı Gür and general inspector Abdullah Alpdoğan led the public projects. First, in 1934 the train station was built, and from the train station to the center a 20-metre-wide boulevard – Station Boulevard – was developed and ornamented with a statue of Atatürk. The municipality and theatre buildings, Elazığ People's House, Atatürk Primary School, and Elazığ Girls' Institute were other rising “modern” buildings around the city center. A public park – Culture Park (sharing the name with İzmir's Fairground) – and a stadium were built. In the city center, streets were reorganized to include landscaping on the pedestrian walkways.⁵⁶ In 1936 general inspector Abdullah Alpdoğan also announced that seven schools were under construction in the towns, and a state hospital with larger capacity was built in the intersection of the south-north and east-west roadways.⁵⁷

In eastern Anatolia the state invested in a development program based on agrarian and mining enterprises. From the early 1930s In Elazığ, cotton agri-

54 Sezer, “Railways and Bridges as Expression of Rural in Early Republican Period, 1930–1945 (Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Kırsalın İfadesi Bağlamında Demiryolları ve Köprüler),” 178–84; Varlık and Koçak, *Umumî müfettişler*, 146–48; *Elazığ-Genç Demiryolu Hattının İşletmeye Açılışı* (Ankara: TCDD, 1945); *Nafia Sergisi Kataloğu*, vol. 13, T.C. Nafia Vekaleti Neşriyatı 5 (Ankara: T.C. Nafia Bakanlığı, 1944); “İsmetpaşa (Kömürhan) Köprüsü,” *Demiryolları Mecmuası*, 1931.

55 *Elazığ-Genç Demiryolu Hattının İşletmeye Açılışı*.

56 “Elazığ Vilayetine Bayındırlık İşleri,” *Altan*,ubat 1937, 6; “Valimizin Mühim Bir Eseri Daha,” *Turan Gazetesi*, June 25, 1934.

57 Varlık and Koçak, *Umumî müfettişler*, 149–53; Hurşit Nazlı, *Elazığ İlinin Coğrafi, Zirai, Ticari, Tarih, Nüfus ve Jeolojik Durumu* (Ankara: Zerbamat Basımevi, 1939), 41–64.

culture (and in some areas silk farming), supported by the government, dominated the rural economy. To process agrarian goods, several foundries were established in the region, and the manufactured goods were transported to other local markets in the neighboring provinces. In 1933 the cotton harvested in the lowlands of Elazığ was processed in Gaziantep's weaving ateliers.⁵⁸ According to state's schedule, in 1937, 40.000 kilograms of cottonseeds would be planted in the cultivated areas of rural Elazığ.⁵⁹ In 1936 the state financial institution Etibank established the Chrome Mining Processing Plant in Keban district,⁶⁰ where the construction of a hydroelectric dam was planned in the same year but postponed until 1966.⁶¹

In other words, the target was to boost economic activities in the region by supporting agricultural production, selling processed agricultural goods within local markets and trade organizations and generating new industrial fields to engage the labor of the population not working in agriculture. Relatedly, the local governor of Elazığ, Tevfik Sırrı Gür, established the "Commerce Club", which was associated with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and founded agriculture cooperatives in rural towns. The club was not only a meeting place for local traders, small manufacturers, and peasants, but also became an educational center offering courses on manufacturing and agricultural production processes and a market for the people.⁶²

58 *Büyük Türk Cumhuriyetimizin On Yılında Elaziz'de İktisadi Umran ve Refah Adımları* (Elaziz: Sinan Matbaası, 1933), 30.

59 Varlık and Koçak, p. 157.

60 Koca, pp. 493–94.

61 The Keban Dam Project was completed in 1974. It was not a part of Southeast Anatolia Development Project (GAP) – the largest energy development project of the Turkish state in eastern Anatolia – but became an inseparable part of it. The construction of the Keban Dam Lake dramatically altered the geography of the city and its districts. John Kolars, 'Problems of International River Management: The Case of the Euphrates', in *International Waters of the Middle East: From Euphrates-Tigris to Nile*, ed. by Asit K Biswas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 44–94 (p. 59); John F. Kolars and William A. Mitchell, *The Euphrates River and the Southeast Anatolia Development Project*, Water, the Middle East Imperative (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), pp. 18–30.

