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Social and Physical Structure of the Towns in Kayseri
Where Greeks Lived

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Social and Physical Structure of the Towns in Kayseri Where Greeks Lived

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Mimarlık Bölümü

Türkiye

Kayseri (ancient Caesarea) on the heart of Anatolia is one of the earliest centers of Christianity. Until the first quarter of the 20th century there was a considerably large Christian population, located mainly in the city center as well as areas to North and southwest. Living side by side with Turks, the non-Muslim population was composed of Greeks and Armenians. It is known that 66 villages were inhabited by Greeks, 23 by Armenians during the 19th century. Seven villages had a mixed population of Muslims and Greeks; five, of Muslims and Armenians; 15 of Greeks and Armenians. Only one village was composed of all three; Turks, Greeks and Armenians. There are also distinct neighborhoods of different nations in the city, where they lived in close proximity to each other.

This study aims to focus on the Greek population of Kayseri. Greeks mostly settled in villages outside the city center, namely Zincidere, Endürlük, Stephana, Talas, Tavlusun, Germir, Taksiarhion, Gesi, Vekse, Ağırnas, Skopi, Sarımsaklı, Gergeme, Karacaören, Erkilet, Molu, Çukur, Taşlık, Rumkavak, İncesu, Dereköy, Soğanlı, Develi, Karacaviran, Avşarköy, Faraşa, Post Karaköy, Kiske, Karaköy, Beşkardeş, Çukuryurt, Taşçı, Hoşça, Satı, Kurumca and Zile. Among those towns and villages, several stand out with their size and splendor of their architecture. Some major ones could have easily competed or surpass Kayseri as regards to the urban amenities they offered. Commerce and trade was the main source of income for the population, and created an economical potential for the region. The scope of the presentation is the distinctive social and physical structure of the Greek villages of Kayseri, while a special attention will be given to their role in creating the identity of the Kayseri.

Keywords: Kayseri, Greek Settlements, social and physical atmosphere

Acknowledgements:

Social and Physical Structure of the Towns in Kayseri Where Greeks Lived

Kayseri (ancient Caesarea) in the middle of Anatolia was the capital of Cappadocia. The history of Christian population in Kayseri dates back to the times when it was still a secret religion. During the Ottoman rule, Christians namely Armenians and Greeks continued their existence under the protection of the Ottoman Empire. Until the first quarter of the 20th century there was a considerably large Christian population, located mainly in the city center as well as areas to north and southwest. They lived side by side with Turks in these areas.

In the 19th century, many travellers who came to Anatolia investigated the country according to populational, economical, geographical, archeological, architectural, etc. criteria and production potentials. Kont De Cholet, as one of them pointed out the peaceful co-existence of the different societies and the survival of different religions in the same area (Eravşar, 2000).

It can be explanatory to consider Kayseri has been a noteworthy commercial center and a wealthy city because of the place has been on the intersection of important commerce routes (Naumann, 1893). With the end of the 19th century the international commerce were retained by non Muslims (Kocabaşoğlu, 1996). The merchandise of the period were wool, fleece, cotton, resin, pastrami and *alacehri*¹ (Banse, 1919). Greeks occupied with the drapery, tailorship, jewelry, carpentry, shoe making, rug business and pastrami businesses (İmamoğlu, 2000). Besides, in another source it is said that the Greeks dealt with mostly plastering, carding, lumber marketing and masonry (Tosun, 1998). Kayseri Orthodox Greek Metropolitans registry shows that, in 1834, 60% of men capable of working, built up a business especially in coastal areas (Augustinos, 1997) and hence some of them prefer neighboring cities like Ankara, Nevşehir or Mersin². Usually, young men who were married stayed approximately six months at home and went for work out of town; and it was women who managed their home, family and field work (Augustinos, 1997). Seasonal workers generally returned a few months later, however job owners could not come home for two to five years³. A folk song on a young woman who had not seen his newly wed husband for seven years depicts the situation better than any other media⁴. They continued to live like

¹ A kind of paint material which use in carpet business.

