

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD CONFERENCES  
AND POLITICAL TRANSITION:

1939-1960

Changing Perceptions of Schooling and Dialogue of Negotiations

By  
Sarah Carpenter Kılınç

Submitted to the Atatürk Institute of Modern History  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for a Masters of Arts Degree

Boğaziçi University  
2007

An abstract of the thesis of Sarah Carpenter Kılınç for the degree of Masters of Arts from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken June 2008

Title: The National Education Board Conferences and Political Transition: 1939-1960  
Changing Perceptions of Schooling and Dialogue of Negotiations

This thesis uses the published reports that represent the National Education Board Conferences (*Milli Eğitim Şuraları*) as a means of exploring both change and continuity in the national system of education during mainly the 1940's and 1950's specifically within the context of the political transition between the single-party and multi-party periods. Too often, these Conferences have been utilized as mirrors that simply reflect the most critical issues of education throughout Republican history, while this is an oversight. What this thesis proposes to do is, without assuming that the selected topics of discussion during the Conferences are the most central points of the time, to take a more critical approach towards the character of the Conferences and delve into the details of how the roles, functions, and perceptions of the Conferences evolved within two very dynamic decades. While the contextual portion of the thesis focuses on producing a framework surrounding the general educational developments from the birth of the Republic to the military intervention of 1960 and focusing on the push for a nationalistic system of schooling, the section aiming to be critical examines more specific aspects of the Board Conferences themselves. The following chapters will also briefly analyze the weight of the Board's advisory role to the Ministry of Education on issues of religion, technical schooling, the Village Institutes, and democracy in education. It will then be argued that while the Board's suggestions are generally reflected in governmental policy, there are significant cases in which the advice of the Board and laws and regulations do not correspond. Finally, this thesis will demonstrate that while the Conference reports contain a plethora of information that gives valuable insight into the growth of a nation, the entity itself that can and should be analyzed for not only outcomes, but for the behind-the-scenes perspective as well.

Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Yüksek Lisans derecesi için Sarah Carpenter Kılınç tarafından Haziran 2008'de teslim edilen tezin kısa özeti

Başlık: Milli Eğitim Şuraları ve Siyasi ve İntikallar: 1939 – 1960  
Eğitim Üzerinde Değişen Algılar ve Diyalog Müzakereler

Bu tez 1940 ve 1950'li yıllarda, özellikle tek partili sistemden çok partili sisteme geçiş dönemindeki milli eğitim sisteminin devamlılık ve değişikliğini incelemek amacıyla bu yıllar arasındaki Milli Eğitim Şuraları'nın raporlarını içermektedir. Bu şura Türk Cumhuriyet tarihindeki en kritik eğitim meselelerini yansıtan bir ayna gibi çok fazla kullanılıyor. Bu tez, şuralarda tartışılan konuların dönemin en önemli noktaları olduğunu varsaymadan, şuraların karakterine doğru daha eleştireci bir yaklaşımdan faydalanmak ve çok dinamik geçen yirmi yıl içerisinde, şuraların rolü, görevi ve algısının nasıl evrim geçirdiği detaylarını analiz etmeyi amaç olarak kabul ediyor. Tezin (contextual) bağlam kısmı Cumhuriyetin doğuşundan 1960 yılında gerçekleşen askeri darbeye kadar genel eğitim gelişmelerinin kapsamını oluşturmaya ve milliyetçiliğin eğitim sisteminin üzerindeki baskısına (push) odaklanıyor. Tezin diğer (yorum) kısmı Milli Eğitim Şuralarının daha spesifik içeriklerini incelemektedir. Tezin daha sonraki kısımlarında oluşturulan şuraların Milli Eğitim Bakanlığında eğitimdeki din, meslek okulları, köy enstitüleri ve eğitimdeki demokrasi kavramı konuları hakkında verilen önerileri ne kadar dikkate aldığına kısaca analiz edilecek. Daha sonra, genelde şuraların önerilerinin hükümetin politikalarında yansıtılmasına rağmen, bazen şuranın tavsiyeleriyle oluşturulan hukuklar arasında uyumsuzlukların olduğu tartışılacaktır. En sonunda, bu tez şuraların raporlarının içerisindeki bilgiler Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin gelişimine önemli bir perspektif katmıştır. Ama aynı zamanda şuraların kendileri sadece sonuçları için değil, perde-arkası bakışı için analiz edilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank Professor Ayşe Buğra for her immediate enthusiasm and support as well as her continued patience and faith in me. Without her ability to necessarily balance the need to challenge and to comfort, this thesis would not have been completed. I would also like to thank Professor Karaömerliođlu and Professor Köksal for their suggestions and encouragement.

I would also like to thank all my friends at the Institute who made me feel completely a part of this graduate experience and without whom, I would not have had nearly as positive of an experience at Bođaziçi University. Thank you to Necla Turunç, Kadriye Tamtekin and Leyla Kılıç for answering all of my many questions. I also owe great thanks to Özer and the staff of the Near East section for their help and kindness during the long hours at the library.

My family deserves thanks for both pushing me, encouraging me, and sometimes just listening to me through the ups and downs. I want especially to thank my brother Ross for his understanding of the time spent at the library instead of with him. I also owe a very special thanks to Oma and Opa for their patient willingness to not only edit my thesis but to ask questions and get involved in the whole process. That kind of love speaks louder than any words.

Finally, I owe the biggest thanks to my husband for the nights he sat awake with me when I was in a writing frenzy, the hours given up for this project taken from the little time we have to spend together, and for loving and respecting me for even embarking on this endeavor in the first place.

For Johanna and Ross

## CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

CHAPTERS

I. INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS	
Seventeenth National Education Board Conference.....	1
Theory of Education and National Development.....	5
Literature Review and Research Methodology.....	10
II. THE BIRTH OF A REPUBLIC AND NATIONAL EDUCATION	
Contextual Background: Foundation of the Republic.....	16
National Education Ideology.....	19
Political Reforms of the Twenties and Thirties.....	22
Educational Developments and Perceptions in Single-Party.....	25
Beginning of Organized Education Meetings and Conferences... ..	34
National Education Board Conferences.....	40
III. MULTI-PARTY POLITICS, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF FORMAL EDUCATION	
Emerging Educational Concerns During Multi-Party Era.....	48
Political Implications of Multi-Party Transformation.....	50
Party Stances on Education.....	57
Other Changes and Policies of 1940-50s Transition.....	64
IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD CONFERENCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLING	
Later Board Conferences and Points of Discussion.....	69
Practical Application and Transformation of Board Conferences during the 1950s.....	82
V. CONCLUDING REMARKS	
What are the National Education Board Conferences?.....	98
17 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Future Research.....	100
APPENDICES.....	104
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	112

## PREFACE

As a nation's education system generally reflects its goals and visions for development and the future, my intentions to enhance my own knowledge of Turkish state and society led me to be naturally inclined to this field. Education is an area where change can be implemented from the simplest and most basic level. This makes formal and informal schooling a shining realm of potential and source of hope, but it also means it can be a point from which control is easily lost and where identifying parties, individuals and institutions within the negotiations of that control and influence forms a nebulous process. In the fall of 2006 when I was trying to decide what specific aspect of the Turkish education system to focus my studies on, I was informed that coincidentally, for the first time in seven years, a nation-wide conference on education was being planned for that November. This was the seventeenth National Education Board Conference (*Milli Eđitim Őurası*),<sup>1</sup> an event that has been taking place every few years since its inception in 1939 with the participation of academics and researchers from public and private institutions, politicians, teachers, experts of the field, and sometimes foreign advisors among others. It is the event itself – several days of debate and discussion of previously announced topics pertaining to the schooling system – as well as the following media debate, and conversations with participants that inspired this project. After witnessing the extensive attention given to the conference and considering the significance of role of the conference in potentially making extensive changes in the national education system, I decided to make the education conferences my research focus.

---

<sup>1</sup> This term is generally referred to as 'Board conference' throughout the thesis, though occasionally in relation to quotes and other references, the word '*Őura*' is also used to indicate the same thing.

It would be quite an ambitious project to analyze the cumulative seventeen conferences that have taken place in the last eighty years in their entirety, so to allow for a more intensive and in-depth study, this thesis will encompass the review and discussion of just a few of the conferences that took place during a critical phase in Turkish modern history, purporting to bring to light both clefs and continuities between and within the conferences. The beginning chapter opens with a brief peek into the dialogue and technical details surrounding the most recent education conference of 2006, including input from two attendees of the event. The aim here is to provide a few pages which will hopefully provide insight into the positioning of these conferences within social and political boundaries, allowing the reader to more easily appreciate the historical context of the initial gatherings during the formation of the Republic of Turkey. This section is followed by a mention of theoretical foundations key to this project, as well as a brief literature review, segueing to a description of the niche that may be partially filled by the research done for this thesis.

Chapter Two provides a contextual framework, necessary for exploring the appropriate historical context in which the education conferences take place. Beginning with the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, moving through national development, and focusing in on specific growth in the field of education keeping in mind the national ideology of a new nation-state, this chapter concludes with a brief picture of how the concept of a National Education Board and ensuing conferences emerged. This section also gives a brief description of the first two conferences and their main subject matter and recommendations.

Early in Chapter Three, the reader is provided with a brief introduction to the major educational issues noticed during the forties and fifties. Then, the chapter continues with important historical context, focusing on the transformation of the country from a single-party to a multi-party political system. A discussion of the general changes in policy are included, followed by the ideologies and perspectives on education of the two major political parties of the period. The remainder of the chapter concentrates on a selection of social and economic factors that played key roles in the development of the Turkish Republic mid-century.

The Fourth Chapter focuses initially on the contents of the Board Conferences during the 40's and 50's with specific analysis of noteworthy points of procedure, debate, and decision-making. Next, begins a discussion regarding some of the practical applications taken from the Board's suggestions. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list or intensive analysis of the relationship between Board decisions and legal action, but rather present an overview of several critical points that should not go unnoticed. The last segment of the fourth chapter purports to explore internal transformations as well as to create a working understanding of the functions of the Board Conferences.

Finally, the concluding remarks in chapter five will try to recap the most significant points and summarize the main conclusions that can be drawn based on the presented research. Here, the goal is to create a working definition that can functionally answer the question, what are the National Education Board Conferences?

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

*All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.*

*- Aristotle*

The seventeenth conference of the National Education Board was held between the dates of November 13-17 2006, seven years after the previous conference, though according to regulations, it should occur once every four years. Around 850 people from various backgrounds both inside and outside the field of education were in attendance, being invited exclusively by the Ministry of Education and its administrative branch called the Training and Pedagogy Council (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu*). According to the board secretariat, 36 percent of participants were representing official-private institutions of the Ministry of Education, with 15 percent assumed customary members (though it is not disclosed clearly who this group encompasses), 36 percent members of the Ministry of Education, representatives from state and private institutions, 17 percent academicians, 11 percent from ‘civil society’ organizations, 11 percent from other public foundations, 6 percent local administrative representatives, and finally 4 percent foreign representatives.<sup>1</sup> A majority of the discussions are reported to have revolved around two central themes: ‘Inter-Level Transitions, Orientation and Examination’ and ‘Globalization and the Turkish National Education System in the EU Process’, as

---

<sup>1</sup> These statistics were taken from the Ministry of Education website: <http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/> See appendices for printed material.

determined by the Training and Pedagogy Council, in response to a preliminary committee study conducted nationally to gauge the most pressing current issues in education.

Overall however, the details of the conference, namely the discussions and decisions, seem to be overshadowed and clouded by the controversy and disagreement that appears to have shifted to the center of attention instead. One institution, the Board of Higher Education (*Yükseköğretim Kurulu*) was claimed to have walked out of the deliberations in protest to the politicized nature of the conference, within the first few days. According to one academic, Professor Ali Baykal<sup>2</sup>, this action was intended to make a jarring political statement against the current government in power, specifically the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) and its leaders, which simultaneously may be interpreted as the initiator of the nation-wide marches in support of nationalism and secularism that took place before the 2007 elections. There are a few particular venues for criticism repeatedly present in newspapers and participant interviews, which are key to understanding the context of this latest education conference.

The first point of criticism is the fact that despite the existence of a law requiring the conference to be held at least once every four years, exactly seven years later, the seventeenth gathering of the National Education Board was taking place. Even four years may strike one as perhaps a relatively lengthy time span in between conferences especially given the gravity of the subject matter (the intellectual, political, and social development of the future generations), the magnitude of those affected (nation-wide education system for a population well over 67 million in 2000), and the speed with

---

<sup>2</sup> Professor Ali Baykal is a professor in the Faculty of Education at Boğaziçi University and was among those invited by special request to present his research at the seventeenth Education Board Conference.

which changes are taking place in the world, and especially in Turkey. There is little available information related to the cause of such a severe delay.

Additionally, the complaint has been made, that in fact, the most imperative debates and pressing issues of education today were not even breached during the conferences, but instead minor and meticulous points were negotiated at the conference's main discussion tables, the coefficient (*katsayı*), for example. Professor Rıfat Okçabol<sup>3</sup> explained in a brief interview and in an unpublished essay that issues involving the lack of secular scholarship, domestic abuse, child abuse, or honor crimes were apparently totally overlooked in favor of smaller matters of technicality. Of course, dealing with these matters transcends the capabilities of only the field of education. They run into issues of social justice, human rights, political agendas and cultural codes. These are not things that can be solved during a one-week conference about education, but the fact that these major issues, which do in many ways involve responsibilities of formal schooling were not even addressed at the conference, is to some a bit disturbing.

Furthermore, the structure of the discussions appears to hinder the ease with which meaningful and substantial debate could take place. For example, during deliberations of the General Board (at different times smaller committees would break off for more specified topics and then come back to the large group setting for general comments) everyone was allowed to speak their opinions regarding any issue of concern despite the extent of its relevance. For example, if there were two hours set aside for conversation and thirty people wanted to make comments, each person would be allowed four minutes to speak until their time was up and the microphone was passed.

---

<sup>3</sup> Professor Rıfat Okçabol is a professor in the Faculty of Education at Boğaziçi University and was among those invited to attend the seventeenth Education Board Conference.

Symbolically, this principle is essential for ensuring the democratic nature of the conference, without showing favoritism or bias. Nevertheless, Baykal argues that practically speaking, this limited speaking interval in combination with the opportunity to speak on any subject may have resulted in many hours of disconnected, superficial verbatim that does not in any way contribute to the process of real revision and change.

Finally, as will be seen later with respect to earlier conferences, it is reasonable to defend that many people's expectations of these conferences, appear to completely disregard the fact that the Education Board is indeed derived from and answerable to a branch of the Ministry of Education. It is not a private or neutral institution that should be expected to prevent any hint of political agenda. Of course, the conference has been designed to try and encompass representatives from as many segments of society as possible, aiming to prevent one-sided opinions and limited perspectives. Still, there is a significant gap between the intrinsic nature of the formation of these conferences, and the portrayal of the roles and expectations, particularly in the media that has been a source of tension and distraction from the aims and objectives established for these meetings.

What appears to emerge from these debates surrounding the most recent National Education Board Conference is the miscommunication or at the very least, a lack of consensus regarding what exactly the goals of the conferences should be, the extent to which it is justifiably politicized, and how to go about revisions in structure and process. While a retrospective approach in analyzing these conferences in the past may certainly not provide all the answers, exploring these same questions within a historical context may at least provide suggestions, insight, and perhaps guidance to where the original nationalist ideals of the conferences were derived from and where they should be headed.