62 *Büyük Türk Cumhuriyetimizin On Yılında Elaziz'de İktisadi Umran ve Refah Adımları*, 10.

Executing the Turkification Agenda and Four New Rural Settlements in Elazığ

According to the 1936 survey of the general inspectorate, the total population of the Elazığ area, including Erzincan, Bingöl and Dersim (Tunceli), was 350.826, of which 198.508 were Kurds and 107.965 were Turks.⁶³ Despite these numbers, authorities insisted on establishing the Turkishness of the region, including the rural territories where people were much more attached to tradition and religion. Early republican officials referred to the Kurdish tribes as “the natural born rebellions and bandits who aimed to transform a Turkish region into Kurdish one”.⁶⁴ This view informed cultural operations in the city, and the extension of these operations strongly affected the rural areas and altered the spatial form of the countryside.

In this respect, Elazığ People’s House played a critical role and deliberately furthered the establishment of Turkishness in the region. Under the directorship of the local governor Tevfik Sırrı Gür, a committee in the People’s House set the organization’s agenda based on the demonstration of the Turkish nation with lectures and conferences on Turkish history, culture, and language. Indeed, this committee worked to Turkify the names of almost 3000 villages in the Elazığ terrain.⁶⁵

Additionally, the symbolism of the People’s House had an important role in Elazığ, as well as in other eastern provinces. Starting from the early years, the institution became influential in disseminating state propaganda, and was intended to be a place bridging the people and the regime. The organization concentrated on the transmission of republican reforms, and at the same time on the building of the Turkish nation in the eastern provinces. The People’s House offered a completely new program for cultural life in the city and in rural areas different from the typical instruments of the state. Particularly in Elazığ, it was meant to transform the cultural panorama, along with the physical panorama, by adding a new institution for modernization and nationalization to the city.

63 Varlık and Koçak, p. 30.

64 Ibid, pp. 130–32.

65 Between 1963 and 1964 the Ministry of Village Affairs prepared an inventory report for the villages in Elazığ province. This report gave wide publicity to the altered place names of the villages (from Armenian and Kurdish placenames to Turkish placenames). *Köy Envanter Raporlarına Cöre Elazığ*, Köy İşleri Bakanlığı Yayınları 44 (Konya: Yıldız Basımevi, 1966), 126–52.

Moreover, the implementation of the 1934 Settlement Law became another key nationalization instrument, especially in the rural areas of the region. Within the scope of the law, the deportation of Kurds and the settling of Balkan immigrants paved the way for the transformation of the rural landscape in Elazığ. By 1936 a total of 6428 immigrants had arrived in Elazığ, including 3,875 people from Romania, 1,963 from Yugoslavia, 176 from Bulgaria, 59 from Greece, and 355 from Russia. Out of 1653 families, 1234 had been housed, with the remaining 419 families still waiting to be settled by the state. By 1935, 29.033 decares of agricultural land had been provided to the incomers, followed in 1936 by a further 28.019 decares. In addition to this, the state supplied equipment for agrarian activities such as ploughs, farm animals, and seeds.⁶⁶ For the state it was crucial to provide equipment for the settlers in the region since Balkan immigrants fulfilled the profile of the “loyal” and “hardworking” citizens that the state idealized.

The immigrant population was meant to plant a “Turkish” population in the eastern provinces, especially in Elazığ and Diyarbakır. Therefore, state officials agreed on a crucial consensus to establish “strong and collective Turkish settlements” along the railways and highways, and every year a set number of Balkan immigrants would be housed in these villages. A local commission affiliated with the general inspectorates would organize the construction.⁶⁷ Relatedly, the housing operation in Elazığ was led by local governor Tevfik Sırrı Gür and general inspector Abdullah Alpdoğan.

