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An Evaluation of Education Approach and Policies during the Single-Party Period in Turkey

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Abstract

In general, education can be thought as an institution related to the phenomenon of social change. There are a series of approaches that try to disclose the relationships between education and social change in the literature. The prominent ones among these approaches are the functionalist one which is underlied by the positivist paradigm and the conflict-based one which is underlied by the structuralist paradigm as a general category. In this study, educational policies and the dominant perception of education during single-party period of Turkish Republic were discussed within the frameworks of social change and education approaches. Two qualitative research techniques –document and policy analysis methods- were used. The fundamental legal documents, programs, printed official notices and statements announced by important public figures and the official decisions made in the meetings and national councils (*Şura*, in Turkish) which guided the education policies in the mentioned historical period that falls into the scope of this study were analyzed and reported. The conclusion of the study is that since the educational policies and the dominant perception of education during single-party period of Turkish Republic aimed to construct then a new political structure as a form of homogenous community who would accept secular values and whose different properties would be in harmony with each other, to indoctrinate the different sections of the society in order to make them accept their spatial statuses and social realities; and since it defended the existence of a linear link between education and the development of the productive capacities of individuals and society, educational policies and the dominant perception of education during single-party period of Turkish Republic corresponded to a form of functionalist approach in the sense.

Keywords: *Education policy, social change, functionalism, reproduction, modernization*

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Türkiye’de Tek Partili Cumhuriyet Dönemi Eğitim Yaklaşımı ve Politikalarının Bir Değerlendirmesi

Özet

Genel olarak eğitim, toplumsal değişme olgusu ile ilgili bir kurum olarak değerlendirilebilir. Literatürde eğitim ile toplumsal değişme arasındaki ilişkileri anlamaya yönelik bir dizi yaklaşımdan söz edilebilir. Bu yaklaşımların öne çıkanları, gerisinde pozitivist paradigma olan işlevselci yaklaşım ve gerisinde genel bir kategori olarak yapısalcı paradigma olan çatışmacı yaklaşımdır. Bu çalışmada toplumsal değişme ve eğitim yaklaşımları çerçevesinde tek partili Cumhuriyet dönemi Türkiye’deki eğitim anlayışı ve politikası ele alınmış ve değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi tekniklerinden doküman incelemesi ve politika analizi teknikleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın kapsamı içinde kalan tarihsel dönemde eğitim politikalarına yön veren temel mevzuat metinleri, eğitim programları, yetkililerin genelge ve demeçleri ile toplantı ve Şura’larda alınan kararlar değerlendirilmiş ve raporlaştırılmıştır. Tek partili Cumhuriyet dönemi eğitim anlayışı ve politikalarının, temelde seküler değerleri benimsemiş ve farklı özellikleri ile benzeşmiş bir insan topluluğu olarak ulus formunda yeni bir siyasal inşayı amaçlamış olması, toplumun farklı kesimlerine kendi mekansal konumlarını ve sosyal gerçekliklerini kabul etmeleri yönünde telkinde bulunmayı hedeflemesi ve eğitimle kişilerin ve toplumun üretici kapasitelerini geliştirmek arasında doğrusal bir bağ olduğunu savunması yönlerinden işlevselci bir eğitsel yaklaşıma karşılık geldiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Eğitim politikası, toplumsal değişme, işlevselcilik, yeniden üretim, modernleşme.*

Introduction

In general, it can be said that education in modern capitalist societies performs functions such as providing social harmony and stability, socializing individuals in accord with certain common values for these purposes, making workforce acquire qualifications for the industry, selecting the most talented and successful individuals, matching them with the suitable jobs and, by doing so, playing a critical role in the social reproduction process.

The social and historical foundations of today's Turkish Education System have started to be shaped during the last period of Ottoman era. During this last period of Ottoman Empire, in which a series of dynamics exhibiting the qualities of economic, social and political crisis were effective, the education system started to develop on the modern bases through the renewal reforms aiming at the restructuring of the establishment at institutional level, and continued its institutional and social development during the Republic Period.

During the process, which can be called as Ottoman-Turkish modernization regarding the continuity, Turkish Education System which was restructured by taking the Western education systems, particularly the French Education System as the model followed a developmental path in accordance with the basic premises of the positivist paradigm. Considering the direct link between positivist paradigm and the functionalist approach, it can be claimed that the development exhibited functionalist features.

The aim of this study is to examine and evaluate Turkish Education System in the single-party Republic Period within the theoretical frameworks of social change and education approaches. In the first section of this study, existing arguments on social change and education are discussed and critical/conflict-based and functionalist approaches are briefly introduced. In the second section, basic approaches that guided the education system during the single-party period in Turkey are argued and evaluated.

Two techniques of qualitative research methodology, document and policy analysis methods are used. The fundamental legal documents, programs, printed official notices and statements announced by important public figures, the official decisions made in the meetings and national councils (*Şura* in Turkish) which drew the framework of education policies and guided them in the mentioned period were analysed and evaluated.

Social Change and Education Discussions

In education literature, education, being an important field for the production and transmission of culture through generations during the historical and social development processes, is taken as a sequence of activities realized in a regular and planned manner to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of basically the non-adult individuals and transform them to those individuals via the participation and their learning experiences.