This thesis does not attempt to draw direct connections between previous and recent conferences, but simply hopes to provide a subtle reminder of the past for those planning the future.

### Theory of Education and National Development

The challenge of educational investment is the patience of waiting for the return of benefits of the long-term investment. Because schooling's intrinsic benefit is providing lessons and skills necessary for future generations of a nation, there are often limited short-term advantages. Thus, passing regulations and gaining support for learning programs are daunting tasks. But it is an investment that must not be overlooked. Today's society is obligated to empower students to recognize the mistakes and regrets of the current generation in order to move forward and be proponents for progress and development, providing hope for coming decades. In addition to the dominate viewpoint, which identifies the function of formal school as aiming to raise 'successful citizens, workers and participants in society', educating children is also the most fundamental way of passing on culture, tradition, history, and memory, as well as serving the spiritual needs of individuals. It is the continuation of these things that give meaning to people's lives.

### *Theories of Education and State*

Fundamental to this project, is an analysis of the relations between and within notions and realities of state, society, educational ideals, and formal schooling. In order to

begin an analysis of the ways in which discussions of education emerge and how they evolve, it is important to review several approaches to this type of subject matter.

One classic theory of education according to Fägerlind and Saha is the theory of human capital, which prioritizes economic gain, viewing investments in education as the force that can spur national growth and productivity based on the development of human knowledge. The skills and proper motivation of labor are provided by formal schooling, thus increasing labor productivity and overall economic improvement. The obvious criticisms of this approach focus around the neglect of a humanist factor. Viewing bodies as capital with the purpose of contributing to the greater collective may create “a docile and adaptive workforce which serves the needs of the power structure of the economy”. This model does not allow for transformation and evolution of society, and does not take into account external factors contained in the international arena.<sup>4</sup>

Another classic historical approach, the modernist perspective, also raises notable issues within state-education relationships. Acknowledging that education can be highly instrumental in the transformation of a traditional state into a modern one. Yet this approach, popular in the 1950's and 1960's, assumes a linear aspect in modernization and supposes there are pre-established steps through which all nations must pass to achieve true modernity, though whether there is even such a thing (that is, if anyone knows when modernity has been achieved) remains unclear. Also, the complexity of the processes of modernization is far underestimated, and modernists fail to accept the existence of

---

<sup>4</sup> Ingemar Fägerlind & Lawrence Saha. *Education and National Development* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983), p. 49.

“disjunctures and even conflicts, which occur through the uneven and inconsistent impacts of the transformation [to modernity].”<sup>5</sup>

The Neo-Marxist theory, which emerged in reaction to modernist perspectives, is most often evoked when discussing education’s place in the national development of a country as it additionally provides a social component. This view defends that societies with capitalist economies may certainly see growth thanks to educational investments, however, the general direction of progress and growth is generally in the best interests of those in power, and contributes to the perpetuation of social and economic inequalities rather than providing the opportunity to challenge them, which can also unintentionally maintain underdevelopment. For instance, the disjuncture between school and work may cause major social problems like unemployment in socialist countries. This theory brings post-colonial regions to the forefront, cautioning educational discourse to refocus discussions of schooling away from its Western setting.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, the liberalist view presents the notion of the state as being a whole, comprised of all its individual members, encouraging the autonomy of each citizen as well as acknowledging the state as an entity external to government bureaucracy. Expansion of the school system has been understood as one strategy for encouraging equality of opportunity and embodying citizen rights. According to Carlos Alberto Torres, educational systems have three primary functions respective to the liberal viewpoint: to provide cognitive and moral socialization, skills training, and certification.<sup>7</sup> Torres calls the combination of these a function of ‘allocation’, meaning education

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> Carlos Alberto Torres. *Democracy, Education, and Multiculturalism* (Oxford: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1998), p. 35.

should facilitate a fair method of distribution of national resources depending on reasonable competition. Compared to a functionalist approach, which neglects to explain the basis for widespread unequal opportunity, the liberal approach prioritizes fair provision of educational assets. Major complaints of liberalist thought consist of its inability to regulate the nature of and extent to which power is spread out along with opportunity. Torres asks rhetorically whether public education charged with the mandate to facilitate egalitarian social change can be an effective tool in the presence of established social hierarchies, economic structures, and interest groups.<sup>8</sup>

One complication that emerges with regard to this liberalist approach is transcending the assumption that the nature of state and political intent is indeed fair and equal distribution. However, this idealist notion seems to overlook the potential of educational systems to serve the interests of the elite and to maintain the status quo. For all developing nations, including Turkey, this is a critical point that is easily overshadowed by the glowing hope that any kind of educational program, investment or schooling necessarily contributes to social amelioration. One of the dangers of mass educational reconstruction and expansion is the tendency to oversimplify the relationship between public schooling and economic or social effects. Fägerlind and Saha concur that schooling does play a key role in the process of socialization of youth and “instill[s] in them a greater political awareness and recruit political elites” but they simultaneously warn, “other social institutions such as the family and the media perform the same task, and to some extent might do it more effectively.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, no single approach to an analysis of education, state, and society suffices alone, but an acknowledgment of the

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Fägerlind&Saha, p. 141.

complexity of these interrelations, and sensitivity to the number of factors that are involved in the negotiations between a student and teacher are indispensable.

Several other theoretical concepts and approaches also serve to contribute to the foundations of research in education within and between societies. For one, the issue of citizenship and rights has been a significant point of debate within greater discussions of education. The notion of the citizen – one with natural rights bestowed upon an individual at birth – is a key concept within discussions of modern state formation, not only because it is the fundamental unit by which political culture is constituted, but also because of its incredible power of exclusion. Samuel Kaplan explains that, “the meaning of citizenship has expanded from one based on territorially defined states to one including inter-societal interactions from which people organize and shape historical consciousness and identities.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, the social demand for widespread education is an act of claiming certain rights inherent within citizenship, bringing to the forefront the exclusive relationship between an individual and his/her state. In Turkey, he says, a priority of the state is using the school system to produce loyal citizens, justified by the fact that the education system is viewed as the institutional center for ensuring political morality and unity.<sup>11</sup>

Issues of identity also rise to the surface when exploring any social institution, specifically the negotiations between various identities: gender, age, social status, occupation and so on. Decisions regarding a national system of formal schooling are necessarily based on the social majority, striving to establish standards for the average student and coordinating efforts that will reach out to and positively affect the largest

---

<sup>10</sup> Sam Kaplan. *The Pedagogical State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 15-16.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

body of people possible. Nevertheless, policy decisions made on smaller levels and discussions involving widespread systematic changes cannot deny these segregating factors. Furthermore, several of these (age, occupation, status) are not fixed, but constantly changing both from person to person, and even within a single individual over time. Therefore, this must also be reflected in discourses of education. Sam Kaplan warns against the strength of national and communal unity overriding and even trying to erase heterogeneity in the classroom, by refusing to accept the plurality of citizenship and difference. Still, he is encouraged by the fact that regardless of how homogenized schooling may get,

consensus generates a gamut of contradictory and equivocal ideas among political elites and the public alike and is thus vulnerable to alternative perspectives about polity and education. Any serious examination of the politics of education requires attending to the historical mutability and flexibility of political ideas and pedagogical practices and to the power relations (i.e., accommodation, contestation, negotiation) operative in educational system.<sup>12</sup>

It is the acknowledgement of this perspective that makes the National Education Board Conferences a logical place of study; a primary source that is layered in both acceptances and contestations of the suggestions of state policy.

### Literature Review and Research Methodology

It is not difficult to find sources, both primary and secondary, that make mention of the National Education Board conferences. Nearly all books making an overview of the history, development, and growth of the Turkish education system include sections devoted to the subject matter of relevant gatherings. Of course, many of the sources available on the conferences are published directly through the Ministry of Education,

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. xvii.

making their perspectives and sources hardly objective or extensive. Yet, the approach used by many secondary sources related to mentioning information about the conference details utilizes the conferences as sources, which appear to intrinsically reflect the most relevant issues of the period. Generally these conferences are perceived as legitimate sources reflecting general socially critical issues, rather than as serving the purpose of select parties, genders, classes or country regions. The voice that often rings clear in the secondary sources is one that appears to be neutral and analyzing the education system from an objective eye. It is as if the fact that the equal representation of different groups and segments of society and sections within the schooling system (the notion of equal representation may not necessarily be accurate in itself) participating in the conference is enough to conclude that the decisions made and topics discussed are somehow equally unbiased. What is being overlooked here are details such as, whose voices are actually being heard; from where are the conference topics derived; what is (un)intentionally left out of the conference discussions; and who do the decisions benefit; how effective are the final reports on impending policies? In short, the conferences, their points of discussion, and reported recommendations are usually extracted from their historical context.

Ercan Türk's book on the Turkish Education System includes a section devoted to the education conferences, though it is based upon summary of topics discussed at each distinct assembly of the Board with the appropriate dates. In a section titled, "A General Evaluation of Turkish Education System within a Historical Perspective (*Türk Eğitim Sistemi Üzerine Tarihsel Süreç içinde Genel Bir Değerlendirme*) the conferences arise again, though this brief mentioning leaves the reader with the impression that the Education Board is a flawless advisory organ that provides recommendations for

government programs, without clearly elucidating details of its relations to the state, specifically the Ministry of Education. With this premise in mind, Türk's main assumption is that the proper course of action is to apply each recommendation within government programs, though the legitimacy of the Board is never brought into question.<sup>13</sup>

Şevket Gedikoğlu's book on Kemalist Education Reforms also perceives the Board conferences as an ideal institution, with authority to incite change within the National Education System. He suggests that the first Education Board successfully evaluated previous years' educational practices and policies and handled *all* problems of education, designed five year plans, and made appropriate suggestions in response to each issue.<sup>14</sup> Later discussions appear to use the review of a certain issue at the Board conference or a decision made by the Board as a legitimizing agent. It is as if the approval of the Board is automatically included in the appropriate steps of passing legislation into law.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, a significant challenge arose within the present research, when trying to examine the (in)consistency between Education Board decisions and legal or practical application. There is a very nebulous line between these two types of approval, and the two often appear to be used interchangeably. One author fails to clearly distinguish decisions about lengthening schools courses, writing, "at the Fourth Şura meeting there was a debate over the merits and demerits of the ministry's proposal to lengthen the school course, and in the end the Şura voted to accept this change. The most

---

<sup>13</sup> Ercan Türk. *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nda yapısal değişimler ve Türk Eğitim Sistemi* (Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım Ltd., 1999), p. 112-13.

<sup>14</sup> Şevket Gedikoğlu. *Kemalist Eğitim İlkeleri ve Uygulamalar* (İstanbul: Çadaş Yayınları, 1978), pg 90.

<sup>15</sup> An example of this sort of speech can be seen on page 108 in Gedikoğlu's book within his discussion of education institutes.

significant curriculum changes made at that time were...” and then concludes with a list of changes that were made during 1949.<sup>16</sup> What is unclear is what is meant by the word ‘change’. Here, it is as if the Board’s decision is assumed to indicate official application of the suggestion, though the following chapters will indicate that this is not always true.

One book, organized in combination of chronological and thematical structures and which can be considered to reflect extensive rather than intensive research, also reserves a page for mentioning the Board conferences. Yet, once again, the emphasis is on the fact that an advisory organ that allows space and time for debate on important issues is emphasized, whereas the question of ‘who’ and ‘with what authority’ is left completely out.<sup>17</sup>

The same criticism can be applied to the Ministry of Education’s own publications, as may be expected. At the beginning of a book entitled ‘*Milli Eğitim Şururları*’ published by the ministry, which serves as a useful compilation and summary of each and every Board conference that took place from the beginning in 1939, there is a single page introduction to the initial principles and organization of the conferences. Here, the emphasis is placed upon the purpose of the Board, “to ensure the improvement of the quality of education through its development, by serving as the highest advisory council to the Ministry.” Following, are details about how often the Board should gather, selected topics contained within the conference agenda, and even how Board decisions can become law. But there is once again, the missing information is identifiable as any indication of how to participate, who regulates this participation, how the reputation as

---

<sup>16</sup> Andreas Kazamias. *Education and the Quest for Modernity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 149.

<sup>17</sup> Yahya Akyüz. *Türk Eğitim Tarihi: Başlangıçtan 1993’e* (Istanbul: Kültür Koleji Yayınları 2, 1993), p. 347-48.

the highest advisory council is justifiable, and the details of inner-council hierarchy. While it is not fair to disregard the conference decisions and review processes as unjustified and lacking proper authority in their evaluations or decisions to impact progress and development of the Turkish system of education, it is an important critique to draw attention to such unquestioning perceptions of this institution.

The unique role of this thesis is, rather than looking specifically at the board conferences' external relationships with government policies or specific legal action, it will take a more internal approach and try to provide a more critical perspective when analyzing the education conferences, not only concentrating on their decisions, but looking more closely at the structure of the assemblies themselves. This thesis will concentrate on the period of 1939, the date of the first official National Education Board conference, through 1960 when a military intervention was carried out, serving as a historical marker indicating dramatic change including a complete change of government, a new Constitution, and a relatively immediate reversal of many political policies took place. Functioning to place this twenty-one year period in a larger historical framework, a large section of this thesis focuses on the early years of the Republic hoping to provide a more qualified analysis of the selected period.

There is a certain set of questions that have emerged as a result of this type of research on education. First of all, it appears that generally secondary sources that discuss these conferences often touch upon the main topics and place them in the center of discussion as a legitimated source of important subjects on education at the time. But no one appears to take a critical eye and examine the Board Conferences themselves as an instrument of policy. The research of this thesis, rather than take the legitimacy of the

Education Board for granted, examines what the conferences' roles were within the education and political system, and asks how they were run and how they fit into the historical context. Extracting several criticisms after exploring the contents in detail, comparing and contrasting the conferences with one another, and asking how the conferences' role changes as well as actually inspecting to a limited extent, the relationship between the Board decisions and the actual legal policy of the time are all pieces of this thesis. The conferences are so often viewed with a subjective eye without being placed into a framework of the appropriate time period, and assumed to be the dictating factor that laid the groundwork for all educational policy of the time. To what extent is this true or is this notion based mostly on assumptions and speculation? Also, are there changes within and between the Board Conferences themselves, in terms of reputation, power of influence, topics, attendees, procedure, or public image? Finally, what do these changes reflect about the context of the Republic and its transformation and development, and how does this help to formulate an idea of what the functions of the original Board Conferences were? It is the aim of this thesis to address all of these important points of question and provide insight to the greatest extent possible, in hope to shed some light on the origins and roots of this national phenomenon that has proved to be directly involved in the process of change in the Turkish Education System.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE BIRTH OF A REPUBLIC AND NATIONAL EDUCATION

*In times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.*

*- Eric Hoffer*

#### Contextual Background: Foundation of the Republic

The early decades of the twentieth century contain the stories of those who would be the first members of the newly forming Republic of Turkey, and these stories compiled, paint a vivid yet complex picture of how the Ottoman Empire fell and a nation-state was born. The conclusion of the First World War left the land of Anatolia and its people with their own defensive war against the Allied forces who were determined to divide and share the remains of the Ottoman territories. The famous day of May 19, 1919 is still celebrated today in Turkey, as “the opening of a new chapter in the history of Turkey”<sup>18</sup> and for marking the beginning of the revolt which would be remembered as the War of Independence.