According to a report dated June 1935, Etminik village in the center, and Kapuaçmaz, Nirhi and Hoşmat villages in Palu, which were abandoned after the Armenian deportation, were reconstructed for Turco–Romanian incomers starting from 1934. When the settlers arrived in the city, officials registered them as “Turkish citizens” and transported them to the settlements. The immigrants also worked in the construction of village houses.⁶⁸ According to another report from July 1935, 41 immigrants arrived in the city. Nine of these (from three families) were housed in Hölvenk (or Hulvenk), which was also an abandoned village following the Armenian deportation, and 32 immigrants waited to be settled. But in the northern part of the city, while the construction of village houses for immigrants was still to be completed, some of the villages

66 Varlık and Koçak, *Umumî müfettişler*, 148–49; Nazlı, *Elazığ ilinin Coğrafi, Zirai, Ticari, Tarih, Nüfus ve Jeolojik Durumu*, 51.

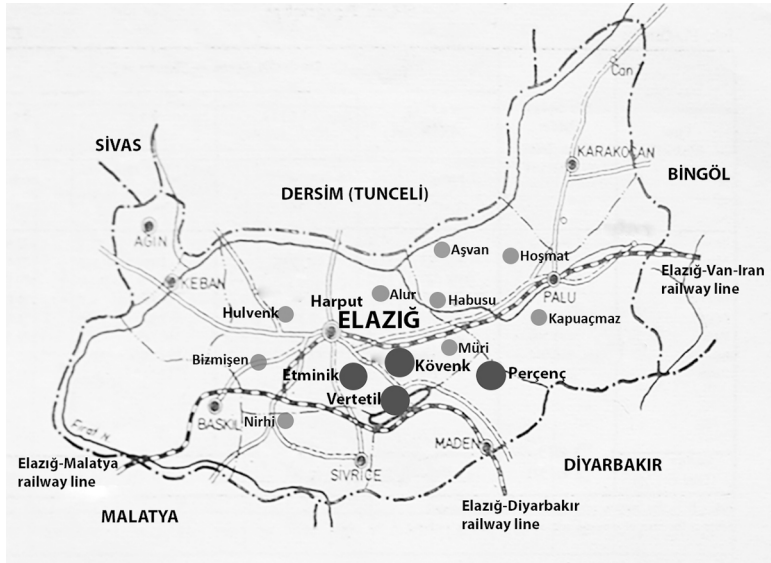
67 Varlık and Koçak, pp. 72–73.

68 “Şarımızda Olup Bitenler: İskanda,” *Altan*, Haziran 1935.

were reconstructed for the incomers.⁶⁹ In August 1935 it was announced that the director of Land Registry Office of Elazığ, Celal Tuna, was to lead the land provision operation for the incomers and for the locals who were covered by the 1934 Settlement Law and housed by the government in the province.⁷⁰

The intention to build “Turkish” rural settlements around the railways to strengthen the political authority in the region was apparent with these housing operations. After 1935, almost ten new settlements that had been abandoned after the Armenian and Kurdish deportations were constructed for Balkan immigrants along the railways in the province (**Figure 5.5**).⁷¹

Figure 5.5. Villages in which new rural settlements were built from 1934 to 1936 along the railway lines in Elazığ.⁷²



69 'Şarımızda Olup Bitenler: İskan İşleri', *Altan*, Temmuz 1935, 10.

70 'Şarımızda Olup Bitenler: Tapuda', *Altan*, Aralık 1935, 9, 12 (p. 9).

71 *Cumhurluk Devrinde Elazığ, İl ve İlçelerde Bayındırlık İşleri* (Ankara: Resimli Ay Basımevi, 1935).

72 Drawn after *Köy Envanter Raporlarına Göre Elazığ*, 13.

Rural settlements, including “Hölvenk (or Hulvenk) with 80 houses, Bizmişen (or Pazmaşen) with 80 houses, Etminik with 89 houses, Vertetil with 18 houses, Habusu (or Habusi) with 26 houses, Kövenk (or Hövenk) with 21 houses, Alur with 21 houses, Şerusi with 11 houses, Müri with 18 houses, Kuyuk with 20 houses”,⁷³ were built for the incomers. According to an official document from 1935, another settlement with 26 houses was built in Perçenç for the immigrants.⁷⁴ In Etminik a village school with two classrooms, in Bizmişen a village school with one classroom, in Habusu a village school with one classroom, and in Vertetil a village school with two classrooms, were constructed together with the village houses.⁷⁵ This program of building schools demonstrated that educating the settlers was as crucial as housing them in the planned settlements.