From a relatively neutral perspective, education, as an intellectual effort of an individual taking place within a group or on his/her own aiming at perceiving, understanding and controlling his/her environment, can be acknowledged as a system of planned activities useful for achieving specific developments in the behaviours of people in accordance with predetermined goals (Oğuzkan, 1974: 6). Through education, children, adolescents and adults are provided with better mental and physical abilities. For Ertürk (1979: 12) education is a process of creating deliberate and desired behavioural change via the subjective experiences of an individual. From a similar perspective, according to Adem (2008: 2), education is a process which provides individual with desired behaviour, knowledge, skill and quality. Furthermore it refers to learning process of the norms and rules of the society by individuals and their implementation also. For Akyüz (1985: 1, 2), education amounts to the totality of the efforts aimed at developing the mental, physical, emotional and social abilities of an individual in a desired manner or providing the individual with novel abilities, behaviours, knowledge in conformity with a set of objectives. Başaran (1996: 173) defines education as a process of creating the desired behaviour in the individual being educated.¹ A similar definition made by Demirel (1993: 36) asserts education as a process of generating deliberate and desired change in the behaviours of an individual through the personal experiences of him/her and as a science guiding the educational practices.

In the literature, there are several specifications concerning the functions of education in modern societies. For instance, according to Sönmez (1994: 43), education refers to the activities creating behavioural change realized in order to train individuals in such a way that they will be able to control and change the nature, to make production, to enhance their natural formations and to make it possible for these qualities to come to the light. For the British philosopher Russell (1976: 35), the aim of education is to provide individuals the educational facilities, to remove inhibitory effects, to transfer culture to individuals, to develop the abilities of individuals as much as possible and to create worthwhile citizens.

A similar approach is held by Güvenç (1984: 325, 326). According to him, in modern societies, education (school system) is to make children -who in the preschool period have different educational-instructional experiences that lead to the different directions and levels of developmental tendencies- pass through common experiences, in other words, to maintain the socialization already begun in the family, to discover and process the innate learning abilities and the learned skills of children, therefore to educate the national workforce, letting the individuals recognise each other not only in the school but also outside of it and to make them achieve the group, societal and national consciousness. The last capabilities mentioned are related to the function of education in the political socialization process. Political socialization is defined as the development of the

¹ According to the same author, a person can learn a behaviour only through experience. Experience refers to the tracks as the result of his/her relation with other people and environment. Intended behavioural change must be in conformity with the predetermined educational objectives. Thus, education can be taken as a process within which desired behaviors are formed via the subjective experiences of the individual.

individual's opinions, behaviours and values related to the political system as the result of his/her lifelong indirect and direct interactions with the social-political environment (Alkan, 1989: 18). By using methods and contents compatible with its aims, every regime would try to make individuals accept its own legitimacy symbols, while trying to eliminate the symbols of opposing regimes (Alkan and Ergil, 1980: 84).

For Adem, what is aimed at via education is to develop the personality and professional skills of individual, to make him/her be in conformity with the society, to exalt the ethical values of the society, to improve the quality of life and to ensure compatibility with economic development and democracy. From this perspective, first task of the education system is to enrich and transmit from one generation to another everything that constitutes the cultural heritage of a nation. The second task of education is to integrate and differentiate. Education integrates individuals to society by teaching them a common language and by making them achieve certain behaviours and common values. At the same time education makes individuals get differentiated by preparing them for their future social and professional statuses. The third task of education is to make labour as one of the factors of production more qualified. Making manpower more qualified is compulsory in terms of economic development (Adem, 2008: 3, 10 - 13).

When the mentioned definitions and functions of education are contemplated from a critical perspective, it can be claimed that neither of these definitions and functions take into account the peculiar conditions of different societies, different levels of development and different social sections. The common idea behind these approaches is the reproduction of an allegedly "homogeneous" society by the transmission of knowledge, skills and attitudes to new generations. Hence, it can be put forward that these education approaches which attribute isolated, ideal and neutral qualities to education are the products of a "functionalist society assumption" made on the basis of the positivist paradigm.

There are two main approaches and a set of intermediary perspectives which are vital for the proper comprehension of the social structure. The first set of approaches includes the functionalist approach and the structural-functionalist approach which was developed as a response to the deficiencies of the functionalist approach. The second set comprises the structuralist and the structuralist-dialectical approaches.

In general, functionalist approach asserts that society is a complex system based on the co-functioning of its different pieces towards stability and cooperation. By making an analogy between the functioning of society and that of a living organism, functionalist thinkers claim that like the organs of a living organism, the subcomponents of a society also operate together and in harmony for the well-being of the entire society. From this perspective, the analysis of a component of a society is regarded as the understanding of this component's function in the balanced perpetuation process of that society (Giddens, 2008: 55).

Durkheim, one of the prominent thinkers of the functionalist approach, considered the society as an organic integrity composed of interdependent parts.