² Mina Hristopoulou mentioned about some houses that were used by the traders coming from Aegian Islands and Greeks coming from Capadocia and a few fisherman huts in the Mersin harbour in the beginning of 1840 (Augustinos, 1997). The Greeks who were getting crowded by the development of trade, have built their churches in 1885 (Augustinos, 1997)

³ In 20 April 1839, 12 men were sent to Istanbul for two years as carpenters aged between 11 and 55, were they aware of another group who left Sarımsaklı on the very same day? Have they met on the way or an inn in Istanbul? We don't know... (Güngör, Açıköz, 2009)

⁴ *Yarım İstanbul'u mesken mi tuttun?*

*Gördün güzelleri beni unuttun
Sılaya dönmeye yemin mi ettin?
Gayrı dayanacak özüm kalmadı
Mektuba yazacak sözüm kalmadı
Yarım sen gideli yedi yıl oldu
Diktiğin fidanlar meyveyle doldu
Seninle gidenler sılaya döndü
Gayrı dayanacak özüm kalmadı
Mektuba yazacak sözüm kalmadı
Yarımın giydiği ketenden gömlek
Yoğumuş dünyada öksüze gülmek
Gurbet ellerinde kimsesiz ölmek*

that until they saved enough money to live in comfort or until their fifties (Augustinos, 1997). They went even farther after the second half of the 19th century. A rug dealer named Kuyumcuoglu could be an example in this respect whose business spread out even to Manchester in 1869, after he shut down his work in Kayseri (Augustinos, 1997).

Many travellers recorded the Turkish speaking Christians in Kayseri⁵. The documents of the period, the inscriptions in Karaman language in the entrances of the houses, the grave stones in the garden of the Tavlusun Agios Basileos Church and the inscription of Endürlük Agia Triada Church (Figure 1) also strengthen this information.

In the 19th century, among the Kayseri villages and neighborhoods, Greeks lived in 66 of them, Armenians lived in 23, Muslims and Greeks in 7, Muslims, Greeks and Armenians in one, and in 15 of them Greeks and Armenians lived together (Keskin, 1998). In 1922, there were a 27522 Greek population of which 20409 in Kayseri centre, 2221 in Develi, 1197 in Bünyan, and 3695 in İncesu (Nuri, 1995).

Levidis mentions that the Greeks mostly lived in Zincidere, Endürlük, Reşadiye (Stephana), Talas, Tavlusun (Aydımlar), Germir (Konaklar), Taksiarhis Monastery, Taksiarhion (these two places are in Darsiyak known as Kayabağ today), Gesi, Vekse (Özlüce), Ağırnas, Üskübü (Skopi), Sarımsaklı (in Bünyan), Gergeme (in Bunyan), Karacaören (in Bunyan), Erkilet, Molu, Çukur (Özvatan), Taşlık, Rumkavak, İncesu, Dereköy, Soğanlı, Develi (mentioned as Everek-Fenese in older references), Karacaviran (around Develi), Avşarköy, Faraşa (today it is called Bahçecik and in Adana), Post Karaköy (supposed to be the place called Karaköy today), Kiske, Beşkardeş, Çukuryurt, Taşçı, Hoşça, Satı, Kurumca (named Gürümze today and in Adana) and Zile (Stavridis, 1996) (Figure 2). According to the Grothe, Kiske and Karaköy were the places where the Armenians lived as well (Grothe, 1912). When different references are investigated, it can be seen that Talas, Tavlusun, Germir, Gesi, Darsiyak, Ağırnas, Sarımsaklı, Gereme, Erkilet, Karacaören and Develi are towns that Greeks and Armenians lived together.

In the neighborhoods Muslims and non-Muslim societies settled around the sacred buildings of their own mosque or the church (İnalçık & Arı, 2005). They had their own schools, hospitals and charitable foundations. The social interaction has occurred around the public spaces like bazaar and market which were in the town center (Soykan, 2000). Almost all Christians in Kayseri had a church in their neighborhood or town (Aktan, 2000). If there were no possibility to build a church in some small villages, they had the right to provide a priest to perform the religious ceremonies with the permission.