The wake of these violent years left the remains of Anatolia in disarray, poverty, and exhaustion. Mustafa Kemal, the well-known military officer and future first president of the Republic of Turkey who is hailed for leading the people towards the foundation of their nation-state, called the first gathering of the self-declared Turkish Grand National Assembly (*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi*) [TBMM] on May 2, 1920 in Ankara to counter

---

<sup>18</sup> Kemal Karpat. *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 33.

the forces of the remaining final Ottoman Sultan Mehmed VI based in Istanbul, which was occupied by the Allies at the time. This can be understood as the birth of Turkish National Education. With the founding of the TBMM came the establishment of the Assembly's ministries, one of which would be the Ministry of Education (*Maarif Vekaleti*), with Rıza Nur appointed its first head minister.<sup>19</sup> This ministry was initially made up of four Directorates, a single Inspectorate, a seven-man Board of Curriculum Development, and a list of responsibilities and goals as determined by the first government's program, a few of which are as follows:

1. Forming education that is religious and nationalistic.
2. Training students to be creative, self-reliant and productive.
3. Emphasizing the importance of using scientific methods.
4. Creating texts that fit national spirit and historical character.
5. Most importantly, administer existing schools properly.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the importance of the first four aims, Minister Nur recognized that the war conditions would not allow any new projects, but rather the single focus initially was necessarily to maintain the school system.

The problems in education were countless in the early twenties. The usual burdens that accompany a war-ridden country such as large dips in population numbers, financial strain, and disorganization took their toll on all those involved in the field of education. A plethora of schools were forced to shut down for a number of reasons. The foremost of which being lack of funding, since such a large amount of money was reserved for the war efforts. Unpaid teacher salaries, deteriorating schools buildings in dire need of renovation, high student drop-out numbers, and ideological conflicts about the nature of education all played major roles in the gradual retrogression of schooling in

---

<sup>19</sup> İlhan Başgöz & Howard Wilson. *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 37.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 38.

Anatolia. The issue of ideological debate is of special interest as this was an issue that would not be ameliorated during the short term. As explained by Başgöz and Wilson, schools were “attacked from one side as being too traditional and from the other side as being too ‘godless’.”<sup>21</sup> This ‘religion versus secularism’ and ‘traditional versus democratic’ will become a persistent issue in discussions of the developing educational system as will be seen throughout this thesis.

With the official move of the government to Ankara, motivated by a desire to sever ties with the Istanbul-based Ottoman Sultan and Muslim Caliph as well as establishing a defensible base, in mid-October 1923, also came the declaration of the Republic of Turkey on the twenty-ninth of the same month as a political nation with Mustafa Kemal as President and İsmet Pasha (later known as İsmet İnönü) as the Prime Minister. This achievement marked the beginning of a period of reform as dictated by Mustafa Kemal’s government that would set the groundwork for the future of the country. A few days after the founding of the Republic the Minister of Education İsmail Safa Özler publicized his Goals of Education (*Maarif Misakı*):

1. To raise nationalist, populist, revolutionary, secularist Republican citizens
2. To teach everyone reading and writing actively through primary education.
3. To aid performance of the next generations generally scientifically, especially in economic life.
4. To replace the fear of punishment with a real teaching of morality of what is best for the nation and society.
5. Our general educational aim is to bring the Turkish civilization forward and create new generations who feel pride in being Turks.<sup>22</sup>

Within these five primary aims, we can begin to see the emergence of a nationalist ideology that would dominate the educational policy of the twenties and thirties.

---

<sup>21</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 39.

<sup>22</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 37.

### National Education Ideology

Within the nation-building project that had begun for the leaders of the nascent Republic, education was viewed as one of the primary ways to produce and disseminate the nationalist agenda, thus giving it a central position amidst political discussions. In order to fully sever ties with the remnants of past Ottoman glory and decline, Mustafa Kemal (generally known as Atatürk, meaning ‘father of the Turks’) and his followers were determined to solidify the nation by creating one identity, a single language, and collective memory of the past with a unified goal for the future. The means of accomplishing these goals, however, were debated.

According to Başgöz and Wilson, the very meaning of national education was unclear during the twenties. They mention a policy of ethnic integration, a system of cultural morals, and a road to democracy to counter the previous religious education philosophy.<sup>23</sup> Among the many opinions of how to adjust the educational system to the goals of the new nation, one person’s opinions and ideas are particularly remembered.

Ziya Gökalp, known as the father of Pan-Turkism, had a distinct view of education within his solidarist viewpoint. Gökalp believed “that the problem of education in a given society could not be solved as long as class differences were not eliminated and a sincere, far-reaching attempt made to secure equality, or at least equality of opportunity, among all members of the society.”<sup>24</sup> Social mobility was essential for a growing and developing nation. The uneducated were ‘wasted talent’ in his opinion. Building his ideas off of the theories of sociologist Emile Durkheim, Gökalp claimed there was a direct relationship between a person’s environment and his or her “level of

---

<sup>23</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

civilization”, thus giving great importance to each area of one’s environment, especially that of education.<sup>25</sup>

İsmail Kaplan’s also gives a thoughtful critique of the ideology of the national education project. He contextualizes the initial push for nationalism in education within the global war-period of the first half of the twentieth century:

From the very beginning the foremost task of education was declared to be national character formation in the new generations who should be strongly devoted to the Turkish state and ready to fight against all other nations and against all ‘foreign’ ideas and currents of thought. According to this ideology perpetual and deadly struggle of nations against each other was the main reality of the world and those nations who failed to inculcate in their children and youth the necessity of this struggle would lose the very right of existence. Therefore vigilance and fight against all currents of thought ‘which are not of us and for us’ was an absolute necessity, which should form the basis of educational policy. This nationalist ideology of education thus at first tried to reconcile nationalism with religion.<sup>26</sup>

It is this context of nationalist ideology that gives the Law of Unification of Instruction (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*) which was enacted in 1924, so much significance. The passing of this law placed all control of educational institutions under a centralized system of administration with the aim of unifying education under one authority. As a result, the religious *medrese*<sup>27</sup> were closed down, marking an important step for the secularists. Though initially religion can be seen as a fundamental characteristic of the nationalist agenda, it too began to be perceived as a threat to the unified feeling of the nation and needed to be minimized. Over 16,000 *medrese* students had been in attendance when each religious school was transitioned into elementary, middle and high schools

---

<sup>25</sup> Kaplan, S., p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> İsmail Kaplan. *The Ideology of National Education in Turkey and its Implications for Political Socialization*. (Ph.d diss., Boğaziçi University, 1998) p. 160.

<sup>27</sup> Medrese were schools for religious teaching established during Ottoman rule.

belonging to the state.<sup>28</sup> These state schools were called Pastor and Preacher Schools (*Imam ve Hatip Mektepleri*) but even these surviving schools were abolished by 1931.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, religion courses were even eliminated from the curricula of primary and secondary schools, though certain villages continued religion classes as an exception. Overall, these actions very clearly displayed how serious the government was planning to bring the nation into a future of secularism, though Secularism as a political ideology did not enter the national constitution until 1937.

Under the same law, there was strict action taken against foreign schools, especially with the fear that they were a guise for missionary activity. Schools that did not comply with the order to remove all religious material from the classroom (this included removing crosses and other religious paraphernalia from the school-buildings themselves) were forced to close down.<sup>30</sup> However, Mustafa Kemal tried to make it clear that it was not simply the ‘foreignness’ of schools that the government was against, but their intent was rather to counter the possible threat of anti-Turkish propaganda. In an interview with a foreign journalist he expresses this point:

Although we may be suspicious of religious propaganda in your schools, we would like to have them remain in the country. However, we cannot allow these schools to have privileges that our own schools in Turkey do not possess. Your institutions can continue their existence only as long as they are subject to the same laws and regulations governing the Turkish institutions of the same category.<sup>31</sup>

This was perhaps spoken with the stinging memory of the capitulations granted to Europeans in Ottoman Empire, and a bold statement that this former pattern would not continue. Another consequence of this law was the removal of Arabic and Persian from

---

<sup>28</sup> Akyüz, p. 285.

<sup>29</sup> Kazamias, p. 186.

<sup>30</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 80.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

secondary school curricula beginning in 1929.<sup>32</sup> All of these restrictions and control moves reflect the areas of education that were viewed as possible points of rebellion against the Republic and its direction towards future of strength and modern development.

### Political Reforms of the Twenties and Thirties

The abolition of the Muslim Caliphate was perhaps one of the most public and bold actions in the name of the nationalist cause, and it was followed by a series of reforms that form the core root of general discussion of the early Republican period. Yet, Mustafa Kemal and his party, the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*)<sup>33</sup> were not so naïve to think that they could rule with an authoritative hand without any justification or explanation for what was nearly a small revolution. It was decided that a legal process would provide much easier access of politicians to measures of social change, thus was born the Law on Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*).

The event spurring this law is known as the Kurdish Rebellion that took place in February 1925 as the culmination of Kurdish discontent with their lack of authority and autonomy in the growing Republic. Furthermore, the abolition of the Muslim Caliph and social policies like the prohibition of the Kurdish language in public made matters worse. The rebellion was easily suppressed but the emergence and passing of the Law of Maintenance of Order had a much more lasting effect. The power bestowed by this law allowed the government to “ban by administrative measure any organization or

---

<sup>32</sup> Kaplan, İ., p. 158.

<sup>33</sup> The RPP was officially founded in 1924 in reaction to the splitting of the original People's Party and the Progressive Republican Party, but the latter party was closed down in 1925.

publication it considered might cause disturbance to law and order.”<sup>34</sup> The real meaning of this law was the birth of a one-party political system, which enabled the string of reforms passed during the first decade of the Republic to go without much political or social opposition. This lasted until 1929 when the nation was already settling into the pattern set by the major changes made. A few of the significant changes include the following:

1925	Hat Law	-banning of traditional headgear such as the fez and veil
1926	Calendar	-begin using the Western clock and calendar
1928	Alphabet	-changing the Arabic script to the Latin alphabet
1931	History Society	-formed to research connections between the new Republic of Turkey and its Central Asian roots
1932	Language Society	-created to protect the ‘purity’ of the Turkish language
1934	Family Names	-begin using last names
1935	Holy Day	-changing the official day of rest from Friday to Sunday

Certainly for the field of education, the most attention-grabbing reform was the adoption of the Latin alphabet during 1928. Arabic was considered ‘too difficult and time-consuming’ and the sounds of the Turkish language were not always properly represented by Arabic script, so there were obvious difficulties. The decision to use Latin alphabet was also a blow to religious groups in Turkey since Arabic was the language of Islam and found in the Qu’ran. Teachers, government officials and many military officers stood strongly opposed to the alphabet reform, yet Atatürk, after concluding “that not much more than five percent of the total population could write in Arabic”, chose to focus on the long-term benefits the Latin alphabet could bring.<sup>35</sup> There was a national campaign led by Atatürk in the role of the grand ‘schoolmaster’. The timing of the reform was key as well. By the end of four months over 5000 teachers had learned and were teaching the

---

<sup>34</sup>Erik Zürcher. *Turkey: A Modern History*. (New York: IB Tauris & Co Ltd. 1993), p. 171.

<sup>35</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 85.

new script, starting a major literacy campaign. Atatürk traveled throughout the countryside, giving lessons in coffeehouses, open-air squares, Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), and newspapers/printed materials. Another key element was extreme public support and enthusiasm from the masses. “This general movement had profound impact on the mores of Turkey, and was both symbol and cause of the more rapid modernization of the Republic.”<sup>36</sup>

Yet, the bold and swift actions of Atatürk’s Republican People’s Party during the twenties certainly did not escape criticism. The combination of the extreme secularist policies of the RPP and the global economic depression occurring in the late twenties proved to leave the RPP without much choice but to find a way to buffer the complaints and criticisms of their political rivals and unhappy members of the civilian population. So, Atatürk decided it was time for the emergence of a second party, to be led by his close friend Fehti Okyar in 1930. This party was thought to be a ‘loyal opposition party’ with two aims: to act as an outlet for social and political discontent, as well as serve to motivate the existing RPP to reenergize and continue to move forward with their program.<sup>37</sup> Hence, the Free Republican Party was formed, representing the first significant step towards a multi-party system.<sup>38</sup> But the small success of the party in the 1930 local elections winning less than one-percent of the total 502 councils, was enough to intimidate the RPP and the party closed down the next month out of respect of the personal request of Atatürk.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 87.

<sup>37</sup> Zürcher, p. 178 and Başgöz & Wilson, p. 51.

<sup>38</sup> In 1924, the previously mentioned split of the People’s Party resulted in the formation of the Progressive Republican Party, but this was not endorsed by the RPP and was never even given a chance to participate in elections, thus it is not considered a ‘significant’ detail in the transition to multi-party politics.

<sup>39</sup> Zürcher, p. 178.

### Educational Developments and Perceptions in the Single Party Period

After the War of Independence, the mid- to late twenties saw a new kind of battle emerge; one of a social nature, that would encompass two main aims. This new fight purported to first, win the loyalty of the Anatolian people over the perceived ‘traitorous’ government of Istanbul led by the Sultan Second, it aimed to establish a system of education within a war-torn country haunted by illiteracy and ignorance.

#### *Economic Factors*

Başgöz and Wilson provide an account of financial difficulties in the area of education economics during the twenties. They explain that there were three main sources of financial support for the education system, including the central government’s budget, religious endowments, and school taxes (*mektep vergisi*) during the first decade of the Republic. Trying to negotiate these three resources to cover the expenses of the countrywide schooling was a job that consumed a majority of each education minister’s time. The religious schools (*medrese*) were supported by private religious endowments, leaving the public schools to rely on a balance between local and central provision. In terms of local assistance, income from agriculture served to fund the tithe tax (*aşar*), 2% of which went towards educational expenditures, but it was abandoned in 1925 after being exhausted due to the difficult ramifications of the War of Independence, in particular, the requirement of paying off a large portion of the Ottoman debt to the European Allied forces. The end of the tithe tax meant the start of a general sales tax as well as a separate school tax, which was collected provincially. This was also

problematic, however, since local populations with low population numbers could not afford these taxes either. For example, in 1935, of the 34,876 recorded villages, 26,817 of them had fewer than 400 people, which demonstrates that maintaining the costs of teachers' salaries and school buildings was too burdensome. Plus, there were complaints that the funds collected were often used for non-educational projects, causing stronger resistance from the local population. Though Education Minister Vehbi Bey tried to make fundamental alterations to the local school tax between 1923 and 1927, these changes were limited in their benefits. Furthermore, this period also saw an end to the private charity tendencies of the Ottoman period where private voluntary contributions of the wealthy were often enough to finance educational institutions, but with the end of religious education in schools came the end of most of these donations.<sup>40</sup>

In terms of support from the central budget, there is no consistency until the forties. Beginning with a minimal amount, .07% of the entire budget in 1921 is set aside for education, which increases to 6% in 1924. This is mostly due to adjustments made in local tax plans, when the central government began to assume certain expenses like that of teacher training schools and some high schools. It then falls again between 1924 and 1937, ending at 5%. This may be partially related to the worldwide depression in the late twenties that seriously affected Turkey as well. Turkey was still so reliant on agricultural production, so it too was hit hard by the drop in crop prices. The government's priorities were focuses more on provided financial support for the development of infrastructure such as railroads and the banking sector. The emergence of '*etatism*' in 1931 as an official state ideology, though not always clearly defined, practically, meant the focus of

---

<sup>40</sup> Başgöz & Wilson give a more detailed explanation of the tax reforms and budget distributions in their book on pages 95-98.

the state budget on taking over major projects that could not be supported by private business.<sup>41</sup> But education reentered the central budget with priority in 1948 when primary school teacher's salaries were finally transferred to the central budget from local administration offices, and the percentage allocated for education more than doubled, residing at 11%.<sup>42</sup> The general problem with the first decade of economic planning for the national education system, was that:

whether or not educational expenses were met by provincial or national budgets depended upon the economic power of the country as a whole. Whatever the government sought to do; it had to finance its operation by asking for sacrifices from the people, many of who were barely above the subsistence level. Because the country lacked sufficient capital investments in industry and commerce, taxes were levied not so much on industrial and corporate profits, as on the regular income of the average citizen.<sup>43</sup>

The first few decades of the developing Republic of Turkey represent a period where extremely minimal stability and limited organized administrating was a reality to which people were forced to adjust. Because there were few clear foundations from which to build from, trying to work through the establishment of a functional budgeting system was sometimes a matter of guess-and-test, knowing change had to be made, but without having available or feasible solutions at hand.