The rural settlements constructed in Elazığ after the 1934 Settlement Law were mostly incomplete housing areas in abandoned villages that were first reconstructed for the Balkan incomers and deported population in 1934. However, the 1924 Village Law, which essentially determined the spatial organization and administration of the rural settlements, was not applied in all of the villages in Elazığ.⁷⁶ The rural settlements were constructed without a large-scale plan. On the other hand, the housing typologies varied and differed from the examples of other housing programs in the western part of the country.

In Kövenk (Güntaşı), 26 houses were constructed. The houses were 28m² (7mx4m) one-storey semi-detached buildings in a 300m² garden, and they consisted of two rooms and an interior barn with a small porch at the entrance. The construction material was adobe and the houses were covered by flat mud roofs. Although the building material and techniques were local and traditional, the rectangular form of the houses and white-washed walls evoked a modernized landscape.

The houses in Vertetil (Yazıkonak), Etminik (Altınçevre) and Perçenç (Akçakiraz) differed from other rural dwelling programs in the country. In Vertetil, the state built 18 two-storey masonry single houses,⁷⁷ which had

73 “Elaziz Vilayetinein Bayındırlık İşleri,” 6.

74 *Cumhuriyet Devrinde Elaziz, İl ve İlçelerde Bayındırlık İşleri*.

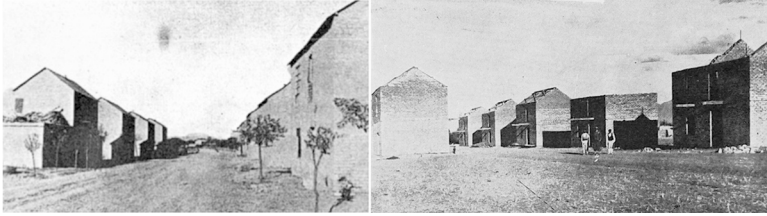
75 “Elaziz Vilayetinein Bayındırlık İşleri,” 6.

76 According to the General Inspectorates Conference reports, in 1936 there were 1,050 villages associated with the cities of Elazığ, Bingöl and Tunceli, which were under the control of 4. General Inspectorate. In 314 villages the 1924 Village Law was still not applied. Varlık and Koçak, p. 357.

77 “Elaziz Vilayetinein Bayındırlık İşleri,” 6.

48m² (8.7mx5.5m) floor space in a 500m² garden. Between each housing plot was a 10-metre space where a garden wall was built. The houses were located facing each other and framing a 10-metre-wide street. Although there were fewer houses in Vertetil than in other settlements, the organization of houses clearly represented a modernist perspective in the rural environment (**Figure 5.6**).⁷⁸

Figure 5.6. Settlement in Vertetil (Yazikonak), 1935, under construction.⁷⁹



The houses consisted of two separate rooms and two halls. On the ground floor, there was one room and a large entrance hall where the timber stairs were located. On the first floor, there was another hall and one room. It was also intended to add a balcony facing the street that could be reached from the hall in the first floor. However, the balcony was not put in place and later this area was filled in. The construction material was brick and timber, which was also used on the floor and roof. In the garden there was a cubicle for bathing and a toilet.

The Etminik settlement, the construction of which started in the early 1930s, was one of the largest operations in Elazığ.⁸⁰ Eighty-nine two-storey masonry single houses were built in Etminik, following the same typology as the dwellings in Vertetil. Likewise, the houses were located on a 40.5m² (9mx4.5m) floor space, with one room and an entrance hall on the ground floor and one room and a living area on the first floor connected by the timber stairs. Brick and timber were used in the construction (**Figure 5.7**).⁸¹

78 Naşit Hakkı Uluğ, *Tunceli Medeniyete Açılıyor* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1939), 168.

79 *Cumhurluk Devrinde Elazığ, İl ve İlçelerde Bayındırlık İşleri*.

80 “Şarımızda Olup Bitenler: Iskanda,” 10; “Elazığ Vilayetine Bayındırlık İşleri,” 6.

81 *Cumhurluk Devrinde Elazığ, İl ve İlçelerde Bayındırlık İşleri*.