Kayseri was an important Primacy in Orthodox Primacy system (Augustinos, 1997). Like Bursa, Trabzon, İzmir and Sinasos, Kayseri was also a wealthy society and could establish its institutional system for education and economical charities (Augustinos, 1997). Augustinos explained this development in Kayseri both with economical wealth and with a proper organization of the society. Ramsey could be added in this

*Gayrı dayanacak özüm kalmadı
Mektuba yazacak sözüm kalmadı
İğde çiçek açmış dallar götürmez
Dağlar diken olmuş kervan oturmaz
Benim bağrım yufka sitem götürmez
Gayrı dayanacak özüm kalmadı
Mektuba yazacak sözüm kalmadı*

⁵ Some of them are Tozer, Simeon, Grothe, Schweinitz, Ioannidis, Millas, Balta.

respect with his contribution that the education of Greeks had the priority even if they were poor (Ramsay, 1897).

The schools were founded and managed by the charities: İstanbul, Athens and American associations had sponsored them (Varjabedian, 2005). At the end of 18th century, some merchants in the society brought and supported a monk from İzmir, as a qualified teacher for one of the new developing schools (Augustinos, 1997). In 1848, a teacher who is graduated from Athens University was brought, and a theology school opened for the use of the whole society in the Zincidere Monastery (Augustinos, 1997). Generally the schools by the church had a social centre in the neighbourhood. In 1897, there were four Greek schools in Kayseri (Sevinç, 2002). The Greek and Armenian students also attended the classes in the missionary schools (Nuri, 1995). Moreover there were orphanages as institutions of solidarity of the social structure. The ones in Zincidere and Darsiyak could be good examples.

At the turn of the century, Talas, Germir, Efkere, Tavlusun and Develi were urbanized settlements. They were worth mentioning by outstanding houses and paved streets which were unique among the other Anatolian towns (Nuri, 1995).

Darsiyak

Darsiyak is a village that is settled on the both sides of a valley at the south of Gesi (Figure 2). The settlement was previously known as 'Aylin Plain' (Levidis, 1904) It is called Kayabağ today. The name "Darsiyak" comes from Taksiarhis Monastery (Rizos, 1856). The 60 family harbourer town at the west of the monastery, gave the name "Taksiarhion" to there (Levidis, 1904). This monastery was an important place for all Greek, Armenian and Turkish people (Alboyacıyan, 1937). The act of building of the monastery by Empress Helena. Hamilton dated the origins of the settlement far back. The monastery is also known as '*Yanar Taş*' because of the colored stone that was carried by two angels, placed on the top window of the apse (Katsikas, 2002). Cuinet pointed out the rumor, mentioning about the yellowish brown lightning of the monastery under the morning sun, infiltrating through that stone. The rumor said that, the stone could be taken from the ruins of another monastery at peaks of the hill (Cuinet, 1892).

In 1875, there were 28 Armenian, 195 Greek, 289 Turkish, total 512 male in the town, living in 196 household (Kocabaşoğlu, 1996). At the beginning of the 20th century, Greek family number decreased to 60 (Levidis, 1904). The settlement was known with its iron working.

Although it was recorded two Greek Churches in 1882, in Darsiyak, (Kaytam, 171), Alboyacıyan pointed that three churches were there which the two were in the monastery : the "big and tremendous" church for the special and Sunday ceremonies, another church where the daily worshipping made and the third one, at the east of the town near by the Greek school (Alboyacıyan, 1937).

Germir

Germir, which is 5 km east of Kayseri in Derevenk Valley. Although it was a village with gardens and orchards until very recent times, now it's a district of Kayseri (Figure 2). The settlement is situated on the terraces of the valley, as the general characteristic of the region. Public protested the name change of the district from 'Germir' to 'Konaklar' and it revised by their application. The word Germir is derived from 'garmir', which means 'red' in Armenian (Naumann, 1893), depending on the

colour of the soil. Germir was recorded in local archives as Bosh River due to the older Armenian residents who were dealing with tambourine production (Naumann, 1893). The settlement was named as 'Ghirmi' in the journey book of Hamilton in 1843.