### *Foreign Experts*

The visit of American educational philosopher and Columbia Teacher's College Professor John Dewey to Turkey in 1924 marked the beginning of a steady inflow of foreign advisors to the ministry of education. Between the years of 1924 and 1957, over

---

<sup>41</sup> Zürcher, p. 197.

<sup>42</sup> Akyüz, p. 347.

<sup>43</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 97.

fifteen experts from a variety of countries were invited to Turkey to focus on the general education system or sometimes one or a few particular aspects. Gedikoğlu points out that despite the importance given to these education advisors' suggestions along side the Science Councils, this says nothing of the actual real-life application of them. With the wishes of Atatürk, they were all closely tied to the local advisors and researchers, not for one to be given preference over another.<sup>44</sup>

John Dewey, both the first visiting advisor and perhaps the most well-known, stayed for two months and wrote two reports on improvements that could be made in the general system of education. Considering these two reports, one of their most poignant recommendations emphasizes the importance of adapting the school system to local conditions and contexts. While Dewey did not necessarily discourage the building of a national education, he tried to demonstrate how the success of education is directly related to how well the students can relate and become involved in the educational setting. Because Turkey's regional differences were so expansive, it would be extremely difficult to design a single program of education that would apply to all Turkey's people. This notion can be seen in the development of the village institutes until their formal and legal foundation in 1940. Other of Dewey's themes included teacher training and funding, schools as community centers, health and hygiene, school discipline and the restructuring of the general education administration.

The other foreign advisors who can be seen in Turkey during the twenties, thirties, and fifties, cover a multitude of subjects and come from a variety of different

---

<sup>44</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 40-41.

countries, though over half are American. Below is a brief summary of the experts and related information.<sup>45</sup>

<b>Year Invited</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Subject of Given Report</b>
1924	Prof. John Dewey	USA	General Education System (2 reports)
1925	Kühne	Germany	Technical Education
1927	Omer Buyse	Belgium	Technical Education
1932	Prof. Albert Malche	Sweden	Universities
1934	Mis Parker	USA	General Education System, emphasis primary education
1933-34	a group of experts	USA	General education system
1933-52	Prof. Philippe Schwartz	Germany	Universities
1951	Prof. W. Dickermann	USA	Adult Education
1951	K.V.Wofford	USA	Village schools
1952	Prof. John Ruff	USA	Middle School Education
1952-53	E. Tompkins	USA	Middle School Education
1952-53	Prof. L. Beals	USA	Guiding at schools
1953	Prof. R.J. Maaske	USA	Teacher Training
1955-56	Dr. E.S. Gorvine	USA	Technical Education
1957	group of experts	USA	Commerce Education

While the suggestions of the foreign experts are generally acknowledged as logical and clever, they are equally criticized for being idealist and unrealistic. That is, due to their external perspectives, it was difficult to contextualize the system of education within the historical conditions of the political and economic environments. For example, pointing out that teachers' salaries are too low and must be paid in a timelier manner is quite simple, but finding the financial means to carry out this endeavor was the real challenge, and something the researchers were not invited to investigate.<sup>46</sup> The interest in the opinions of so many education researchers from around the world is notable mostly for its reflection of the global perspective of educational leaders, especially during a time when the national ideology was so strongly pushed towards expansion and development. Though the application of many of the advice reports were not put into practice

---

<sup>45</sup> Akyüz, pg 355.

<sup>46</sup> Fay Kirby. *Türkiye'de Köy Enstitüleri*. (Ankara: Rüzgarlı Matbaa, 1962), p. 34.

immediately, certainly the act of reviewing and critiquing the national education system is admirable and may have laid the groundwork for later reforms and programs.

The first several foreign experts during the twenties and thirties seemed to agree on several consistent problems with education which can be summarized as a major lack of funding, high rates of illiteracy, teacher and school shortages, and the need for a new theoretical basis for teaching. Though the combination seemed a looming challenge, producing solutions to these general issues within the post-war period never seemed out of reach as “victory in the face of almost insurmountable obstacles instilled hope and confidence where there had been none. The nation now believed that all difficulties could be overcome.”<sup>47</sup> Two of the most influential programs that were established to address these weaknesses of the educational system are People’s Houses and Village Institutes.

### *People’s Houses*

The development of adult education is a theme that permeates nearly every text on education in the single-party era. It was not enough to merely educate children, as this was a long-term investment. But the short term solution to a post-war population left with only a fraction of the earlier period’s intellectual class and facing a daunting project of nation-rebuilding was reaching out directly to the older generations as well, to both offer training in professional fields and perhaps more importantly to provide cultural and educational centers from which support could be rallied for the ruling government and their policies and reforms. The idea of educating adults through the establishment of community centers was considered by the 1931 Congress of the RPP, but only after the concept had been circulating within party discussion for several years.

---

<sup>47</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 55.

From the period of the Young Turks before the official founding of the Republic of Turkey, there had been a movement established called the Turkish Hearths (*Türk Ocakları*), which partially fulfilled this need. The Turkish Hearths' purpose can be summarized as trying "to spread nationalist, positivist and secularist ideas in the country through lectures, courses and exhibitions."<sup>48</sup> But the hearth movement was 'tainted' with a sentiment for the early years of the twentieth century, and it was decided that a fresh new movement would be necessary, designed and organized by the government to ensure that there was loyal support for the ruling party and that the exact objectives contained in the RPP program would be supported. An agreement was reached to close down the Turkish Hearths and the People's Houses (*Halk Evleri*) were born. Beginning in 1932, rapid construction of People's Houses can be seen – though many centers were erected in the previous locations reserved for the Turkish Hearths – and by 1945, 437 Houses and 2,688 Rooms (smaller versions found in towns and villages) were up and running.<sup>49</sup>

People's Houses housed nine main activity categories:

- a) study of language and literature
- b) cultivation of fine arts
- c) theatricals
- d) sports
- e) social welfare
- f) publication of pamphlets, journals and books
- g) aid to rural villages
- h) study of local and national history
- i) development of museum collections

Of all these foci, perhaps the most impressive was the amount of publication that took place in the People's Houses. They were a place for the centralized distribution of journals and periodicals as well as a starting opportunity for young writers to publish

---

<sup>48</sup> Zürcher, p. 180.

<sup>49</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 152.

their work, especially due to their occasional provision of scholarships. The Houses were quite liberal in their participants, not acting exclusive to any particular section of society. They were created to serve as a meeting place between the Turkish elite and the uneducated masses by appealing to subjects appropriate for all. However, the extent of their success from a class standpoint is questionable.<sup>50</sup>

The main point of controversy regarding these cultural centers can be found in their political affiliations. While their aims were not intrinsically political in nature, their formation and continuation was based on mutual support for the Republican People's Party and much of the People's Houses income was derived from the state budget. According to Karaömerlioğlu the People's Houses were founded as "propaganda organs of the regime."<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Gedikoğlu claims that towards their last years they "became places for experimentation and preparation for future politicians since the people's houses ministers were to be Parliamentarians."<sup>52</sup> This close relationship between government officials and public servants (teachers and administrators especially) with the People's Houses is clear, though they were still considered non-political institutions by nature.

However, with the changing winds in politics during the end of the forties, the support dwindled, and by 1951, they were closed down by the Democrat Party (DP) due to their close ties with RPP. The Democrat Party, founded in 1946 by old members of the RPP as a welcome opposition party, won 62 of the 465 Assembly seats, which helped to

---

<sup>50</sup> There is a useful discussion of details regarding the People's Houses in Başgöz & Wilson's book pages 152-158.

<sup>51</sup> Asım Karaömerlioğlu, "Elite Perceptions of Land Reform in Early Republican Turkey." *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 27 No.3 (April 2000), p. 116.

<sup>52</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 115-16.

establish and stabilize the party within the political context of the late forties.<sup>53</sup> As their strength and popularity grew, rather than shut them down, İnönü and other leaders of the RPP decided that the value of a multi-party political system was too valuable and allowed the party to remain. Much to the RPP's surprise and disdain, the 1950 election brought the DP to the majority side, which began a swift set of changes in policies, mostly purporting to sever remaining ties with the RPP, which is was inspired such deliberate action against the People's Houses. The DP charged the People's Houses with being centers of RPP propaganda and sympathy, and pointed out that the Directors were little more than Republic trainees for the Grand National Assembly. Despite the general falseness of these accusations which were merely gross exaggerations of the support provided by the RPP government, the closing down of the Houses by the Democrats also meant the confiscation of their property in its entirety.<sup>54</sup> Gedikoğlu suggests that

with the coming of the multi-party period, the People's Houses should have been saved and new suggestions, which would have encouraged the continuation of the Houses as educational and cultural centers (which reflects their foundational aims) should have been made. But a road leading to these changes was not even embarked upon. With an operational arrangement suitable for the election system, the People's Houses could not be saved from being organizations tied to the party, or from the thought that this was true.<sup>55</sup>

This, perhaps, is the most controversial issue that comes to mind when remembering the years of the People's Houses.

### *Emergence of the Village Institutes*

---

<sup>53</sup> Zürcher, p. 212.

<sup>54</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 158.

<sup>55</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 115-16.

The reforms and changes in policy that took place during the twenties and early thirties were generally focused within urban centers in an attempt to reach the largest number of people. But the demography of Turkey at the time meant that while concentrations of people could be found in cities and towns, a majority of Turks were still living in disbursed villages across the countryside of Anatolia. According to Erik Zürcher, during the forties, the percentage of the population living in villages is approximated at 80 percent.<sup>56</sup> Reaching this segment of society posed a new challenge that needed to be addressed.

Karaömerlioğlu's article on Village Institutes in Turkey is formulated around a notion of peasantist ideology, which was the perception during the 1930's that the urban reforms and development of city-centers was leading towards superficiality, immorality, and a decrease in quality of life.<sup>57</sup> A peasant's life, on the other hand, was the representation of the heart and mind of true Turkey. The Turkish village and villager became romanticized and were perceived as embodying limitless potential in serving as the labor and moral backbone of the nation. With this in mind, the government was also facing a crisis in village education:

The students were taught neither practical nor managerial skills but instead received an education that only enabled them to replace the older, less qualified bureaucracy. Within this context of an education at odds with the daily necessities of the economic life, the only option for these graduates was to be employed in the governmental institutions... This bizarre situation seems to have created a vicious circle that produced an idle and unproductive workforce.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Zürcher, p. 206.

<sup>57</sup> Asım Karaömerlioğlu. "The Village Institutes Experience in Turkey." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No.1 (May 1998), p. 47-73.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p. 54.

The combination of this type of difficulty with the minimal contribution of the People's Houses village aid projects proved that the implementation of some new solution was inevitable. The thirties demonstrate experiments in village education strategies. In 1936, for example, there was an attempt to use young men serving their mandatory military duty as teachers in villages all over the country. Later in the same year, two village teacher training institutions were opened in two of Turkey's larger villages: İzmire Kızılcıllu and Eskişehir Çifteler.<sup>59</sup> Finally, the following year brought the birth of the Village Institutes as they are most commonly remembered.

Though foreign reports published as early as the mid-twenties (like Dewey and Kuhne's) include suggestions for a similar sort of rural education strategy, timing played a significant role in the decision to delve into this new sort of project. The twenties and early thirties were tied up with the new regime's attempt to stabilize its power. Only beginning in the mid-thirties was the RPP available to explore more 'creative' options for encouraging social development across the nation. The implementation of the project took place under the leadership of İsmail Tonguç, the Director of Primary Education appointed in 1935, who is generally credited with being the driving force behind the institutes. Partially inspired by the 1939 National Education Board Conference and foreign advisory recommendations, Tonguç's contributions to the formation and continuation of Village Institutes are indubitable.<sup>60</sup>

1940 brought with it the passing of the Village Institute Law 3803 in April, officially commencing the project of widespread rural education. Education Minister Hasan Ali Yücel and Education Director İsmail TONUÇ both played major roles in the

---

<sup>59</sup> Akyüz, p. 339.

<sup>60</sup> Fatma Gök. *75 Yılda Eğitim*. (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1999), p. 324-25.

passing of the law and development of the village institute system. In terms of curriculum, part of the philosophy of the village institutes was not only teaching reading and writing like urban schools but also including a more ‘hands-on’, practical, and applied combination of skills. In comparison to the previous village education style and instructors, “now, the teachers who themselves are villagers, who will only be useful to villages, who rather than pens and books, carry shovels, hoes, wire-cutters, or axes in their calloused hands, must be trained.”<sup>61</sup> This radical change in teaching philosophy was certainly not without criticism, however. Further discussion of the diminishment and final closing of the Village Institute project can be found in later chapters.

### Beginning of Organized Education Meetings and Conferences

#### *Education Congress*

The initial landmark that catalyzed the pattern of nation-wide educational gatherings, is the Educational Congress (*Maarif Kongresi*) held in Ankara, occurring on July 15, 1921. With over 250 male and female teachers in attendance, and held by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk himself, this meeting of educators from all over the country served a more symbolic purpose than practical one. The three main topics discussed during the conference include mainly primary and secondary education programs, as well as teacher training in villages. Due to arising conflicts during the continuing fight against the Allied forces, however, the meeting itself was cut short and few real decisions were agreed upon. Still, there were two very important aspects of this Congress that should not be overlooked. Firstly, this kind of gathering in the name of education set a precedence that emphasized the necessity of an organized gathering with the goal of calling educators

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

and administrators nation-wide to collectively discuss and debate issues related to the development of a national education system. The impact of this type of conference on the future of education will be seen in the following pages. Secondly, Atatürk's decision to invite both men and women to convene together in such an important social-political context, proved to be a point of contention in later questions of how to run such event.<sup>62</sup> This issue of gender discrepancy was especially vital during a period when of the 2,861 schoolteachers in 39 provinces only 477 were female.<sup>63</sup>

### *Science Councils*

Two years after the Educational Congress, at the same time that the Lausanne Conference<sup>64</sup> was concluding, the first Science Council (*Heyet-i İlmiye*) was held in July and August of 1923 in anticipation of a chance to formulate a whole new organized national system of education that was in synch with the needs of the developing Republic. As can be inferred from the title, these conferences held by the Ministry of Education were committed to scientific approaches rooted in research. They also display some interesting discussions about the roles of society members in the creation and carrying out of educational policies and programs. The opening speech of the first Science Council by Minister of Education, İsmail Safa Özler is written below:

Until today, especially since 1908, many venerable people have been seen working to give a real direction to the needs of our education. There is nothing lacking in the value and fortune of their undertakings. However, all undertakings taking place after them are continuously changing ways

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p. 279-80.