According to Durkheim, for a society, in order to have a permanent existence, the specialized institutions of it such as administrative and religious institutions, family and education system have to operate in harmony. The continuity of the society depends on the cooperation of these institutions. This cooperation on the other hand necessitates a unity of general interest and compromise. As seen, Durkheim's social change approach aims to protect the variables considered as preserving the society's integrity and preventing the social turmoil. In this regard, according to Durkheim who emphasizes the concept of "social solidarity", solidarity can be preserved if the individuals can successfully establish "social adherence" relations with the social groups and are led by the set of common values and traditions dominant in that society (İnal, 2004).

Max Weber's reflection which paves the way for structuralist-functional approach is based on individuals' social actions and the meaning these actions carry at sociological level. In other words, the main topic of Weber's sociology is the social action which emerges at the individual level. For Weber, the social actions of the individuals constitute the first and the fundamental level of social reality. The connection of these actions forms the interdependent social relations at the second level. When these relations concretize within social processes, social structures come into existence. In this way, a certain social system emerges. However, for Weber, the existence of a certain social system does not mean that society is a harmonious integrity. There is not only compromise but also conflict in the society. From this perspective, the struggle among different social statuses and roles is one of the main social relations. The processes of social relations and struggles acquire their meanings in specific social groupings (Tolan, 1983: 35 ; Aron, 1989: 382, 383).

As in functionalist approaches, in structural-functional theories too, the main assumption is that each social component satisfies a certain need and forms a harmonious integrity with the other social components. In other words, according to structural-functionalists, all social components, structures and units take place in the social system and form a harmonious integrity only because they are functional. For instance, Parsons has behaved with a special motivation to de-emphasize the factors that lead to social divisions and conflicts while focusing on the ones that help social integration, has defined the social systems as consistent integrities and denied the existence of components and facts which may lead to contradictory consequences.

As seen, structural-functionalists' social change approach is also determined by the social integration and harmony concepts. As in the example of the transition from socialization in the family to socialization in the school, various social functions constitute new structures during the differentiation process and the division of functions; namely, the differentiations require new integrations: via the institutions and by the help of cultural systems, a differentiation heads towards a new integration at a different level and in a different form, that is to say, social change takes its shape as a social evolution being realized in a certain equilibrium (Tolan, 1983: 56).

On the other hand, when structuralist and historical/dialectical approaches are concerned, a society vision and analysis different from those of functionalist

and structural-functionalist approaches is observed. Generally speaking, structuralist approaches put forward that all social components make an inter-relational totality, however, the totality of the society cannot be reduced to the arithmetic sum of its components. In this respect, the apparent functions in society are not the totality of the social structure, the society cannot be considered as the sum of the apparent structures formed by the apparent functions; the focus should be on the structural causes and processes behind the apparent functions and structures (Eroğul, 1999).

The social change and education approaches and discussions which are briefly introduced above and corresponding to the social structure analysis quite take part in the education literature. According to the authors examining the topic within the framework of sociology discipline, social structures, events and processes can be evaluated by appealing either to functionalist approach or to conflict-based approach in general. While functionalists generally emphasize social harmony, continuity and the harmonious unity of different social functions, the proponents of the conflict-based approach generally focus on differences in society and on the conflicts or the conflict potentials resulting from these differences. Therefore, according to the proponents of the conflict-based approach, the focus should be on the topics such as power relations, inequality and discrimination.

For functionalists, modern society carries some distinctive properties. One of them is that talent and effort are more important than privileges and hereditary status in modern society. Second distinctive property is that in such societies, economic development relies on rational knowledge and these societies need people who are very well trained experts acquiring the professional positions. Third property of modern societies is their quality or ideal of being democratic which is highly correlated with social justice, differentiation and a satisfactory life. In modern society, in the essence of development lies the increase in the education levels of the citizens. Along with the development of educational opportunities, the number of the poor but talented students who can reach the higher social positions increase and the society gets closer to a state of equality in educational opportunities (Tan, 1991: 563).

According to functionalists, education has technical, practical and universal qualities rather than qualities being determined by the social, political and economic contexts. In this approach, one of the issues in focus is the transfer of social and individual components/products to the youth by the old generation without any fundamental conflict or contradiction and this process is considered as socialization (İnal, 2004: 42).

For Durkheim, a prominent functionalist, dominancy of a specific value system in a society and socialization of individuals according to these values is profoundly important for maintaining the social integrity and perpetuation. Accordingly, education would take shape as the influence of adult generations on the individuals who are not ready for the social life. Goal of the education refers to mobilizing and developing child in order to make him/her achieve a set of physical, intellectual and ethical standards required by both the political society (especially the state) and his/her private social environment (Durkheim, 1956: 71).

In his posthumously published work “Moral Education”, despite referring to the necessity of a certain type of discipline in education, Durkheim also claimed that the integration of the individual to different social groups by acquiring an autonomous and self-sufficient existence would lead to social harmony and development. For Durkheim, the effectiveness of morality or a certain type of ethic in the field of education refers to the realization of discipline. This discipline aims to regulate individuals’ behaviours by encouraging them and to make them achieve specified goals which at the same time limit their perspectives (Durkheim, 1973).