The Germir word comes from the 'Yellow Prince' and 'shiny, sunny place' meanings (Özdoğan, 1937). Stefansos Yerasimos thinks that the word could be a wrong spelling of an unknown Greek word and registered to Fener Patriarchate as Kermira or Kermirion, and later transformed to 'Germir' (Korat, 2000); for alternatively view related to the subject, it is derived from 'Karmir' meaning 'gerber shebang' in Greek (Kermir). To another argument the name comes from the mis-writing of the word 'Kuriamitir' as 'Kur Mir', like written on the Panagia Church icona in the town (Ioannidis, 1896).

It was mentioned in an almanac from the beginning of the 20th century that the town already had a 250 years of history (Levidis, 1904). Although different references give different numbers, they agree that there were mostly Greeks in the town. There were 600 households Greek, 300 Armenian and 200 Muslim settled in the town, while the first half of the 19th century (Rizos, 1856); and in 1893 there were 450 Greek, 220 Armenian and 110 Turkish houses (Naumann, 1893). These numbers would be 450 Greek, 120 Armenian and 330 Turkish families by the 20th century (Enc. 1974-1987). Greeks lived in the 8 neighbourhood, Armenians lived in 4 neighbourhood, Muslims lived in one and in three neighbourhoods Armenians and Greeks lived together in the settlement (Keskin, 1998).

Ioannis Kougioumtzoglou (Kuyumcuoglu), pointed out that the Greeks migrated to Germir for job opportunities in the 19th century (Augustinos, 1997). The people of Germir themselves went to İstanbul for the textile business or brokerage for European goods (Augustinos, 1997). It was stated that in Germir kitchen tools, knives, scissors, etc. were produced and many merchants had a trade mark for themselves that time (Alboyacıyan, 1937). There were 4 pharmacies, 12 doctors, and 35 shops selling various goods; there were also small factories that produce gypsum plasters, oil, and pottery (Cuinet, 1892). For İnciciyan, Germir was the most famous town of Kayseri. The prosperity of the village was also reflected on the clothing and life style of the Germirians (Simeon, 1999). For example Elia Kazan who was a famous director mentioned his mothers photograph with a fancy hat in Germir (Kazan, 1989).

In 1823, there was an Armenian school and library (Enc. 1974-1987), and according to 1892 Greek registry, there were 4 schools with 5 teachers and 242 pupils (Korat, 2000). In the Armenian Church, Armenians were learning French together with Turkish people (Cuinet, 1892). At the turn of the 20th century, there was a wide range of educational facilities from kindergarden to high school and a church library.

Zincidere

The village is 17 km. away from the city (Figure 2). Its old name was Flaviana (An., 2004). 1114 men population was in the settlement in 1873 in 473 households (Cömert, 2003). In the time of İonnidis, the 15 of the 500 house were belong to Protestant, 430 Greek (Orthodox) and the rest Muslim (Ioannidis, 1896). According to a document in Ottoman Archives there were 151 Protestant men and women in 32 houses, in 1883. However, Levidis mentioned a decrease in the Greek houses in the settlement from 400 to 320 in a few years, many of the leavers were merchants, stone workers and masterbuilders as he pointed out (Levidis, 1904). It is understood that in

the 19th century, Greeks were settled in 11 neighbourhoods of Zincidere and Muslims were in only one (Keskin, 1998).

At the end of the 19th century, the number of Greek households in Zincidere were 320. Even though it had a modest Greek population, the village was the most important one for the Greeks, since its famous and ancient monastery of Ioannes Prodromos was the official place of the Kayseri metropolit. Monastery was not only a religious center for Kayseri but also an educational center. By the second half of the 19th century, it had an Orthodox seminary in addition to a high school for boys, a secondary school for girls (which was unique for Cappadocia) and orphanages for boys and girls. It is known that Greeks of Zincidere were mainly occupied with construction crafts or trade, which provided a considerable high income. Combining the rich economic resources with an inclusive social organization was resulted in a developed small town, with the printing press and periodicals, seven pharmacies, three churches, and shops selling imported European goods.