<sup>63</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 39.

<sup>64</sup> The Lausanne Conference began in November 1922 between the Ankara government represented by İsmet Pasha and the Allied forces, after Turkey finally succeeding in driving out the last Allied forces from their land, thus ending the war. Yet, the relief of the war's end and the celebration of the military's success was quickly replaced with the gradual realization of how severely wounded Anatolia was left, and how much work lay ahead for its population. For more detail, see Kemal Karpat, 1959.

and directions like a small river, and started to dry-up and disappear. Every new person seems to want to leave the old ways behind, and work in a new area with a new format. The fact that our educational institutions are so connected to individuals' work is the most significant reason that they are not definitive and established, and their remaining without support has caused today's dry and dismal view. The day I entered the ministry, I saw danger and illness at this point. Therefore, there was a need for scientific and positive decisions to be made by the collective of the nation's experts, thinkers, and educational and social scientists. It would have been impossible to carry out anything true and lasting without these kinds of decisions. The Minister of Education would not have had this authority anyway. In my opinion, the Ministry of Education is nothing other than a vehicle through which the decision and opinions of great minds and thinkers of the nation can be applied. Ministers will change but your decisions and established program should not change, and as new decisions are made, they should be applied in just the same manner.<sup>65</sup>

This strong statement draws some very clear lines between the roles of educators, researchers and thinkers as producers of useful decisions and plans to support the education project, and the politicians who put them into law. Özler wants to be clear in his opinion that it would be quite dangerous for the Republic to remain under the authority of people rather than offices. He warns his listeners to ensure that the real drivers of change in the nation, specifically in the field of education, must be the people, not the politicians. As far as content is concerned, the basic topics, according to Akyüz, discussed at this first meeting are as follows:

- primary education years' increase from five to six;
- classroom size in primary school not exceeding 30 or 40 students depending on the grade level
- denial of permission for students to attend foreign schools during the mandatory years of primary education study
- regional boarding schools for small villages
- using the same criteria for choosing religion class teachers as teachers of the other subjects
- changing the high school name 'Sultani' to 'lise'

---

<sup>65</sup> Akyüz, p. 348.

These topics all reflect a clear agenda of the central government during this period, and their viewpoint that education was a valuable tool that would serve as a means by which to spread their ideology surrounding the nationalist future of the Republic of Turkey and to create a patriotic and loyal society. Of the participants in the council, Ziya Gökalp is perhaps one of the most well known.<sup>66</sup>

The second Science Council was held the next year in April 1924 under the direction of Education Minister Vasif Çınar. The undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, education directors, several university professors, high school and girls and boys teaching school directors were all present.<sup>67</sup> The themes of this second meeting are also fairly technical in subject matter, focusing on curriculum, time spans, and texts, though there is no mention of village schools this time around:

- Primary school shift from 6 to 5 years in length again
- secondary school 3 years middle, 3 years high school (rather than a combined 7)
- teacher training schools from 4 to 5 years with curriculum changes
- developing the girls' high schools to become full classes like the boys' schools
- addition of social studies to middle school, high school, and teacher college curriculum
- developing the instructional program of primary schools
- printing of appropriate texts for primary school children

There were individual commissions responsible for preparing reports that would be appropriate for the general debate of the whole Science Council, and many of the decisions established by the council members, were put into practice.<sup>68</sup>

The third Science Council took place from late December 1925 until early January 1926. Mustafa Necati, the Minister of Education at the time, presided over the

---

<sup>66</sup> Ziya Gökalp had his own unique role in the development of the Turkish national education and will be discussed further in the later section on 'National Education'.

<sup>67</sup> T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 'Milli Eğitim Şuraları 1939-1996' (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1998), p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 10.

council meeting, which covered a plethora of topics and came to the following conclusions:

- using the state and provincial allocated budgets which were separated from the National Education Organization, in a more beneficial way
- expanding the school system to allow for acceptance of all students who apply
- reorganization of high schools and opening and increasing the number of strong high schools in particularly central areas
- strengthening and increasing the number of teacher training schools and other vocational schools in popular areas
- putting into practice mixed-gender instruction in non-boarding middle schools
- establishing the main principles of the pedagogic formation that will be given to apprenticing teachers
- founding the Training and Pedagogy Council (*Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu*) to address issues of instruction and discipline

This final decision was perhaps the most substantial in changing the future of not just the educational system itself, but the way discussions of education would be carried out in the future.

### *Training and Pedagogy Council*

April 3, 1926 the founding of the Training and Pedagogy Council resulted in numerous changes in management strategies. The Science Councils were ended as the responsibility of educational analysis was transferred to this new council. In 1933, Law Number 2287 stated that the Training and Pedagogy Council would be charged with establishing the National Education Board Conferences as the principle advisory organ to the Ministry of Education. With this law, regulations, notices, programs and principles suggested by the members of the Board and prepared within the Training and Pedagogy Council would become legal only if endorsed by the Nation Education Minister. Additionally, according to the same law, the Board must meet once every three years.

However, though the first board conference was planned to be held in 1936, for various reasons it did not take place, and instead the first meeting was held in 1939.<sup>69</sup>

### National Education Board Conferences

#### *Organization Details*

The National Education Board is the Ministry of Education's highest advisory body. By aiming to provide thoughtful and useful suggestions that may serve as a basis for new laws and amendments, the purpose of the board is to agree on decisions after exploring topics related to education and instruction. The outcome of these Board Conferences would ideally be developing and increasing the quality of the Turkish National Education System.

The Board conferences are guided by particular work principles and by-laws. Each conference has provided direction for working to organize the education system and renew particular aspects when necessary. Board members and conference participants compose quite an eclectic group including teachers, educators, scientists, area experts, and education ministry officials, while the other participants are made up of members of various public and private foundations, institutions, unions, associations and other ministers.<sup>70</sup> Certain members of the board are assumed from the beginning such as the Education Minister who presides over the whole conference, and university rectors, and Training and Pedagogy Council members for example. The others are selected by the existing board and are exclusively invited to attend. Thus, each year the conference participants vary. Documents that record the board decisions and comments have, since

---

<sup>69</sup> MEB, 1998, p. 19.

<sup>70</sup> Türk, p. 94.

1939 at the first conference, been compiled and incorporated into the Communications Journal (*Tebliğler Dergisi*) and is made public. Sponsored by the Training and Pedagogy Council, the National Education Board Conference minutes are documented by a TPC secretariat and following publications are printed on behalf of the TPC and Ministry of Education.

As the focus of this thesis narrows upon the changes and transformation of these national conferences during the multi-party transitional fourteen years, the following coverage of the first two meetings will be concise with minimal commentary. The later four conferences and an analysis of all of them will be presented in more detail in the next chapters.

#### *The First National Education Board Conference, July 1939*

On July 17, 1939, the very first national education board conference, which would last for twelve days, was opened with a speech by then Head Minister of Education, Hasan Ali Yücel. This initial meeting was organized in a large group format for the commencement of the conference. Selections from Yücel's speech are included below:

Thinking about the issues related to national education, listening to and consulting of those individuals who have gained fame through their knowledge and experience in cultural life is a method of considerably supporting our Republican Government. Still in the years of the National Struggle, in the most dismal period when foreign lands were shaking the close horizons of our central government, the Honorable Grand Atatürk opened the Educational Congress himself, and with this gave a historic signal towards the vital importance of discussion and debate regarding the issues of culture.

Friends, I feel the need to draw your attention to a critical point. It is my belief that in order for national education in its entirety to be an ideal institution, education must be handled in a way that ensures that each internal part is related to and appropriate for the others...Middle school teachers are saying that the students coming from elementary education

are weak in their academics. High school teachers have the same complaints. University and higher education institutions insist that incoming students are behind in one area or another...How must we establish a stable system of instruction so that each piece may run in harmony with the others?<sup>71</sup>

As is reflected by the speech above, the first conference – also the longest lasting conference since its inception – took a very general approach, covering nearly every aspect of education thinkable. According to one author, not a single consequent conference resulted in so many new and revolutionary viewpoints and ideas.<sup>72</sup>

The next four days were spent separately, as members of each of the eight commissions met to discuss and debate their topics. The eight commission titles are comprised of the following:

- 1) Plan commission
- 2) Primary School commission
- 3) Middle School commission
- 4) Commerce Schools/Boys Art and Construction Professional Schools/Girls Institutes commission
- 5) University and Higher Education Commission
- 6) Publication Commission
- 7) Physical Education/Wellness Commission
- 8) Wishes Commission

On the sixth day, all groups met together to share their progress, focusing on higher education. The seventh day was again spent as individual commissions, with the eighth day devoted to higher education, physical education, and publication and the remaining days, a good mix of the remaining commissions. According to the education ministry's own publication on the conferences, the conclusion of the first meeting of the board meant five concrete decisions:

- 1) To change village schools from three levels to five.

---

<sup>71</sup> MEB (1998), p. 20-21.

<sup>72</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 91.

- 2) To accept the suggestions to separate school classes in the morning, and teacher-supervised free and group activities, which are required at the high school level and optional in middle schools, into afternoons.
- 3) To prepare a middle school plan that is formed around the needs of individual regions
- 4) To examine the regulations and instruction programs of Boys' Technical, Girls' Technical, and Commerce Teaching Institutions
- 5) To connect higher education schools and faculties to the Ministry of Education

One of the most important decisions brought to the board's table during this conference is claimed to be regarding textbooks. It was decided that a single, state-approved textbook system would be the standard for school curriculum.<sup>73</sup> Also one of the most important people in attendance was İ. Hakkı Tonguç, who would in the following months, play a significant role in the establishment of the Village Institute Project.

Overall, this first national conference on the Turkish education system appeared to be a clear success. Minister Yücel had only words of praise to conclude the work of the board:

This scholarly work method, has given this High Council the possibility of accomplishing in a few days what normally could not be handled in a few months, and in a way suitable to the needs of our society. Within the efforts of this High Council, what has made me feel the most fortunate and elated, is that all of these professionals in these commission roles never once saw any other's occupation as less important, consistently acknowledging that the meticulous examination of each and every duty was necessary and useful, refusing to neglect a single point, and never sparing a single selfish moment when trying to comprehend each and every trial... The decisions made each day by this High Council has left a satisfying impact on even the farthest corners of the nation. This, what you have accomplished here, is the most tangible signal of how tightly this county is bound to its real needs.<sup>74</sup>

This first conference's success was as symbolic as it was practical. Establishing a precedent that would provide a place for a cross-section of members of society directly related to education to exchange ideas, to debate proposals, and submit decisions, is

---

<sup>73</sup> MEB (1998), p. 21.

<sup>74</sup> MEB, (1939) p. 487.

meaningful in its intent to engage in open dialogue about contemporary issues. While there is no obvious rule against participation of the public, it appears that these conferences are exclusive to invitees, a fact that will be revisited later. Unfortunately, despite the positive energy and momentum of the success of this initial conference, the break-out of the second world war forced the government to reprioritize its duties and focus on the ensuing global events rather than focus too closely on application of all the board's recommendations.

#### *The Second National Education Board Conference, February 1943*

The 1943 board conference pales in comparison to the first. Lasting only six days – exactly half the time devoted in 1939 – there were only three primary commissions with not nearly as many participants. Perhaps the wide breadth of subject matter and suggestions/decisions made three years earlier at the first conference is the reason for a more compact version in 1943. Size aside, the topics that comprise this conference are also more specific and seem to build on the basic debates of the previous occasion. The three foci that dominate the conversations here are morality, language, and history.

Regarding morality, it was deemed important to establish the principles of Turkish morality, separate the steps that will be taken to establish these principles according to the type of school (technical, regular etc.), tie these steps to a clear and organized program, examine the middle school sociology and ethics classes, to ensure that higher education youth are tied to moral principles, examine the issue of the desire for inspecting the extracurricular activities. The Turkish language commissions covered three main points: determining the steps for increasing the efficacy of instruction of

writing in Turkish, designating the ways to ease agreement on the spelling of language in official publications, and understanding the priority of spreading the use of new terms in higher education. Finally, subjects related to history, include establishing the critical points in science and pedagogical means for preparing history books for primary and middle schools, and clarifying the ways to improve high school history books.

After six days of discussion and debate, eleven central decisions were agreed upon:

- 1) increasing the efficacy of native language study in all educational institutions
- 2) agreeing that the history curriculum of primary and middle schools are not currently suitable for each grade level
- 3) writing separate books for vocational and technical schools
- 4) adding historical anecdotes to books
- 5) focusing on giving National History
- 6) appointing history teaching duties in middle and high school to only graduates of history studies
- 7) agreeing that the suggestion to put art history classes within the high school curriculum is a suitable one
- 8) accepting the aim for moral education
- 9) accepting the Ideal Turkish child
- 10) accepting the primary social and personal reforms for Turkish Morality
- 11) accepting the report that clarifies the steps needed for moral education in and outside of our schools

These decisions reflect the continuation of the importance giving to a national education ideology and the determination to utilize education as a means of legitimizing the Republic of Turkey as its own, unique, and independent nation-state. Also, the themes of morality ring familiar, remembering the transformation of the late Ottoman Period during the Hamidian Regime. According to Benjamin Fortna,

the moral instruction initiative represented an attempt to inject Islamic content through modern means and modes of organization...The moralizing agenda of the educational project was, moreover, the logical extension of the Hamidian reaction to what were perceived to be the

deleterious effects of foreign educational encroachment on the empire's youth.<sup>75</sup>

During the first two decades of the Republic, the dramatic reforms and cultural revolution had to be carefully planned and carried out, always establishing a justifiable and legitimate cause for each action taken. Perhaps it was only after the 1940's when the RPP felt confident in their position of power, that morality could be discussed within the educational conference, especially since Fortna suggests that moral instruction has underlying notions of religious guidance, and this accusation would have been too risky early on. In terms of the latter concern about foreign influence, due to the global pressures of World War II bearing down on Turkey in the early forties, and the anticipation of much closer political and economic intimacy with other nations, the United States and European countries especially, perhaps wanting to establish a systematized moral code of standards for the national education system was one way of trying to balance out potential incoming attempts at 'Westernization' or strong foreign pressures.

---

<sup>75</sup> Benjamin Fortna. *Imperial Classroom*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 203.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MULTI-PARTY POLITICS, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF FORMAL EDUCATION

*Education therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.*

*- John Dewey*

#### Emerging Educational Concerns During the Multi-Party Era

After twenty-three years of being ruled by a single party – the Republican People’s Party – the population of the Turkish Republic was ready for a change; a change that would mean more liberal policies, increased voting power, a fresh set of ideologies, and that would set a precedent for multi-party governance. However, it also meant that with regards to the 1950 election, which ended in a landslide victory for the opposing Democrat Party who won 53.4% of the vote, perhaps the result was more due to a desire to see the RPP removed from power, rather than a genuine support for the opposing party platforms. Some, like Erik Zürcher, even say that the party programs were not decidedly distinct. Nevertheless, symbolically it was an enormous step for Turkish politics. The ability of the nation’s citizenship to engage in a free and open election is a memory that did and will continue to serve as an unforgettable example for the future.