Another functionalist thinker, Parsons, mentioned two functions of classroom in his study based on the application of his social conformity model in classroom settings. The first function of the class is “socialization” and the second is “selection”. Socialization is the development of the capacities and conformity skills required by the future role-playing performances of the individuals. Selection, on the other hand, refers to the definition and classification of students according to different professional fields by the use of success criteria. Parsons who insistently emphasized the functional links between education institutions and other social institutions claimed that through its socialization and selection functions, education would provide society with individuals capable of playing their roles properly (Parsons, 1959).

While functionalists are examining the education via the protection and development of property and power structures and relations in society, they are optimistic about the education as an activity that has the solutions of many social problems. Their argument on equality in educational opportunities and the link they established between education and personal/social income can be regarded as arguments taking place in this context.

Equality in opportunities has constituted one of the important components of “classical liberal” political and economic thought –originated from the doctrine of the law of nature and the enlightenment philosophy- and was proposed by the liberals as a solution for the tension which is thought to be existing between equality and freedom. The concept claims that regardless of a set of qualities such as race, gender and social status, individuals have or may have equal opportunities in social life (Soydan, 2008a).

Another main educational assumption of functionalists which is still widely shared today is that education is related to the incomes at the social and private levels. From this perspective, “human capital theory” or the concept of “human capital” can be regarded within the functionalist approach. The concept of “human capital” which was uttered by the American economist Theodore Schultz in the early 1960s and developed by Gary Becker in 1962 rests on the claim that human as an economic category is itself an investment factor; human productivity in the production process can be increased through various activities such as education and training which in turn will mean growth for the economy and increase in income for the individual (Soydan, 2008b).

For Schultz, education can be considered as a field of investment because of the fact that it will increase the individuals’ productivities and incomes in the

future. Development can be made possible through the educational investments in humans. Schools are institutions specialized in the production of educational services and can therefore be analyzed as production units. All these indicate that education performs an important function in dealing with economic instabilities (Schultz, 1971; Baptiste, 2001).

Since 1970s, whence the validity of the functionalist approaches were being widely questioned, conflict-based approaches have been getting stronger. It is widely assumed that these approaches have two main wings: Marxist/Neo-Marxist and Weberian. What these two branches have in common is that education systems have been serving the continuity of social establishment via the idea of social harmony and the argument of equality in opportunity.

The basic thesis of the conflict-based approach which adopted by Marxists or Neo-Marxists is that society is not a harmonious integrity but involves specific conflict dynamics rooted mainly in the social class statuses; thus the education system take on its shape in these contradictory processes and in turn effect these processes.

According to the critical pedagogy approach which can be considered as the expression of the conflict-based approach in the field of education, education's function of making the child ready for a certain social environment is in fact operating as a process which prepares the child for the membership of a specific group in the social hierarchy. Therefore, unless the education-based selection and screening system is removed, there will always be privileged groups in society. This happens not only because of the visible links between school success and social status that can easily be established but also as the students from higher classes are able to acquire a social capital allowing them to have higher education and to be successful at this level (Bottomore, 1984).

The main topic which the conflict-based approaches emphasize regarding the social change and education is the social reproduction processes. From the perspectives of these approaches, as the basic functions of the schools are the reproduction of the dominant ideology and its knowledge forms, and the social division of labour, the function(s) of education can only be fully comprehended by analyzing its relations with the state and the economy (İnal, 2004: 53).

Main Educational Approach and Policy in the Single-party Period in Turkey

During the last period of the Ottoman Empire, Ziya Gökalp, who as one of the ideologist of the political party in power (1908-1918), namely "Union and Progress". (İttihat ve Terakki), continuously reformulated and adjusted the ideology of the Party due to the changing conditions, tried to determine the Party's approach in the field of education. Ziya Gökalp supported the idea that child should be educated for the society, melt within the society and acquire a formation in accordance with the aims of the society; and separated the "talim (instruction)" and "terbiye (education)" from each other by applying the ideological framework of "Turkization, Islamization and Modernization" which he developed and proposed as an effort to rescue the Ottoman Empire. For Gökalp, "talim" refers to teaching of scientific knowledge to child. Therefore it

has to be modern. On the other hand, “terbiye” (education) is the transferring of moral and national values to the children. Hence, it should be Islamic and national (Gökalp, 2006).

The Union and Progress Party reign was a period in which a strong connection was started to be established between education and citizenship policies. In this period, reformist Ottoman intellectuals observed closely the West, particularly the developments in France and modelled this country in terms of the role the schools, especially the primary schools, played in the construction of citizen regarded as the political subject of the modern centralized state. In this era, education was considered as an instrument to transform the Ottoman society into a community of citizens who would prevent the collapse of the state (Üstel, 2004).

During the last years of Ottoman Empire, under the effect of the heavy defeat in the Balkan War, the reform efforts in the field of education got intensified and a law named “Tedrisat-ı İbtidaiye Kanunu-i Muvakkatı” (Provisional Primary School Law) regulating the primary schools was enacted in 1913. Although it was named as “provisional” and went under modifications, this law remained as the legal backbone of Turkish Primary Education System, being in force for 48 years until replaced by the 1961 dated “Elementary School Education and Instruction Law” (Çağlar, 1999: 129).