Figure 5.7. *Settlement in Etminik (Altınçevre), 1935.*⁸²



Figure 5.8. *Settlement in Perçenç (Akçakiraz), built in 1935.*⁸³



On the other hand, in Perçenç (Akçakiraz) the housing was slightly different from the dwellings in Etminik and Vertetil. The houses were constructed as two-storey semi-detached masonry buildings. Each house had 35m² (7.8mx4.5m) of floor space. The interior organization was the same as

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

the dwellings in Vertetil and Etminik villages; the entrance hall and one room were on the ground floor, and on the first floor was a living space consisting of a hall and a room. The timber stairs ensured circulation between the floors. The construction material was brick and timber. According to the photographs taken at the construction site, the housing plots were clearly designated. However, information about the measurements was not included in the official documents.⁸⁴ (Figure 5.8)

The Clash of Turkification and Planning: An Interpretation of the Rural Settlements of the Early Republic

The state authorities' intentions for the village community and the rural population, starting from the early years of the republican regime, were varied. The projects aimed to develop the country by fostering rural life in its socio-cultural, economic, and national aspects. Nevertheless, the spatial programs, which were physical extensions of these motives, *de facto* formed the rural landscape of Anatolia. In other words, these operations developed an architectural culture in the countryside, with a powerful impact on the Turkish village, for which there had been no precedent.

Before 1930 these projects were a response to critical post-war conditions: the incomers from former Ottoman terrains in the Balkans urgently needed to be housed, and the reconstruction of the built environment for the locals arose as another obligation for the state. On the other hand, the population of the villages and small towns were the majority of the country. The new settlers were also small farmers and peasants who were associated with the rural community in their lands of origin. Indeed, during the first years of the republic, the village evolved into the nucleus of the country.

Although the insufficiency of infrastructure in the cities and in the rural areas was a tremendous obstacle for the new programs, legislation for the village community became the major concern. Therefore, the 1924 Village Law was enacted by the government even earlier than other critical laws such as the first Settlement Law in 1926 and the Municipalities Law in 1930. The Village Law

84 In Perçenç, today's Akçakiraz, from the republican settlement only one house has remained to enable a historic architectonic analysis. However, the plot, comprising the house and the garden, has mostly been altered by the settlers. Therefore, information about the measurements of housing site is missing.

identified the village as the communal and spatial midpoint of Turkey and as an administrative unit of the new secular state. It was one of the first modernizing attempts that resulted in planning, and hence reconstruction, of the existing villages and the formation of new settlements. The 1924 Village Law introduced the fundamental idea for the building program required for Turkey's new villages. The government produced settlement plans and housing typologies, and constructed "exemplar villages", based on this law, paving the way for a significant phase in the transformation of the appearance of rural Turkey as well as the questioning of village architectural planning during the early republican period.

In 1930 the single-party government of the RPP reinforced the political power of the Kemalist regime. In addition to administrative and regulatory operations, the republican state had an important impact in the economic and socio-cultural fields. These two facts changed the development of rural settlements, especially from the early 1930s: starting from mid-1920s the Kurdish conflict prompted the state to use force against any social and political resistance in the country. In the 1930s the strength of state's authority and its self-confidence developed into the formula with which the theme of nationalization (read as Turkification) was materialized and systematically introduced. Involving all agents of the government, the regime bridged the modernization program to the demographic program, which also included Turkish-speaking people from eastern Europe.

The second settlement law, enacted in 1934, briefly and clearly addressed instructions for the legal and spatial organization of the demographic engineering that the regime decisively engaged in during the 1930s and 1940s. The implementation of the 1934 Settlement Law shaped the population in the countryside as well as the rural built environment by producing the new form of the Turkish village. The law was primarily directed at housing settlers within a state-determined framework in accordance with national characteristics – simply defined as Turkish folks and non-Turkish folks. Secondly, the settlement law assisted the application of the 1924 Village Law on a broader scale in rural areas. And finally, the 1934 law guided the building of new rural settlements and the housing of people in these new habitations.⁸⁵

During the implementation of the 1934 Settlement Law, Balkan immigrants played a critical role in population planning. Since the 19th century Turkey had

85 According to the documents introduced above, until the early 1940s new settlements and rural dwellings were under construction in several provinces of Turkey.

been confronted with movements of people as refugees and exchanged populations. After the Balkan Wars, the First World War, and the Greco-Turkish War, and up until early 1920s, the migration of masses occurred within the circumstances of war. However, during the 1930s the state undoubtedly encouraged Turkish-speaking people from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Romania to come to the country, particularly within the scope of 1934 Settlement Law.