During the critical time period leading up to the 1950 election (including the 1946 election where the DP first entered Parliament as the opposition party), a particular set of educational issues surfaced and formed the focus of policy-making and academic

dialogue. The first of these was vocational and technical educational institutions, which received a noticeable increase in attention during the multi-party era. The numbers of these schools, teachers, and students increased very rapidly in the early 1950's, and an emphasis on practical and applied experiences developed, though the late fifties meant a shift towards a more state-integrated and centralized vocational schooling system. Specifically, under this category falls the Village Institutes, which have often attracted the attention of researchers and scholars for the critical role they played, not only in the process of educational development or contributions to new teaching methods, but also for how they reflect social and political opinions of the era, specifically regarding the village-urban population dichotomy and furthering of nationalist sentiment.

Religious education is another theme that consistently arises in historical discourse of the forties and fifties. From the beginning of the Republic, religion has been a sensitive issue that was and continues to be constantly negotiated within and among the secular goals and democratic principles of the Republic's founders. With the movement of the DP into power, its leaders are said to have "used appeals to Islamic sentiments, especially during election campaigns", though in reality, there is no real evidence that the DP government truly attempted to incorporate Islam into the political system.<sup>76</sup> There was an increase in availability of religious schooling in higher education, and Minister-Preacher Schools (*Imam-Hatip Okulları*) were reopened during the fifties too. But whether the relaxing of restrictions of DP policies in favor of Islam ever truly marginalized or endangered the principle of secularism is not at all clear.

Finally, the role of democracy in education became a popular topic during the fifties. On the one hand, the discussion of how to spread democratic ideals by

---

<sup>76</sup> Zürcher, p. 232.

incorporating democratic principles into the national school system was a common one. However, putting strict curriculum goals and written promises aside, it is also important to examine how these ideals were upheld and also violated during this decade.

Nevertheless, before engaging in negotiations about specific educational policies and transitions, it is equally as critical to illustrate the conditions of the sphere of politics in order to appreciate the friction, challenges, and successes in the field of education during such a momentous era in Turkish history.

#### Political Implications of Multi-Party Transformation

This election and the first half of the following decade reflect a dramatic change from using the term democracy as an ideological goal and philosophy, to a functional practice in politics. Adnan Menderes, the prime minister who led the nation through the fifties, is credited with incorporating democracy into the Turkish political system by “integration of the rural masses into national political and economic life through democratic processes...[bringing] Turkey’s ‘silent majority’ into the political process and made them a significant force in shaping public policies.”<sup>77</sup> Yet, the trends beginning in 1956, with the ramifications of the DP’s short-term economic policies, the questionable interpretations of constitutional and democratic ideals, and the deteriorating relationship between the DP and the military, catalyzed the start of a paranoia (justified or not) in some social spheres that viewed each action of the DP as a potential threat to Turkish democracy and secularism. “Turkish intellectuals at the time – and later – saw [the

---

<sup>77</sup> Sabri Sayarı, in Heper and Sayarı’s *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002), p. 80-81.

relaxation of secularist policies under the DP] as a resurgence of Islam.”<sup>78</sup> It is perhaps this fear that led to the military intervention of 1960. This decade represents incredible accomplishments as well as devastating losses for Turkey, and for better or worse, has served as an important lesson to future politicians as well as Turkish society as a whole.

With the close of the Second World War, the government of Turkey was feeling the need to acquiesce to strong international and domestic pressure to establish a more formal democratic republic, and move away from its authoritative tendencies. The signing of the United Nations charter in San Francisco signified Turkey’s commitment to democratic ideals and Prime Minister İsmet İnönü realized that the formation and development of new parties was inevitable. In this way, in 1945-46 parties such as the National Development party and the Democratic Party came into existence.<sup>79</sup> Of Turkey’s joining of the UN, Menderes is said to have “expressed the view that, by signing the charter, Turkey was committing itself to full democracy.”<sup>80</sup> The DP quickly became the leading opposition party and yet its rapid popular growth and steadily growing tensions with the RPP set the stage for its memorable victory at the 1950 elections.

### *Party Perspectives*

Due to the nature of a single-party system in the first decades of the Republic, the RPP retained power easily since no other feasible options were permitted to evolve. The RPP believed that in order to carry out such dramatic reforms and establish a unified

---

<sup>78</sup> Zürcher, p. 234.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 220-221.

<sup>80</sup> Metin Heper & Jacob Landau. *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*. (London, NY: IB Tauris & Co Ltd., 1991), p. 120.

Republic, it would take a heavy hand, thus explaining their policy: for the people in spite of the people.<sup>81</sup> They believed that there was a difference between pleasing and serving the people, and that despite short-term discomforts, long-term gains were to be prioritized. Furthermore, the RPP suffered from a lack of true political legitimacy since they had never come to power in response to public mandate (and especially after being tarnished by accusations of dishonest election procedure). The RPP experienced a constant struggle to justify its claim to power after being overshadowed by the ‘chosen’ DP. According to Feroz Ahmad, the RPP’s biggest mistake during the 1950’s was its failure to “eradicate its authoritarian image and win public confidence.”<sup>82</sup> Ahmad presents the opinion that if the RPP had focused on presenting a solid and stable program, rather than limiting its efforts to slandering the opposition party, perhaps with a new identity or approach and a fresh reputation, it would have been able to claim more of a legitimate position in multi-party politics, and may have been able to step in for the DP and smooth over tensions before events accelerated into a military intervention.

The RPP did, however, have the advantage of a substantial legacy in its favor, including the “material legacy of Atatürk.”<sup>83</sup> This was no small advantage, but included land, money, close bank relationships, and though non-material possibly the most significant of all, a claim to be the supporters and representatives of Atatürk himself. Its authoritarian tendencies were seemingly forgiven as “the monopolization of power [was] brought about by practical necessity rather than by ideological imperative.”<sup>84</sup> Additionally, there was a strong preference for a slow and steady transformation that

---

<sup>81</sup> Gök, “halk için, gerekirse halka rağmen,” p. 6.

<sup>82</sup> Ahmad, Feroz. *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977), p. 57.

<sup>83</sup> Zürcher, p. 233.

<sup>84</sup> Ergün Özbudun. *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey*. (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Association, 1988), p. 63.

would occur under intense supervision and control, in an attempt to allow time for adjustment from the old institutions to the new ones without undermining existing class structures and social hierarchy.<sup>85</sup> This is an important contrast to the philosophies of the DP.

The Democrat Party, was in favor of a rapid and bold democratization process. Its assumption was that “once the country had gained sufficient momentum they would be able to eliminate errors and iron out the problems.”<sup>86</sup> The DP planned its strategies around the aim to please those with significant electoral potential, and the desire to achieve effective short-term results. The DP, during the late forties while campaigning for the 1950 elections, presented a program emphasizing the liberalization of the political system, with aims to ensure a direct path towards stable democracy. However, with each coming year, the policies of the DP moved further away from the protection of democracy and secularism and closer towards the protection of the DP government against the increasing aggressions of the RPP. Geyikdağı mentions as an example, the increasing suppression of the press as voices critical of the DP grew louder and claims that “antidemocratic measures were taken against the RPP” when the Commission of Investigation (*Tahkikat Komisyonu*) was established in order to “examine the subversive activities of the RPP.”<sup>87</sup>

One of the DP’s key political strategies was the use of the notion of ‘national will’. This concept was used over and over by Menderes and the DP in order to claim legitimacy for actions they would portray as demands of the people rather than the specific agenda of a single political party. The success of this strategy was gaining favor

---

<sup>85</sup> Ahmad, p. 40.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Geyikoğlu, p. 80.

of the peasant masses to represent the ‘national will’ thus often alienating the elite who was in the majority and who was quick to shift their loyalties away from the DP as the proliferation of anti-democratic and unconstitutional policies began to increase. It is a reality, however, that while mutual exclusivity is not the answer, there was a great need for the government not only to represent the vocal bureaucratic class, but also to incorporate and encourage the rural population as well. The DP “was fast mobilizing into political activity those previously on the periphery of Turkish politics... The party appealed to small proprietors, landless peasants, and the new industrial workers.”<sup>88</sup> This is a clearly significant accomplishment of the DP, yet it can be easily perceived that it was done for the promotion of DP self-interest, rather than for the good of Turkish democracy.

In comparison to the RPP, who enjoyed a sort of monopoly of the power that comes from being descendants of Atatürk’s political lines, DP leader Menderes emphasized the importance of not only acknowledging and protecting the goals and objectives recognized within the legacy left by Atatürk, but these achievements must be allowed to change and develop, reflecting the dynamic nature of progress and history. In short, he purported that the destination is more important than the journey; as long as the ideologies of Atatürk remained unchanged, the strategies and methods through which these ideologies may be manifested must be permitted to go in new directions.<sup>89</sup>

### *Party Dynamics*

---

<sup>88</sup> C.H. Dodd. “The Development of Turkish Democracy”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19 (No 1, 1992), p. 19-20.

<sup>89</sup> Ahmad, p. 42.

While it is completely usual to discover competitive political philosophies and policies between majority and minority parties, what is most significant and impressionable about the Menderes Era is the interaction between the RPP and the DP. It is the inter-party conflict and bitter competition and mistrust that contributed greatly to the downfall of democracy during this period. A central point here was “the DP’s seeing criticism as a questioning of their legitimacy, rather than of their programs and performance.”<sup>90</sup> Though it may be true that the DP had a skewed perspective about the function of the RPP, there are certainly numerous claims that support the fact that indeed, the RPP was more interested in removing the DP from power, than performing its function as a loyal opposition party.

Since there was no real precedent for multi-party politics in Turkey before 1946, this new political structure mandated fresh notions of party identity and function. For the first time, the RPP found itself in the role of the opposition party and the DP was facing the responsibility of governing a nation after only a short history in existence. Thus, there were many tensions between the two parties left in the wake of the rise of the DP. Even from the beginning, when Menderes presented his party’s program to the Assembly in 1946, rather than follow the proper steps of formally critiquing the proposals, the meeting resulted in a walk out by the Republican Party.<sup>91</sup> According to Feroz Ahmad, one probable cause for inter-party tension was the DP’s fear of institutional loyalty (including the media and military) to the RPP despite the election statistics, which clearly supported the DP. Although party tensions appeared extreme, continuous and unresolved, Menderes used the notion of a common enemy to keep his own party united when behind the

---

<sup>90</sup> Heper & Landau, p. 127.

<sup>91</sup> Ahmad, p. 36.

scenes, the internal party conflicts and instability may have exceeded those of inter-party relations.

The DP realized that by coming into power after the RPP, it would be following in some large footsteps. Yet, winning big in the elections created significant momentum and an energy of political revolution. This atmosphere may have had a dramatic effect on the DP's perspective of the responsibilities and obligations of the opposition party. Using the justification of 'national will', the DP felt it was their responsibility to end the influence of the RPP entirely, and this self-revering attitude may have caused the DP to take extreme measures, dismissing the normal precautionary measures essential to a democracy, like political checks and balances.<sup>92</sup> The DP expected their opposition party to step down and stay quiet, and to support the new government. When İnönü remained sternly critical, resistant, and in the public eye, Menderes grew restless as did his supporters.

In 1955, the dissidents in the DP decided to form the Freedom Party since it saw no other way of combating the momentum of Menderes' increasing political power. However, when even the new opposition party could not force reason into Menderes by means of their opposition program, nearly all hope was lost, and "1956 went down as the year of Turkey's retreat from democracy, when the ruling party destroyed democratic institutions" as written in the 1956 publication of *The Economist*.<sup>93</sup> The next four years would slowly reveal the true nature and impending ramifications of the DP's policies. The year 1956 served as the turning point in the momentum of support for Menderes and

---

<sup>92</sup> See Feroz Ahmad for more of a discussion on the progression of DP and RPP tensions, pages 56-57.

<sup>93</sup> *The Economist*, 14 July 1956 reference in Ahmad's *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, page 55.

the DP, and just as fast as their power and popularity grew, both would deteriorate until the military intervention of 1960 when the party would be completely dissolved.

### Party Stances on Education

#### *Republican People's Party*

Under Atatürk's rule during the first fifteen years of the new Republic until his death in 1938, education was guided by the principles established to ensure the development of a national education ideology. Initially the development of a widespread firmly founded primary school system that was compulsory and free, was the focus of discussions of education. Over time, programs to encourage professional and technical school growth as well as higher education emerged too. The ideological emphasis was centered upon scientific methods and hoped to benefit from both foreign and local experts in the field. Art, culture, and foreign language classes began to be credited with reflecting a measure of educational development and the place of religion in schools was slowly faded almost completely out.

The early years of reform during the establishment of both a national education system and the Ministry of Education itself were not without tensions and criticisms. There were clear expectations and pressures on government officials to provide support for teachers and administrators but on a very limited budget and scarce resources. There were especially major conflicts between local officials of education (city councils), teachers associations, and even education ministers themselves. City Council members were mainly criticized for using school tax funds for purposes other than education and

for causing the delays in the payments of teachers' salaries.<sup>94</sup> In general, it was felt that little support was being given by community leaders towards the national education project. This, in turn, may have been one of the fomenters of an exceedingly centralized school system and perhaps, despite strong criticism by many education experts of this tendency for a single authority, why ministry officials were so reluctant to create a more dispersed organization.

However, with the advent of experiments in multi-party politics beginning in the forties, the RPP realized the necessity of making alterations in their policies to defend their power base and to remain in favor with the public. The forties mark a noticeable shift in new perspectives and strategies that enter the RPP education program especially focusing on religious, international, democratic, and higher education. The death of Atatürk in 1938 made İsmet İnönü the national president with RPP leader Refik Saydam at his side as prime minister. In the government program of 1939, Saydam explains that the government's first priorities for education were, "bringing up Turkish children who are moral, clean, stable in spirit and physical health, and loyal to their nation, country, Republic and reforms." He then promises to "quickly increase the speed provided by history and language reforms, to the birth of national spirit and its strengthening."<sup>95</sup> These goals still clearly bear the mark of nationalist tendencies and demonstrate the prioritization of students as being formed to the needs of the state rather than for personal improvement.

The government program of 1942 states, "our universities, high schools, and all the young Turks comprising them are preparing for major breakthroughs towards ideals

---

<sup>94</sup> Başgöz & Wilson, p. 102.

<sup>95</sup> İsmail Arar. *Hükümet Programları (1920-1965)*. (Istanbul: Tipo Neşriyat ve Basımevi, 1968), p. 127.

with increases in instruments and bits of knowledge daily. Therefore, we have decided to share in their excitement and work much harder together with them. As the Village Institutes are still young, our villages and villagers have just now begun to see the benefits of these projects. These 200,000-300,000 Turkish youth are preparing to walk along a single path towards the same goals.”<sup>96</sup> This shift towards an emphasis on secondary and higher education should be noted. While the Village Institute Project was designed mainly as a solution to failings in primary education, this program also seems to hint at their long-term benefits, perhaps, with the hope of expanding beyond primary schools, into continued educational opportunities. Finally, the statement concerning a single path and similar goals supports the opinion of later critics of the institutes. While a certain unity was necessary for their success, it was exactly this emphasis on excessive uniformity and obedience that has been interpreted as a backlashing ramification that led to an uncreative and yet undeniable collectivity. This topic is elaborated upon in the Village Institute section of the next chapter.