An ongoing general search effort in the field of educational approaches and policies was inherited from the last period of the Ottoman Empire by the Republic. In this section, education approaches and policies during the single-party period of Turkish Republic will be examined under two headings: first, the 1920s during which the main policies were developed and a series of social and political reforms including education were carried out; second, the 1930s when the Kemalist single-party system was institutionalized and penetrated into social and political scene through Atatürk’s basic principles known as “six arrows” (republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism, stateism and revolutionarism), and a number of educational policies targeting rural people were implemented. Moreover, the effects of changes in the political styles during the World War I on the field of education will be examined.

Educational Approaches and Policies in 1920’s’ Turkey

The regulations made in the IInd Constitutional Monarchy era had remained in force during the Republic period until the types, levels and the aims of education were specified by law. For instance, the official aims of the primary education that had been specified by the “Provisional Primary Education Law” (Tedrisat-ı İbtidaiyye Kanun-u Muvakkatı) dated 23rd September 1913 remained in force until 1926. Due to the “General Primary Schools Regulation” (Mekاتب-i İbtidaiyyeyi Umumiyeye Talimatnamesi) enacted in 1915 within the legal framework of the abovementioned law, the aim of the primary school was stated as getting the children to achieve vital knowledge necessary for life and training them as religious, patriotic and moral individuals.

In the program of the National Independency War period’s first minister of education Rıza Nur targeted an education in national and religious mood, the

individuals trained to have high self-confidence and productivity consciousness, and development of new curriculums for a modern education. In this program announced in Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) on 9th May 1920, the following statements were made about educational affairs and curriculum (Ayas, 1948):

What we target in educational affairs is to make the education of our children religious and national in every sense and to raise it to such a level that it will be possible for them to be successful in scrambling for their lives, to provide them the initiative spirit based on their own personalities and the traits such as self-confidence, and to awaken in them a productivity idea and consciousness...

As it can be inferred from the passage, during the early days of the new state, political attitudes towards education had a nationalist and religious tone; defending at the same time pro-modernist and scientific ideas. Besides, a strong bond between education and economic development was established on the basis of ideas such as individual entrepreneurial power and the active participation in productive activities.

First Education Congress, held during the National Independency War, carried out studies and works about the situation of the education and what should be done with what kind of an educational approach. Mustafa Kemal, who came from the front and attended the opening of the Congress, made an important speech which would be referential for the education policies and curriculums in the years ahead.

The passage from the Mustafa Kemal's speech emphasizing the "national education" is as follows (Akyüz, 1985: 302):

I think that instruction and education methods followed until now is an important factor in the regression period of our nation. Therefore, when I speak of the national instruction and education program, I mean a culture which is in conformity with our national and historical characteristics and far from the superstitions of the past, foreign ideas which have nothing to do with our innate properties and the possible influences that may come from East and West.

In this meeting, besides addressing the measures that should be taken to regulate the educational affairs, Mustafa Kemal made also statements about the education programs while summarizing the educational principles of the new state that would be established (Akyüz, 1985: 302):

Students should be inculcated with a consciousness of struggle against the foreign elements that contradict our existence and unity, and with the necessity of defending the national ideas in trance against all opposing ideas vehemently and in a self-sacrificing manner.

Hamdullah Suphi Bey, (The word Bey/Efendi, mean Sir in Turkish, was used like surname in the times there is no surname law) who held the office of Education Ministry after Rıza Nur, pointed out that education should be in conformity with the life, should satisfy the needs and have a national character, and that they would try to renew the programs accordingly. Vehbi Bey, who became Education Minister following Hamdullah Suphi Bey, stated that education should have a religious tone, the number of teachers should be increased and the programs

should be renewed (Başar, 2004). As seen, while the education policies of the new state were being developed, there were ebbs and flows between religious and secular values and different combinations of these values emerged in these policies.

During the office of İsmail Safa Bey who was the last Education Minister of the Independency War period and the first minister of the Turkish Republic, an Education Contract (Maarif Misakı) specifying the targets of the state in the field of education was prepared. This Contract included such targets as raising the new generations with national consciousness, making the basic reading and writing skills widespread and educating the people due to the requirements of the economic development. For İsmail Safa Bey, the aim of the education was to prepare the youth for a future that would be shaped by the intellectual, legal and particularly the economic expectancies and to raise an unshakeable youth in terms of intellectual, scientific and moral traits (Başar, 2004).

The program of the Fethi Okyar cabinet, which was formed in 1923, by taking the national culture and modern civilization as references, followed a compulsory and general education approach which was unionist, based on the individuals' interests and skills, and to make them ethical.

According to one of the circulars of the Ministry of Education (dated 19th December 1923) issued after the declaration of the Republic, "schools have to indoctrinate the students to remain loyal to the principles of the Republic" and to another circular (dated 8th September 1924) "our children should carry in their hearts and souls the ideal to be self-sacrificing for the Republic" (Akyüz, 1985: 308).

In the 8th September 1924 dated circular issued by Vasif Bey, who played an important role in bringing the draft of the well-known *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* (Unity of Instruction) Law into the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), the qualities of the education-instruction were listed as follows: Education should be national and modern, in conformity with the requirements of the life, should raise a republican youth; instruction should be guided by the practice, education and instruction at the schools should develop the students culturally and socially as well as physically and intellectually (Akyüz, 1985).