The Timios/Ioannis Prodromos Monastery housed the relics of John the Baptist in turn with the Surp Garabed Monastery in Efkere (Cuinet, 1892). There was a monastery named the same and also Moni Flavyanon, at the time of Agios Savvas (Ioannidis, 1896). Ioannis Prodromos Monastery had been built by Neofitos the Kayseri metropolit in 1728 (Ioannidis, 1896). 1804 and 1844 (in the time of Metropolit Paisios) were the years of repair and renovation of the building. (Rizos, 1856). It is stated that it was regularly visited by Armenians and Turks in the ceremony or fair days (KMS arch) The Metropolit Ioannis Anastasiadis from Incesu founded three schools; a secondary and high school for boys, a secondary school for girls and a primary school for the orphans at the end of the 19th century (Çalikoğlu, 1976). Zincidere was a socially developed place and an important center as Sinasos (Schweinitz, 1906) for the Greeks living around the district, because of its Monastery. The first printing house in Kayseri opened up in 1835 in here and 2000 of books in Karaman language and magazines printed (Aksu, 2004). There were two schools, three churches, a mosque and 24 shops found in the seven neighbourhoods of the settlement in 1873 (Cömert, 2003).

Schweinitz mentioned about the the lack of information of how, when and from where the people came here, and pointed out that the Greeks were not specifically different from Turkish. The language, traditions, clothing were very similar, even the religious ceremonies held in Turkish (Schweinitz, 1906). Naumann also, gives the same information, but he stated that the inscriptions on the monastery were in Greek (Naumann, 1893).

During the Greek revolt in 19 th century, the rebellions were exiled to inner Anotolia. Zincidere was also became a shelter station. The deportated people stayed in the cells of the monastery and worked in the fields outside the church (Millas, 2002).

Develi

Develi, which is 6 km. south of Mount Erciyes (Figure 2), was founded by Turks in 11 th century, nearly at the top of the present center. It was called as *Develi* in the old references (Gürlek, 1975). Because of the limited fertile land the settlement moved down. This new place has been named as Everek⁶ (Gürlek, 1975). According to another source Everek and Fenese were founded by Kilikian Armenians in the 15th century, and developed specially in

⁶ *Evmek* or *ivmek* was explained with hurry in Turkish (Gürlek, 1975).

the 16th century (Kevorkian & Paboudjian, 1992). Everek-Fenese⁷ had four neighbourhoods at the beginning of the 20th century. These were Armenian Everek with 1000 houses, Islam Everek or Develi with 120 houses, Fenese with 700 Armenian houses and Ay Kostan⁸ with 120 Greek houses (Kevorkian & Paboudjian, 1992). While Armenians were 8305 person in 1913-1914 Kevorkian & Paboudjian (1992) there were 140 Greek and 60 Muslim houses in Ay Kostan (Salname, 1914).

Vineyards and orchards were main source of wine, liqueur and rakı production and the silkworm in Develi made it possible to trade the silk textiles (Kevorkian & Paboudjian, 1992). Besides Greeks were generally grocers in İstanbul (Salname, 1914). There were two Greek schools which started education in Greek language in 1914, although they were speaking Turkish in the settlement (Salname, 1914).

Talas

Talas, is situated at 6 km south east of Kayseri (Figure 2). Due to its altitude and climatic characteristics, Talas has been one of the major popular recreation spots for Kayseri (Subaşı, 1986). The commentary of the name as: ‘country with fresh air, amply trees, green areas which suitable for resting’ supports this thought (Türkmen, 2000). The existence of caves with wall paintings and scraffiti in Derevenk Valley which is 1 km. east of Talas, points to an early Christian settlement in the area. However, the foundation of Talas is attributed to Turks; that came to Kayseri in the 11th century (Özsoy, 1996). This proposal is supported by the meaning and phonetics of the word Talas. It was used by some Turkish tribes with the meaning clean and holy place (Türkmen, 2000). The word is also known as “rope” which is used in some ball games or horse race. It is still possible to confront with two names as: great Talas (*uluğ*) and small Talas (*kiçi*) (Özsoy, 1996). It can be thought that, these words were the names of places where Turks had come from originally. On the other hand Naumann claimed that the settlement was established in the 3rd century as ‘Mutalaska’⁹ (Naumann, 1893).