The 1943 program focuses on the financial issue regarding educational investment and the increasing number of schools built in the previous years, while the 1946 programs returns to the village institute theme.

Regarding construction of the village schools, the system to use the labor of the villagers will continue. However, funding for the small supplies (window glass, nails etc.) will be supplied for by the state. The ploughing, sowing, and harvest seasons will be undisturbed and left uninterrupted for villagers to work. The project of incorporating villages with no schools into the education system will be connected with a detailed implementation plan on behalf of the ministry, to be completed in ten years, which will be parallel and harmonious with teacher training activities.<sup>97</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, p. 146.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. 181.

The mentioning of the introduction of state funding support subtly provides a government reaction to the growing pressure on and popular discontent of the reliance on villager labor and money to continue the village institute project. This point is also expanded in the next chapter.

According to Ali Ata Yiğit, the goals for primary education remain fairly straightforward and consistent until 1948. This year's government program, however, reflects a sudden vagueness that seems to reinforce the need for support of public schools, but without really indicating how that support would be given and what the real objectives for education the party had prioritized.<sup>98</sup> One possibility for this haziness is that it reflects the same indecisive behavior that was taking place in the Parliament as the strength of the Democrat Party and its policies was growing, making a clear plan for future policies difficult to be compromised with.

The largest change that can be seen from within RPP policies is its slow distancing of the Village Institute Project from themselves and from the milieu of Kemalist ideology in the last years before 1950. Instead, the RPP began struggling to form a system more like the classic one, searching for concessions, and ending sections of projects already underway. For example, the 1947-48 academic year saw the closing of instructors' courses, and the village institute project and regulations were changed in ways that according to Gedikoğlu reflect a "retroactive manner".<sup>99</sup>

### *Democrat Party*

---

<sup>98</sup> Ali Atat Yiğit, *İnönü Dönemi Eğitim ve Kültür Politikası*. (Istanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları A.Ş., 1992), p. 59.

<sup>99</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 108.

Regarding education, the Democrats' initial campaigning shows similar viewpoints to those of the RPP. That is, the success of education was reliant upon the ability to facilitate scientific and modern knowledge in the school system, but according to İsmail Kaplan, the Democrats also tried to emphasize a 'humanistic' component.<sup>100</sup> This perspective incorporated the notion that in the formula of instruction and learning, there are real people involved who have subjectivities, individual ideas and external influences outside of the classroom; designing and implementing a national education system could not be based on statistics and hypothetical outcomes alone. Kaplan explains that this particular notion was significant in introducing universal values, human rights for example. Because of this, a more realistic approach would be more practical than one based on ideals. It is perhaps this belief that led the way for the liberalization of higher education regulations and extension of university autonomy.

In terms of other general themes regarding the DP's stance on education, Gedikoğlu provides an insightful summary of several interesting statements that can be noticed throughout DP programs:

- a) Regardless of how advanced the financial situation is, a society that does not rely on the unshaken principles of nation and morality, and does not leave room for spiritual worth, in the difficult conditions of today's mixed up world, faces terrible consequences that will come sweeping in.
- b) A completely democratic spirit and according to the latest scientific results, in a wide and detailed plan that will be established, we request that the plan for a law that will ensure that the blessings of education will be spread equally to all areas of the country, will receive high approval as soon as the preparations have been made.
- c) An attempt to ensure that primary school teachers have high qualifications and receive training from a systematic style training base.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Kaplan, İ., p. 198.

<sup>101</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 121.

These, in the words of the DP members themselves (Gedikoglu explains these are repeated phrases found in DP platform pieces), introduce several new concepts as central themes of the Turkish educational system: *democracy* and *spirit*. Referring back to the ‘humanistic’ element Kaplan attributes to the DP’s education ideology, this notion of tying education in with the spiritual needs of a society and individual seem to reflect a goal of intertwining aspects of religion back into the learning and growing process. The Democrat Party strategically utilized the issue of religion in education as a sensitive one that could enhance the distancing between themselves and the RPP, and by doing so, create favor and support for their party. By allowing religious classes and schools to be opened, and generally supporting the increasingly significant role of religion in education, the Democrats were able to incur their own set of reforms which, despite certain criticisms, also provided a refreshing change that was perhaps more inviting for its status as an alternative, rather than for the consequences of the changes themselves.

As far as new steps and developments are concerned, the DP’s policies appear to focus more on reversing RPP projects and influence by shutting certain programs down – like the People’s Houses and Village Institutes – and in their places, resorting to a more traditional style of education that sought out education’s short-term benefits. “The validity of the processes of memorization and information transfer was staunchly defended. Generally, education was not adopted as means of investment...[instead] this period can be perceived as one without planning, organization (in field of education) and without considering education a personal strength.”<sup>102</sup> Indeed, the overall decrease in the percentage of the state budget used for education in comparison to the vast increase in population during the fifties, demonstrates this point.

---

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p. 144.

The government programs announced by the Democrat Party during the fifties also provide some informative messages reflecting goals of the Democrat Party for the national school system. The first Adnan Menderes government program speech gives no information about the future of the education system in Turkey. It is not until his second speech in 1951 that the DP plan for the education system becomes evident. He recites a list of aims that the new party in power was promising to put into practice:

- a) to direct all primary, secondary and higher education institutions in a way that will ensure harmony and cooperation between them
- b) to found courses and school branches in necessary regions in order to satisfy the need for technical education, which is the key to progress in agriculture and road building.
- c) to prioritize the needs of Eastern provinces and other regions that lag behind, regarding the construction of village schools and to remove the [labor] requirements on peasants
- d) to plan the establishment of a university in eastern Turkey, and to give supreme importance to the character, personal and spiritual development according to scientific and pedagogic principles without overlooking the national and humanistic goals in public training.
- e) to notice the gathering of Turkish youth around a notion of ‘the citizen’ as a point of movement
- f) to give significance to training all of our teachers to be of the utmost character and to their coming from the same background.
- g) to stay tightly connected with scientific ideals when dealing with education and training.

The 1954 Government Program announced by Menderes once again, is comprised by a concise few lines related to education. This section begins by suggesting that a nation’s strength is not only measured in material wealth, but also in spirit, which can be lifted by developing national education. Yet, immediately after this modest downplay of the hype usually given to ‘material wealth’, the very next paragraph, ironically, emphasizes just that: how the change in state funding for education increased from 197 million liras in 1950 to 313 million liras in 1954. The next and final paragraph which concludes the brief educational message, is a simple and ambiguous promise that “now and during the next

several years, the time has come for the beginning of some significant action in the field of education that will not even be comparable to previous periods of rule, as is true for administration services departments as well.”<sup>103</sup> What is interesting here is that within the 1951 program’s fifteen pages, one of them was devoted to a discussion of real plans and goals, whereas the only part of the 1954 program’s 34 pages, is 3 short paragraphs, which are nebulous and arguably superficial. Furthermore, despite the consistent and overwhelming emphasis on democratic principles and party ideals throughout all of Menderes’ government programs, there is no mention of plans to encourage the further democratization of the Turkish education system.

#### Other Changes and Policies of the 1940-1950’s Transition

Political change that surged during the late 1940’s and throughout the 1950’s prompted some very tangible points of modification in Turkish foreign and economic policy as well, which is imperative for having any understanding of the context in which the national education system was continuing to develop. These policy changes especially affected the relationship between and within civil society and the state, as well as contributed to the redefinition of both. Rather than provide an exhaustive list of social and economic shifts during this time frame, the following points of discussion aim to merely mention a few critical factors that can be seen to directly and mutually engage in issues of education and formal schooling.

One of the first influential places within changing policies of the forties and fifties, though often overlooked and underestimated, is the mass migration and urbanization that accelerates during these two decades. Kemal Karpat’s *The Gecekonu*

---

<sup>103</sup> Arar, p. 272-73.

(overnight settlement) brings to light several ‘push factors’ that impelled villagers to move in vast numbers away from the difficulties of the villages and towards city settlements. He claims that mainly, poverty as well as decreasing soil productivity and quality of agricultural work, caused people to abandon their village homes. He also adds that women especially felt the toils of rural labor and played a major role in eliciting interest for urban migration.<sup>104</sup> Other reasons include the increasingly small sizes of allotted plots of land, and the lack of educational opportunities, infrastructure, and general living standards. This widespread urbanization created the necessity for major changes in social and economic policy, this of course including how to manage the public schooling of an ever and rapid growing population.

Significant shifts within social relations during the forties and fifties should also be noted. One of the most conspicuous acts of social inequality took place in 1942 called the Wealth Tax (*varlık vergisi*). In response to a growing black-market and widespread exploitation of economic conditions inflicted by war, the government introduced a tax that was applied inconsistently, particularly between Muslim and non-Muslim merchants. According to Zürcher, payments made by non-Muslims amounted to nearly 55% of the total tax revenue.<sup>105</sup> Though the regulation was used for a period less than two years, the resulting tension and mistrust between Muslim and non-Muslims would not be easily dissipated. Also, the emergence of the strengthening opposition Democrat Party spawned divisions among classes, mainly between small businessmen/craftsmen and the large company owners/industrialists, although there was also a good bit of interclass disunion as well. Gedikoğlu describes the social changes as having a retrospective air:

---

<sup>104</sup> Karpat, p. 73-75.

<sup>105</sup> Zürcher, p. 200.

Knowing the opportunities of the multi-party period, landowners, village heads, religious exiles, among others, unifying with the politicians tied to the changes of this period, planted themselves directly against village institutes and land reform. Merchants formed during the war years, newly rich, workers, many villagers, and opposing reformists gathered within the Democrat Party with a portion in the front lines of the People's Party. At this point, in Atatürk's party and over the whole country revolutionary processes were left to one side and a race back to the past evolved as a new priority. Thus, there grew a distance from the Kemalist line, concessions began, and revolutionary steps were put to an end.<sup>106</sup>

By 1946 poorer segments of the peasantry had been badly affected by wartime taxation and government demands for the provisioning of the urban areas. The Wealth Tax of 1942 targeted at the bourgeoisie and had elevated mistrust among much of the upper middle class.

The economic strategy of the Democrat Party reflected their campaign ideology, which claimed the agricultural sector as an industry and social class, as the basis for any hope of modernization. With the help of significant American financial support, the DP government passed laws to encourage foreign investment and implement new infrastructure plans. The primary error of the government, according to modern critics, was the intentional neglect of long-term planning, which made for immediate growth, but inevitable disasters that would emerge in future years.<sup>107</sup> As the decade continued, despite significant aid from Marshall Plan funding, inflation steadily soared and a hefty black-market emerged, causing even more damage to economic stability. In terms of education, however, thanks to the Village Institutes, the costs of teaching courses were brought under the state budget rather than be hindrances to local finances. Gedikoğlu gives an interesting overview of the changes during the fifties:

---

<sup>106</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 118.

<sup>107</sup> Zürcher, p. 226.

Despite the initial positive trends of the 50's, towards the end, the positive effects were exhausted and new debts replaced the old and the value of the lira fell dramatically. The struggle to transfer the economic institutions formed by Atatürk into the private sector increased. By the end of the 50's the country was in a state of economic stress and array.<sup>108</sup>

What is interesting, is that despite problems in the economy during this period, finances for schooling continue strongly, seemingly unaffected by larger domestic financial burdens. For instance, two 1948 pieces of legislation, Law 3407 and Law 5166, provided the payment of the salaries of the inspectors and teachers of elementary education from the national budget.

Another important step took place in 1946, which brought full autonomy to universities including separate budgets, self-governance, and independence from the Education Ministry (This is ironic since a large portion of the resisters to the DP's policies in the late 50's were university members.) However, throughout the fifties, the status of teachers slowly began to deteriorate leading to both increased pressure surrounding the already existing teacher shortage, as well as a shrinking of teacher salaries. And despite the already problematic lack of teachers, the DP insisted on creating more and more primary and secondary schools without supplementing appropriate staffing, which exasperated the issue even more.

It is the avoidance of focusing on many of these real kinds of problems that perhaps motivated Prime Minister Menderes to prevent the publishing of The Report of the Turkish National Commission on Education, which was carried out in the late fifties. It was only to be published in 1961 after the military intervention of 1960.<sup>109</sup> It is reasonable to suppose that Menderes' motivation in taking this kind of action, derived

---

<sup>108</sup> Gedikoğlu, p. 144.

<sup>109</sup> Kazamias, p. 142.

from his desire to avoid too much attention or criticism at a point in time when already, any type of negative press was being handled quite harshly.

Finally, with an already growing tension among religious followers and staunch secularists, the decision to switch the call-to-prayer (*ezan*) from being recited in Turkish to being in Arabic, which is arguably the most memorable change implemented by the Democrat Party in terms of religious life during the post-war period.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD CONFERENCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLING

*Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.*  
- Thomas Jefferson

#### Later Board Conferences and Points of Discussion

After the election of 1946 when the Democrat Party gained a significant number of seats, there were four more Education Conferences that took place before the military intervention of 1950. This next section will attempt to present an outline of major debates, interesting decisions, and a brief analysis of the conference as a whole, so that a contextual basis will have been provided for the chapter's final sections, which discuss patterns of change and continuity between and within the conferences, as well as explore the possible functions of the conferences within their respective time periods.

#### *The Third National Education Board Conference, December 1946*

The 1946 board conference lasted for nine days and introduced Reşat Şemsettin Sirir as the head of the National Education Board, as he had recently begun work as the new Minister of Education. After two board conferences headed by Hasan Ali Yücel, who was backed by eight years of service and a strong reputation, the transition to Sirer's political views proved to be a critical change for educational policy all over Turkey. Despite being members of the same party, Yücel and Sirer approached the position of the

Education Minister in nearly opposite ways. The most poignant example of this can be seen in the interactions between these two ministers and the institution of the Village Institutes. While Yücel played a major role in the foundation and continuation of the institutes, Sirer seems to have had an extremely critical eye not of their potential, but rather the reality of how effective they might really be. In one quote, his subtle tone of pessimism and cynicism can be detected:

The Village Institutes were founded in order to train the teachers who would have a large hand in serving the essential mission of encouraging development in our villages by disseminating primary education to villagers who make up three-quarters of the Turkish people. It is the divine obligation of teachers and instructors who have been readied in their education at the institutes to ensure these institutes are handled with the strength and possibility expected by the hopes and wishes of this nation's people.<sup>110</sup>

With the rebalancing of power once the DP gained representation in the assembly in 1946, Sirer appears to be a product of the RPP's inclination to revise their approach to politics, specifically in the realm of education from that of idealism to practi

Outlined below, are six major points of interest though the opening speech of the conference immediately identifies the center of attention as being vocational and technical education, since that is the sector that was perceived as developing the quickest during the forties. The specific points of concentration are as follows:

1. Program and regulations of vocational and technical education
2. Program and regulations of boys' art middle schools and institutes
3. Program and regulations of girls' institutes
4. Regulations of Istanbul Technical School
5. Dealing with legislation related to teachers and instructors of middle and similar level technical teaching schools according to current demand
6. Taking the steps that will properly encourage the cooperation between student families and schools

---

<sup>110</sup> Cavit Binbaşıoğlu. *Çağdaş Eğitim ve Köy Enstitüleri: Tarihsel Bir Çerçeve*. (İzmir: Dikili Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1993), p. 91.