According to the deputy of ministry of education Mustafa Necati, who held the post from 1925 to till his demise (almost three years), the aim of the education "(...) is to prepare the new generation physically and mentally as well as in terms of personality and national ardour due to the requirements of life and democracy; and in this context to try to promote Turkishness to a higher position within the civilization of which it is a part" (Başar, 2004: 177).

With a May 1927 dated circular signed by the minister Mustafa Necati, it was demanded from the schools that instruction should be in conformity with the realities of the country and national issues should be emphasized (Akyüz, 1985: 308):

School directors and teachers should always keep in their minds the necessity to make the youth get prepared for our national community in our country and to assume Turkey and Turkishness as the axis and centre of instructional and educational activities (...)

As seen in the abovementioned statements, the tone of the political attitude towards education was transforming from a religious sensitivity towards a national one. Following the repression of Şeyh Sait insurgency, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü's statements in his address at the Teachers Association (Muallimler Birliği) in 1925, summarizing the "national education" policy, indicates this transformation (Sakaoğlu, 1993: 27):

We want national education. What does this mean? We can comprehend it more clearly through its opposite. The opposite of it is a religious education or an international one. You, the teachers will give national education not religious or international. We will see that religious education is not an attack on national education and that both of them can be realized in their own ways... Religious education is an international education in a sense. Our education will be ours and for us. We can think of two sections in national education: Political and motherland-relevant. There is a Turk who gives the Turkish character to these lands. However this nation is not yet able to display a united nation appearance which we want to see (...) If we want to live, we will live as a united nation. This is the general aim of the system which we call as national education (...)

As seen, on the one hand İsmet İnönü is negating a religious or international education, on the other hand he is referring the role of education in constructing a nation unified on the basis of Turkishness.

During the Independency War and the first years of the Republic, primary education curriculums developed in the period of IInd Constitutional Monarchy had been used until the new programs and textbooks compatible with the new educational approach were prepared. The first curriculum of the Turkish Republic was developed and put into practice in 1924. Although the 1924 program included the name, time and content of the courses, it did not contain any explanations about the instruction and educational targets. When the 1913 dated "Primary Schools' Course Program" (Mekاتب-i İptidaiye Ders Müfredatı) prepared during the IInd Constitutional Monarchy period is compared with the curriculum dated 1924, it can be observed that general history topics are similar to each other and the topics related to the history of Islam and Ottoman Empire which had been taught comprehensively in the first program during the first 4 years of the 6 years long primary education was again given place in the 1924 curriculum though not as much extensively as it had been in the first program. In 1924 program, History of Islam took place briefly more like the History of Arabs and the Ottoman History was presented from the conquest of Istanbul till the collapse of the Ottoman State in the context of the civilization concept. According to the logic of the program, in order to indoctrinate the citizens with the ideology of the Republic, "the evils of the autocracy and the tyrannies of the monarchy should be spoken out". And the Arab History would be covered under the theme of "the periods of absolute monarchy and republic in Islam" which was parallel to the covering of Ottoman History as the transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy and to the republic. Moreover, the topic of "Turks" included briefly in the 1913 program was expanded in the 1924 curriculum.

Beginning in 1924, first and foremost including the curriculums, a set of reforms were carried out concerning the “Teacher Schools” (Muallim Mektepleri). Since 1924 program, training the new generations of teachers with nationalist consciousness was accepted as the primary principle. In the 1924 dated Teacher School program, the time allocated for religion course was lowered from 6 hours to 2 hours. Furthermore, History of Islam and Ottoman Empire, which had been occupying a relatively large place in the old program, was replaced with Turkish History in the new program. This change in the Teacher School program was reflected also into the 1926 dated primary school program.

After the 1924 program which had been developed by the Committee of Scientists (Heyet-i İlmiye) was applied for a short period of time, a new program was put into practice in 1926. During the time of Mustafa Necati, a commission set up by the ministry analyzed the primary school programs of countries such as Russia, France, Germany, the USA, etc. and officially informed the Instruction and Education Department (Talim ve Terbiye Dairesi) of the Ministry of Education about the decisions they had taken. In accordance with the opinions of Instruction and Education Department, primary school inspectors and the teachers, the 1926 Primary School Program was developed and put into practice in 1926-1927 education and instruction year (Başar, 2004: 188).

In the Primary School Program dated 1926, the aims of the primary schools were specified as making students adapt their environments and raising them as good citizens. In the program, what was targeted via each course was also specified one by one. It was aimed with the History “to give information about the history of Turkish nation and to create national consciousness; by describing the lives and actions of great personalities, providing children with the models worth to follow. Likewise with the Geography course was it aimed “ to make the children like their homeland, to introduce the people from different places to each other, to teach the livelihood styles and needs of those people and to strengthen the connections and relations among them”; with the Country Knowledge course, “to raise goods citizens by making them adapt their land and nation”; and with Religion course, to teach the principles of Islamic Religion (such as “not interfering anybody’s religion and beliefs”, “Islamic religion’s prohibition of fanaticism”, “having superstitious and irrational beliefs is against Islam”, “worldly affairs is administered by laws”, “these affairs have nothing to do with religion”, “Islamic religion accepts the dominancy of reason and science in human affairs”, “as the Islamic religion does not belong to Arabs only, all nations should call Allah by their own languages; if they pray their thanksgivings in their own languages, it will be more effective”).