As emphasized in the 1934 Settlement Law, the Turkish language was the most important instrument for identifying the Turkish nation and melting all ethnicities into the same pot. Therefore, the state considered Balkan immigrants, who had spoken Turkish in their origin countries, as key to the demographic program to unite rural folks under Turkishness. Beside the national codes, Turco-Yugoslavians, Turco-Romanians and Turco-Bulgarians were principally accustomed to rural tradition as peasants and farmers in their homelands. In fact, they were better oriented in agricultural production and small manufacturing than the locals.

For these reasons, the Kemalist regime acknowledged Balkan immigrants as “loyal” and “hardworking” people who assisted in modernizing and nationalizing the country. This viewpoint – that the state regarded them as model citizens for a developing Turkey – prompted large-scale efforts in the planning of new rural settlements and dwellings, providing agrarian land and equipment, preparing them for agricultural production, and consolidating Turkishness in the countryside via a majority of Turkish-speaking settlers.

Moreover, the 1934 Settlement Law legitimated and regulated the deportation of Kurds in the eastern provinces to western Anatolia. Erik Jan Zürcher introduces the diaries of German travelers Lilo Linke, Robert Anhegger and Andreas Tietze, who witnessed the deportation of people from Dersim to Afyonkarahisar and Aydın in 1937 after the revolt. They had been told to where they were to be deported by state officials in the train station. The party came across another group when they arrived in Aydın. The travelers depicted the scene: “They are simply removed from there and distributed over the country. They are then dumped anywhere, without a roof over their head or employment. They do not know a single word of Turkish”.⁸⁶ In accordance with the law they would be settled together with Turkish-speaking folks and finally Turkified. Supporting these narratives, in 1938 *La Turquie Kemaliste* – a state-promoted journal –

86 Zürcher, ‘Two Young Ottomanists Discover Kemalist Turkey: The Travel Dairies of Robert Anhegger and Andreas Tietze’, pp. 368–69.

announced that in the new rural settlements people from the eastern provinces were settled together with Balkan immigrants.⁸⁷ (Figure 5.9)

Figure 5.9. The photograph, on the left, was seen in the journal *La Turquie Kemaliste* with the title “Young immigrants preparing to milk their cows”.⁸⁸ The photograph, on the right, was published in the book *Tunceli Medeniyete Açılıyor* (Tunceli is developing towards civilization) with the title of “An immigrant from Rumelia Turks, settled in Elazığ’s lowlands”.⁸⁹



The settlement policies, which evolved into not only the case for building new village communities but also for relocating people according to a demographic scheme, gives the topic a geographical focus. Thus, the introduction of new rural settlements in İzmir and Elazığ become critical to understanding the discussion, especially in a political climate in which the Interior Minister Şükrü Kaya argued the need to “separate the country into west and east” to accomplish the national, socio-cultural and economic program of the state.⁹⁰

The methods the state adopted in the housing operations were compatible to each other in the whole country: the settlements were organized by the local governors and the settlers labored at the construction site. They were equipped

87 “L’Immigration En Turquie.”

88 ‘Ibid, p. 16.

89 Uluğ, *Tunceli Medeniyete Açılıyor*, 168.

90 “TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, IV. Dönem, 3. Devre (TBMM Journal of Official Report, Period IV, Session 3),” 139. Quoted from Üngör, p. 149.

by the government with agricultural instruments, land, farming animals, and seed to plant. However, major differences occurred in the various settlements that reflected differences in on-site plans, housing typologies, and organization of the construction.