Nakracas combined the two discussions by an argument saying that, the only Orthodox community that existed in 1500’s was Talas (Nakracas, 2003). According to Inciciyan, most of the 2000 houses in the settlement were belong to Greeks. Armenians and Muslims had approximately 150 houses each, at the end of the 18th century (Simeon, 1999). 2240 Armenians, 2395 Greeks, 1173 Muslims were living in the 2303 houses of Talas in 1875 (Kocabaşoğlu, 1996). There were only 100 Greek men in 400 houses in Talas before population exchange, because they had gone to work outside (KMS arch).

The settlement has divided into two parts, as upper and lower Talas. Until the first half of the 20th century lower part consisted of four districts which were Harman, Han, Tablakaya and Kiçiköy. There were five Orthodox churches three of them in Kiçiköy, one in Harman and other in Han district (Levidis, 1904).

While there were about 1000 shops in Kayseri at the end of the 19th century, 200 shops of Talas demonstrates the level of trade. Furthermore carpet and wine production was especially widespread (Kevorkian & Paboudjian, 1992). In Talas

⁷ Although, Develi includes these quarters today, Armenians from Develi consider Develi as another place, and they define themselves not from there but Everek.

⁸ District which known as Aygösten today took this name from Agios Konstantinos Church (Salname, 1914)

⁹ Mutalaska was also recorded as the old name of the settlement in most of the sources.

Muslims lived in one neighbourhood. 22 neighbourhoods were belong to Greeks and 7 of them were belong to Armenians. Greeks, Armenians and Muslims lived together in one neighbourhood and in 9 neighbourhoods were the place where Greeks and Armenians lived (Keskin, 1998).

In the 19th century, there was also a dense architectural activity in Talas. Mosques, fountains, a middle school (rüştiye), in addition to Greek and Armenian schools Protestant and Catholic ones, and an American College were built. Two German travellers describes Talas at the end of the 19 th century as such ‘Talas is a settlement of 30.000 people, which was more clean and ordered than Kayseri. It was a developing small town which photographer, tailor, restaurants and kindergarten exists’ (Oberhummer & Zimmerer, 1899).

Endürlük

It is a village of Talas (Figure 2). It’s old name Andronikon (Kyrillos,1815), which comes from Andronikos, who is one of the three saints that the church of the settlement is dedicated. It is stated that, only Christians were living in about 2000 houses at the beginning of the 19th century (Kyrillos, 1815). 1331 men (1264 Greeks and 67 Muslims) were living in 684 houses existed in the village, in 1875 (Kocabaşoğlu, 1996). Population records in 1831 and 1860 shows the Greeks were in 10 and the Muslims were in one neighbourhood (Keskin, 2000). According to the Centre for Asia Minor Studies archive records there were 145 Greeks in 53 houses and 150 Muslims in 1924 (Yerasimos, 2004).

Most of the inhabitants traded in other cities, like İskenderiye, İzmir, Mersin, Adana, İstanbul. The others were farmers (Ioannidis, 1896). The village has one primary school for boys, one for girls and also a library included 500 books. The migration out from Endürlük to Zincidere for work or for Monastery education caused a recession in education facilities in the village (Levidis, 1904).

There were two other churches in the village besides the Andronikos Church: ‘Panagia’ chapel and a church dedicated to Saint Kiryaki (Ioannidis, 1896).

Results & Discussion

Non-muslims of Kayseri were effective on the formation of space, both for single buildings and urban pattern. As culture shaped the space from the beginning to the end the result affects the life and architectural texture. After Tanzimat, non-Muslims were capable of canalising their savings to houses, shops and churches, much more freely (İlter, 1988). This can be considered as a reflection of social and political factors on the formation of space.