The target in 1926 program stated as “making the students adapt their country and nation” refers to the socialization function of the schools which the cadres of Republic had in their minds. In other words, this target meant making the individuals compatible with the concept of the new society which was desired to be constructed and making them accept the new norms and values of this political approach.

The aims of primary schools specified in the 1926 program were rearranged by the “Primary Schools Regulation” issued in 1926. Regulation

included detailed specifications related to the changes targeted in students' behaviours. According to the Regulation, "in education, Turkishness and Turkish country should constitute the main framework. Every opportunity should be used to promote and strengthen national sentiments. Turkish Revolution, what it provided and the enormous efforts exerted to reach it should be properly taught to the children."

Educational Approach and Policy in Turkey in the 1930s

In his 1931 dated circular note, Esat Bey who was the first education minister of the 1930s, announced that the primary target of each course should be to make children adapt the national life and transform them into citizens highly loyal to and useful for the Turkish nation and the Turkish Republic. In another circular of Esat Bey, it was stated that Turkish school has to make each Turkish child entrusted to its hands comprehend completely the psychology and ideology of the Turkish nation and the Turkish Republic and to transform the child into a highly useful Turkish citizen for the Turkish nation and the Turkish Republic (Akyüz, 1985: 308).

As presumed by the specified aims of the primary school programs and the regulations booklets, an oath which would be taken collectively at the primary schools every morning was written by the deputy of education minister Dr. Reşit Galip in 1932-1933. This oath's first content was as follows:

"I'm Turkish, honest and hardworking. My tenet is to protect the youngsters, to respect elders and to love my country and nation more than myself. My ideal is to advance and to progress. Let be my existence a gift to the Turkish existence."

According to the Primary School Curriculum dated 1936, primary schools would provide education in order to make the young generation adapt their vicinity and therefore to raise proper citizens, just like it had been stated in the preceding program. In the 1936 program, the first aim of the primary school was stated as follows:

(...) to raise the primary school children as vigorously republican, nationalist, statist, secularist, revolutionary citizens and to raise students who will take as a duty the inoculation of all of the citizens with the ideas that respect and make others respect Turkish nation, National Assembly, Turkish State.

In this period, religion courses and religious content were to a large extent removed away from the curriculum. In 1930s, national education policies in Turkey were shaped under the effects of the Turkish History Thesis and the studies on the Turkish language.

Pioneered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the studies on the Turkish history intensified by the establishment of the Turkish History Investigation Association in 1931 and the results obtained by the studies constituted the Turkish History Thesis. Within the framework of the Turkish History Thesis, history textbooks composed of 4 volumes were written in order to teach Turkish History in high schools between the years 1932 and 1934. Official history textbooks prepared for high school students have included all the Turkish states one by one established in

the history since the pre-historical periods. In those books, Turks are narrated by laudatory words as a unique nation which had established great civilizations and made enormous contributions to the development of the humanity. It is told that Turks spread to the whole globe from their motherland Middle Asia and brought with them the civilization to every place they migrated. It is also emphasized that Turkish language is one of the oldest and richest language in the world (Eskicumalı, 2003).

Besides the history textbooks, during the 1930s another 2 volume book named as “Civil Knowledge for the Citizen (1931)” were used; first volume of which had been written by Afet İnan under the effect of Atatürk’s ideas and indoctrinations and the second volume by Recep Peker.

In Turkish History Thesis, the main point was to provide Turks with self-confidence, to display the ancient character of their civilization and the continuity of it, and to emphasize the roots of them in Anatolia (Copeaux, 2002: 15). Karal does not only evaluate the Turkish History Thesis - which claims to explain the world and the Turkish history and includes ideas about the place and the role of Turks in the world history - as an interpretation of the past but also as a way of strengthening the national self-consciousness through the revelation of Turkish history and Turkish culture (Karal, 1975).

For Copeaux, Turkish History Thesis was required to address all sections of the society from children to adults and from experts to the common people. In this way all the people would be headed towards the same target. Hence a national consciousness would be developed and the nation would be responsible for the political system (Copeaux, 2002: 101).

Different from the Ottoman era, in the history books of this period, the history of pre-Islamic Turks also started to find room. Turks were depicted as a nation having ancient roots and carrying superior values. Their heroisms were praised and their civilization-creating skills and warrior traits were emphasized.

Language studies in 1930s were also important for the national education policies. It can be said that language studies were initiated with the legislation dated 1st November 1928 and numbered 1353, “Law on the Admission and Application of Turkish Letters”. On 12th July 1932, The Association for Turkish Language Research was established. The name of the association was changed as “Turkish Language Association” at the 3rd Turkish Language General Congress. From September 26 to October 6 in 1932, the First Turkish Language General Congress was held and the purification of Turkish Language by removing the Arabic and Persian words was argued. The Second Turkish Language General Congress was held on 18th-26th August 1934 where the Sun-Language Theory (claiming that all world languages had been originated from Turkish) was proposed.