From this point of view, the programs in İzmir were influential for the circumstances of the larger region. The city had been urbanized since the late Ottoman period. The trade tradition and infrastructure had been ruled city life for a long time, and the agricultural facilities in the rural areas were much more developed than in the eastern part of Anatolia. Thus, starting from the early years of the republic, İzmir promised a strong potential for the development plan of the country. The deportation of the Greek and Armenian populations and the Great Fire of İzmir in 1922 demolished city life, and the Greco-Turkish war also overwhelmed the rural towns and villages at the beginning of 1920s. There was therefore a need for city development as well as rehabilitation of the rural areas.⁹¹

During the first years, population exchange largely influenced the settlement operations, and the state mostly used abandoned villages and houses to accommodate the incoming people. However, the practices associated with the 1934 Settlement Law included the rural districts in the demographic plan as well as the housing of Turkish-speaking immigrants in the region. The most significant characteristic of the programs in İzmir was the use of infrastructure in rural areas that had been constructed by foreign allies since the late 19th century. This enabled a settlement planning in which modernist features like wide regular streets, determined building plots, water infrastructure, and an extended building program were achieved in the new villages.

Nevertheless, Elazığ – a city in eastern Anatolia, which witnessed the deportation of the Armenians and Kurds during the First World War – started to develop in a “republican” manner from the 1920s. Especially in the 1930s, the state definitively implemented its spatial agents and formed a rigid administration in the province. The city was overseen by the general inspector and governor during the 1930s. In Elazığ the state put a great effort into economic and social improvement projects and continued to develop transportation, particularly to facilitate the mobility of the military in this region. Railroads, highways, and bridges were prominent on the government’s agenda, with the city

91 Orhan Özcan, ‘İngiliz Basınında İzmir Yangını ve Mülteci Sorunu (Eylül 1922)’, *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 15.31 (2015), 177–200.

emerging as the symbolic, administrative, bureaucratic, and military basis of the state in the east.⁹²

The city and the countryside did not have determined spatial borders in Elazığ. First, the center was furnished with features of the republican urban program, such as a public square and park, large boulevards, running water infrastructure, Girls' Institute, People's House, new municipality and theatre, hospital, and so on. Urbanization was attempted on the micro-scale, but an urban planning project for the whole city and its hinterland was not completed during the 1930s and 1940s. Similar to the republican program that transformed the city center, rural Elazığ changed with the application of the 1934 Settlement Law that resulted in the deportation of Kurds from the region and the transportation of Balkan immigrant into the villages and new settlements. Thus, both the city architecture and rural development evolved into powerful tools for the regime's propaganda in the region.

The images of new settlements in Elazığ dramatically illustrate the contrasting panorama between the landscape, which was still untouched, tough, and wild, and the "extremely" modern village houses, which were more improved and articulated than those in the western provinces. In other words, the village houses, and their arrangements as new rural settlements in Elazığ were not only architectonic components of the built environment, but also the greatest agents of the state in transforming the country to consolidate and maintain political stability, and to concentrate on one "harmonic" nation by shaping it within the framework of Kemalist ideology.

The "republican villages", which were created during the 1930s and elaborated during the 1940s, evolved into a micro-cosmos of the Kemalist regime negotiating with rural Anatolia. They were specifically formed and planned, and were important to the economic, socio-cultural, and national agenda of state. They became significant components of an idealized land to demonstrate a particular rural built environment, to nurture devoted citizens, and finally to

92 Zeynep Kezer emphasizes that Turkey's first military airport was built in Elazığ in 1940, making the province the nucleus of the state in the east. Kezer, 'Spatializing Difference', p. 517. For further reading on how Elazığ was transformed into a state's secure-space and its reflection on the entanglements of rural heritage, see also Özge Sezer, "Contextualization, Realization, and Contestation of the Village: Inheriting from Early Republican Elazığ, Turkey" pp.183-196, in *Praktiken des Erbes. Metaphern, Materialisierungen, Machtkonstellationen*, Schriftenreihe des DFG-Graduiertenkollegs "Identität und Erbe", Band III, ed. Simone Bogner et.al (Weimar: Bauhaus Universitätsverlag, 2022).

serve a “harmonic” nation adapted to the political authority. Analyzing these forms through a historiography of the Early Republican Period uncovers another layer of this complex narrative and presents clear motivations for an instrumentalized architecture in the countryside of Turkey.