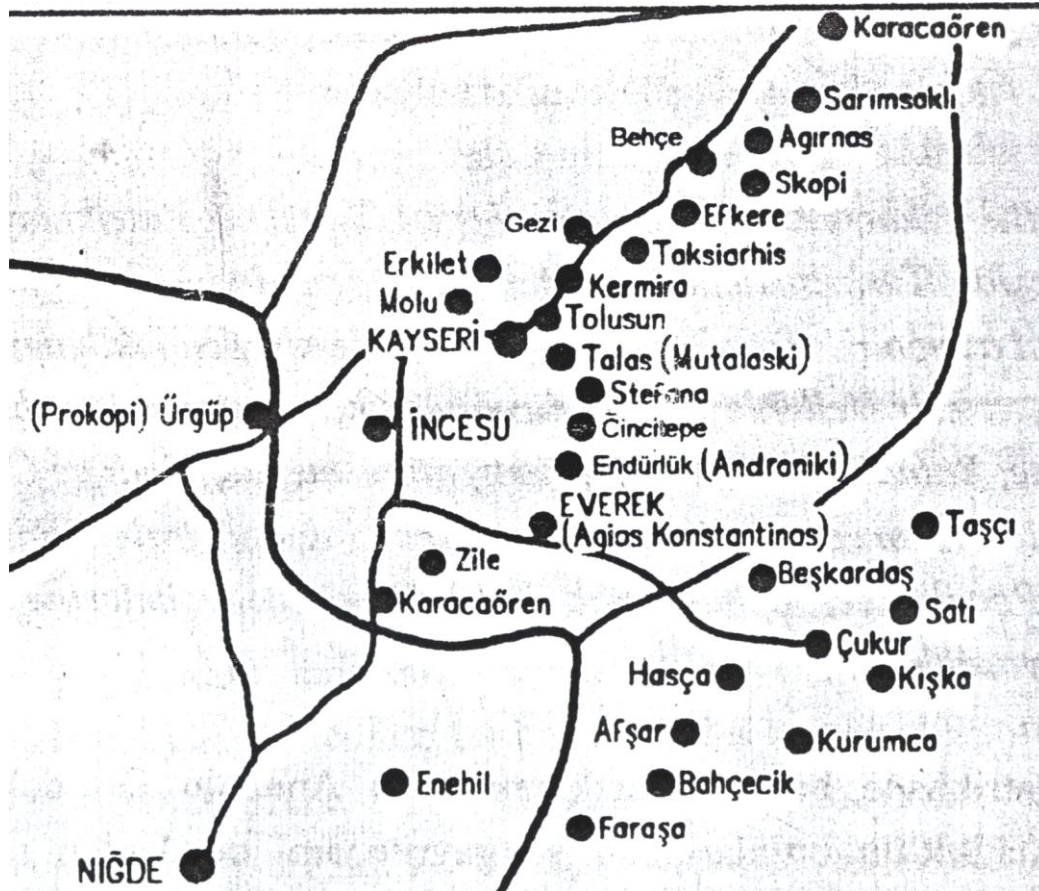
An important transformation has started at the beginning of the 20th century with the immigration of Armenians and Greeks out from these settlements. The decreased number of different cultures caused in the loss of pluralism and the mosaic of cultural interaction, which have ended up with an unidentified and unqualified urbanization. The dynamic urban and commercial life has ceased with this transformation. While some of the abandoned houses and shops were re-settled by new-owners, some of them were decayed because of neglect and damages of time. The survived examples have lost most of their original characteristics. Eventually, these settlements which had a history of several hundred years lost most of their originality. However, some examples of cultural heritage in very small numbers and tired, are still fighting for survival. It is very difficult to express that the preservation studies going effectively

even if it is intended. Therefore, this kind of information exchanges are very important and positively necessary to generate a motivation towards conservation and preservation of cultural heritage.

Figure 1. Inscription of Endürlük Agia Triada Church



Figure 2. Settlements which were Greeks lived in Kayseri



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