At the 5th Grand General Congress of CHP (Republican People’s Party) held in 1939, a comprehensive education policy was proposed. If the principles of the education policy which would be carried out by Hasan Ali Yücel are evaluated, it can easily be seen that, during the late 1930s, the six arrows of

Kemalism symbolizing the six principles of it constituted the fundamental references of the national education system. The struggle against ignorance was going on. As the rates of schooling and literacy were not at the required levels, a search for a program that would educate more children and more citizens was also going on. The target of unearthing the entrepreneurial power of the citizen was being preserved. As a new policy topic, it was announced that a planning would be made for the development of professional-technical education. Accordingly, in 1940s, relatively important steps would be taken in the field of professional education.

At the end of 1930s, the economic and social crisis that got intensified under the effects of the Second World War was threatening the Establishment. This fact had reflections on the field of education as the strengthening of the link between the education and then dominant ideology and as a strong emphasis on moral education. In this context, the agenda of the First National Education Council held in 1939 included issues such as developing the moral education given at schools, improving the efficiency of mother language studies at all schools, and examining the methods and tools of history instruction in teaching of Turkism (MEB, 1973).

At the 2nd National Education Council in 1943, issues such as developments pertaining to primary education, improvement of moral education at schools, inclusion of measures into the program that would develop the principles of moral education at the primary schools, increasing the efficiency of mother language studies in all education institutions and taking measures to ensure the literacy of primary school graduates constituted the agenda (MEB, 1973). The Council clearly specified the aims of moral education and the qualities of ideal Turkish child. Raising teachers with high professional ethics, writing instructive books for teachers and establishing “Ethics Consultation Divisions” in large culture centres were among the primary activities of the Council (Ayas, 1948).

Finally the education problem of the peasantry should be mentioned. The main developments in republic period regarding the education of peasants were experienced in 1930s and the peasants’ education was taken as a part of the “peasantry question”. The main political aims of the Republic regarding the peasantry were to keep the peasant in their villages by making them adapt their environment, to keep them away from the political effects that were threatening the Establishment and to have their support for the regime’s fundamental framework.

It can be claimed that the 1929 World Economic Crisis and the Free Republic Party (Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası) experience, as opposite party were effective in the acceleration of the educational developments in the villages. While the crisis was shaking the Turkish Economy which was dependent on agricultural production, the way to make peasants more productive and to relieve the general social unrest by keeping the peasantry in its spatial and social context was considered to educate of the peasants better. The Free Republic Party experience had revealed the threat scale of the social unrest in the country.

On the one hand the role of education in the ideological reproduction processes was emphasized during the 1930s, on the other hand the failure not to take necessary steps regarding the peasants' education stimulated new efforts. The two most important attempts were the "Village Educator Courses" and the "Village Institutions".

Discussion and Result

After the dissolution of Ottoman Empire, the governing cadres who established the new state and shaped the new sovereignty acted upon the wish to build a modern nation within a nation-state and in this regard, the historical development of Western societies, particularly France, was taken as reference. Thus the governing cadres of the Republic accepted "innovation, modernization and catching up with the latest developments" identical to building a modern nation-state and to constructing a secular and homogeneous society sharing the same language, culture and faith. Therefore, while the efforts for reformation which had begun during the last years of Ottoman Empire were being radically carried out to build a secular nation-state, the reforms targeting the multidimensional development of education system had a particular significance and importance within these reform efforts.

During the single-party period of the Republic, education -in its relation to secularism- was being perceived as one of the main instrument of nation-construction in accordance with nationalism. Therefore, during this period main axis of the education reform was to remove the traditional and religious factors, organization and rules from the educational system to establish a systematic and unified administrative structure and to raise "good citizens" on the basis of Turkish nationalism through education programs. The desired citizens were expected to both adapt their social environments and respond to the expectations of the political system.

On the other hand, the debates on the relationship between education and economic development that can be traced back to the IInd Constitutional Monarchy period has found room in educational debates and political texts during the Republic era, and as it can also be observed in the basic principles human capital theory which would be formulated decades later, it was assumed that the productive capacities of the individuals can be improved via education which would lead to private and social welfare. Beyond providing individuals with productive competency and achieving economic development through education, it was also thought that mainly rural classes can be developed and enlightened via education.

Regarding the fact that positivist paradigm which the functionalist approach is based on brings into question to change the traditional social formation and to reconstruct it on the modern foundations through establishing social integrity and conformity, it can be claimed that in Turkish modernization process, a positivist reform program was tried to be carried out in social change and education issues both in the Union and Progress Party period of the late Ottoman era and in the following Republic period.

Considering the realization of the construction of a political structure in the form of a nation as a group of homogenous people who accepted the secular values; the act of inculcating people to make them accept their spatial positions and social realities; and finally the defence of the idea stating that there's a positive correlation between education and the development of individuals' and society's productive capacities, it can be put forward that the education approaches and policies of the single-party Republic period corresponds to a sort of functionalist approach.

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