These main subjects were organized into five main commissions under the same subject headings, but by combining boys' art middle schools and institutes with the girls' institutes to be discussed within the same committee. According to the opening speech by Minister of Education Reşat Sirer, there are three primary changes that have occurred related to the quick development of technical and vocational education that must be brought to the Board's attention:

The first change is Turkish society's acquirement of a structure that is able to send our students to every kind of job that is central to the work force.

The second change is the need for those employed [in the vocational technical school profession] to have a general education competence in addition to empirical knowledge. This would constitute a change in distinction level in our country in terms of an economic and social point of view.

The third fundamental change is this: many more students than the technical universities and schools are able to admit and provide instruction for, are flocking towards educational institutions. In the cities and towns where we established our art schools, art institutes, and are building expertise training schools (*uzmanlık okulları*), hundreds and thousands of Turkish children are running to school with confidence and pride.<sup>111</sup>

Later in this opening speech, Sirer also points out the existing teacher shortage, which would prove to become an even more serious and deeply rooted problem in the fifties. He calls upon the members of the Education Board to present their ideas for dealing with this worry, and furthermore, how these solutions could be put into practice.

The conclusion of the conference of 1946 resulted in the acceptance of the commissions' proposals for:

- commerce middle schools and high schools program and regulations
- boys' art middle schools and Industry Program and Regulations
- Girls' Institutes Program and Regulations
- Istanbul Technical School Regulations
- Plan to announce to families the education and instruction reforms that would encourage school-family cooperation in school life

---

<sup>111</sup> Opening speech of the MEŞ of 1946, p. 4.

- Discussion of cleanliness, health and continuing problems, as well as opinions, emotions, moral, and wellness education topics
- Taking steps that would ease the work of school-family cooperation
- Discussion of suggestions related to girls' technical schools

Education Minister Sıral closes the conference with brief words of thanks and praise for the efforts and accomplishments made throughout the eight-day conference. Though this conference was held several months after the 1946 elections when the DP won 62 of the 465 seats (just over thirteen percent) available in the assembly, there are no obvious signs of dramatic change or immediate reform that reflect the Democrat Party taking a strong opposition party role, though this will change for the later conferences.

*The Fourth National Education Board Conference, August 1949*

This conference lasted for nine days and took place at the Language and History-Geography Faculty Department in Ankara. While this conference generally seems to serve a purpose focusing on assessment of existing programs rather than creating new reforms and institutions, the one item of business that emerges for the first time as its own category are the democratic aspects and principles of education. The five committees selected are as follows:

1. Reviewing the primary school program, which was applied during the 1948-49 school year.
2. Reviewing the new secondary school program project.
3. Establishing organization of high school curriculum according to its 4-year structure.
4. Coordinating middle and high school level teacher training institutes as well as the High Teacher's School, according to their needs.
5. Examine democratic foundations that rely on education and instruction.

The opening of the conference was honored by the presence of Prime Minister Şemsettin Günaltay who was a Sivas Deputy with the Republican People's Party, and involved from

the very beginning of the Republic in politics and reforms. He was appointed under İsmet İnönü as Prime Minister in 1949 and thus is the last Prime Minister of the single party era. The addition of the speech given by Günaltay, as a unique factor from the other six conferences under discussion here, provides some interesting food for thought. One possible interpretation is that this reflects the heightened political air of this year before elections. Also, Günaltay's steady emphasis on democracy can be interpreted as an attempt to present a stable connection between the Republican People's Party with democracy, since Democrat Party campaigning suggested otherwise. Perhaps this serves as a reminder that the transformation towards a more democratic system was not just spawned by DP success, but also endorsed and perhaps even encouraged by the RPP, despite a steady decrease in numbers of supporters leading up to the 1950 election. Certain attention-grabbing sections of his opening speech are included below:

We are impelled to prepare our youth according to the occupations they will follow throughout their lives, refrain from wearing them out with petty information, and especially give the appropriate weight to the issue of finding it necessary to make students memorize the bulk of their studies. The main method should not be memorization; it should be the way of working with ideals. We know we have to accrue the surprising developments of constructive science by expanding the method of induction. Through practical application, we must expand this method by encouraging functionality and making masses of people use their minds.

The solid democracy that we have entered into and persevere to conclude with accomplishment and the ability to give the prosperous results that we all wait for, is contingent on how and with what, we equip our youth. Every day we are all shocked witnesses to the strange phenomena of how democracy can be understood and shown due to ignorance and unknowingness. Like those who regard democracy as an innocent aimless notion written only on paper, this can be seen like an open road to the assault of our ministers' law and honor.

Democracy is a system of government that carries authority and equal rights for all the individuals who formulate the human community.

The opportunity to maintain this sort of regime is contingent upon giving prosperous results, establishing equal rights and competence, with the condition that they submit to the appointed laws.

In order to carefully monitor our democracy against degeneration, it is a requirement that we inculcate the genuine principles of democracy in the new generation. In the case that this should not occur, we would be giving an opportunity for the malicious manipulations of demagogues in power to stir up the democracy of our country. The raising of our children to believe in true democracy is directly tied with the fate of our future. I hope that this high council will also examine this point.<sup>112</sup>

Aside from the discussion of democracy, the conclusions of this conference do not seem to provide any major solutions or reforms of the topics discussed. They consist of affirmation or approval of existing programs or institutions and still use a very general language that explains the commitment to support students and teachers, but without detailing how that would be done:

1. Review new middle school program project.
2. Establish organization of high school curriculum according to its 4-year structure.
3. Coordinating middle and high school level teacher training institutes as well as Higher Education Teacher's School, according to their needs.
4. Accept discussion of gym (*beden eğitimi*) and fine arts as separate branches at these institutes.
5. Examine democratic foundations that rely on education and instruction.
6. Make appropriate changes to the teacher training organization programs.
7. Coordinate history, geography, and civics (*yurttaşlık bilgisi*), which were separate classes during the second part of primary education, into a single class according to children's psychology.
8. Accept on behalf of the General Board, the suggestion to unify Village Institutes and teacher training school's teachers, with the goal of raising/creating teachers from the same source, with only a few changes.
9. Decide to bring primary school closer to middle school education/instruction in terms of understanding and application, ensuring a parallel relationship and harmony between them.
10. Decide to encourage students to progress into their lives successfully
11. Decide to help students gain basic skills and knowledge necessary for continuing onto professional and regular high schools.
12. Decide to have the examinations made according to primary objectives.

---

<sup>112</sup> T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 'Milli Eğitim Şurası': Dördüncü 1949 (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991), p. 5-7.

This fourth conference's main point of interest appears to center around the emergence of the theme of democracy. The emphasis on the necessity of democratic education system is made clear, though there are few tangible ideas that demonstrate what this means and how this will be carried out.

*The Fifth National Education Board Conference, February 1953*

The fifth education conference was held in Ankara Atatürk Education Institute (*Ankara Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü*) and lasted for nine days. Included within the commission and general discussions were planned social outings for all board members including trips to the zoo, theater, opera, symphony, and children's art exhibits all dispersed throughout the nine days. This is the first time there is a record of this sort of activity in any of the Education Ministry's conference books, an issue that will be address in later sections.

The program of the fifth board conference can be summarized as follows:

1. Reviewing the prepared program and regulations of preschool and primary education.
2. Establishing necessary precautions regarding health in primary schools.
3. Researching and making changes to necessary sections of the report prepared for the education of special needs children, the law about children needing protection, and examining the regulations related to orphanages (*yetiştirme yurtları*).
4. Examining the project of the Primary Education Law and required primary education plan.
5. Discussing again the primary school program.
6. Examining the project of Primary School Regulations
7. Reviewing the subjects of primary school teacher training, teacher schools and village institute's new instruction program, and professional maturation.
8. Discussing general subjects regarding primary school teachers and other general issues related to primary education.

For each of these areas, a commission was founded, members ranging from 20 to 88 members in a single group. The largest group with 88 commission members was the

reviewers of teacher training schools and institutes. The general area of interest here is a reexamination of primary school program and there is also an emergence of a few new topics of discussion: preschool education, education for needy children, and health regulations for educational institutions. The opening speech was made by the 1953 Minister of Education, Tevfik İleri who was the first Minister of Education after the election of 1950 where the Democrat Party took over the majority in Parliament. Some of the excerpts of his speech can be found below:

Among the many various issues regarding National Education, primary school is found to be of primary significance. From qualitative and quantitative perspectives, we are required to spread education to even the furthest corners of our country immediately.

It is seen suitable to separate primary education's structure into those aspects that are now obsolete and those that are still necessary. The necessary realms are in primary education in trying to create useful and comprehensive classes, as well as schools for special education and needy students. Preschool education, comprehensive courses with instructional organization will be founded by a composition of voluntary institutions.

With regions that contain numerous close-by villages but have not, for whatever reasons, been able to open a school, the opening of boarding schools and regional day-schools and the creation of traveling teachers is attention-worthy, as well as school activities that allow for certain adaptation to the conditions of productive life like moving schools depending on the season to plateaus, pastures, or vineyards to aid in the continuation of schools on their mission.

It has been decided to help the growth of powerful and exemplary trained and training teachers in terms of teaching as a profession.

Respectable board members, I find it useful to repeat here several realities that we already know: the next 20-25 years ahead of us, will be an incredibly important period for our country. We are obligated to train our future generation in a way suitable to needs of their ages and in a scholarly manner. In order to realize this goal, we are not in a position to be hoping for luck from our talisman or magic. Our people are waiting for the organization of the Ministry of Education to obtain aims [regarding education]. We are going to raise our children as those who act intentionally, are tied to the national ideal, and have superior souls and are superior individuals. Our children should carry an endless ambition for working, feel pleasure from success, hate a lazy and idle life, develop an organization of their talents, and be moral, constructive and creative

citizens. However much we can strengthen our Training and Pedagogy procedures, will be that much closer to these excellent ideals.<sup>113</sup>

This final passage subtly indicates the early 1950's the beginning of a new period where, seemingly in comparison to the previous decades (where İleri claims there was more of a reliance on 'magic' to ensure the accomplishment of goals), a public call for action is being cited. This statement is perhaps an invocation of the DP's fondness for the notion of 'national will', that is, a belief that the people are truly in command of the government, and therefore political actions are a result of popular demand. This is implying that the new directors of the Ministry of Education have a renewed sense of responsibility to the people that the previous government did not acknowledge or appreciate. There is also a focus on the profile of the type of student being sought out, reflecting a desire for hard-work, morality, and productivity.

A summary of the decisions made during this board conference as expressed by the Ministry of Education and Training and Pedagogy Board themselves include the agreement to:

- ensure the coordination between primary school program goals and content of reforms;
- continue the dominance of the concept of collective instruction during the second period of schooling [after primary education]
- encourage flexibility in monthly and yearly hour usage in the classroom
- decide to develop education programs experimentally before widespread distribution

Considering the ten days of discussion and debate spent, relatively few and rather nebulous outcomes make one wonder whether it was difficult to reach points of compromise, or whether it was simply decided that not much in the system needed changing.

---

<sup>113</sup> T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 'Milli Eğitim Şurası': Beşinci 1953 (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991), p. 5-22.

*The Six National Education Board Conference, March 1957*

The final Board Conference that took place before the 1960 military intervention lasted for six days at the Ankara Ismet Paşa Girls' Institute and focused on vocational and technical education similar to the themes of the 1946 gathering. The new issue of discussion at this time is adult education. The opening speech was given by Minister of Education Ahmet Özel. Just as the last Board met to discuss primary and preschool education in meticulous detail, these commissioners seem to have the same agenda, but focused on their own topics of technical and adult schooling. The overall program topics and commissions are as follows:

1. Boys Technical Instruction Commission
2. Girls' Technical Instruction Commission
3. Commerce Instruction Commission
4. Adult Instruction Commission

The opening speech made by Özel includes the following comments:

We have found it useful to devote the sixth National Education Board Conference to the discussions on the topics of Vocational and Technical Education as well as Adult Education. The subjects of Vocational and Technical Education were examined during the 1946 conference and the recorded developments in this field, along with statistics, and necessary small notations have been offered to Board members in a brochure format. Our goals for this subject include informing the Board of today's current situation in vocational and technical education, and at the same time, encouraging that pieces of advice and suggestions be made by the Board, in order to meet the educational needs of our country in a more widespread manner.

Regarding the significance of Vocational and Technical Education in the global setting, our respected Board members are quite aware, in every way; they are able to assess just how closely related this subject is to the economic and industrial lives of our people, who benefit from the new means and methods of our age. In terms of our country of today and tomorrow, it is our duty to ensure the necessary evolution in a branch of action that holds such importance.

The second order of business, adult education, as specially requested by the fifth board conference, will be brought to your attention in whole and for the first time. Besides the fight against illiteracy, this type of education certainly includes goals like good living, giving knowledge of citizenship and health, enlightening the people, preparing for occupations, increasing productivity and generally encouraging occupational progress. The main aim of education is to reunite preparation of individuals for social life with a superior, moral life. This enters an assessment phase that in some way or other renders one employed.

Before finishing my opening words, I want to express how lucky I feel to be able to express my thanks to all of the experts of the foreign and international organizations and their precious agencies, who contributed to help with this business. The collaboration of the free nations helps countries to grow closer and strengthen their bonds.

Here, one can see not only the themes of the conference but also the transformation in speech that has started to branch into an international setting rather than remaining focused only within national borders. There is also a seeming reemergence of the notion of education as a tool for boosting productivity and contributing to economic goals. In the midst the 'humanistic' approach originally used by the DP appears to have receded from the conference discourse.

After only six days of discussion and debate, a rather lengthy list of outcomes emerged. Though some decisions are trivial in light of others, the notes on this gathering appear much more concrete and tangible. The summary of the conclusions can be found below:

1. To lessen the workshop projects of students in the first two grades of the Structure and Art Institutes of children at that age, keeping in mind what their special abilities are.
2. By extending Institute section instruction periods to three years, turn them into Art high schools.
3. By examining these schools' curricular programs, provide space for foreign language, music, and gym classes.
4. Open apprentice schools for primary school graduates.
5. Discuss again the established regulations of responsibilities and functions of technical schools

6. Have technical day schools run for two years, and evening technical schools be three years.
7. Open branches according to daily needs of these schools.
8. To plan earlier, the business required for the training of those in personnel characterized as technicians.
9. Adding girls to some sections of the art institutes

The aims of Girls' Technical Education were defined as focusing on:

- a. general education
- b. teaching how to be a housewife
- c. identifying professional education according to individual, family, societal, and national needs

After reviewing the following topics of discussion, they were approved as points from which to continue educational development:

1. aims of adult education
2. eliminating illiteracy
3. increasing literacy rate
4. strengthening national unity
5. social reconstruction
6. development of ideal service
7. moral manners
8. love of history and character
9. giving information regarding domestic and international tourism
10. training volunteer assistants for adult education activities
11. adult education using visual and audio strategies
12. the program "köycü kardeş kolları" in city schools (a sort of pen-pal program between city and village schools encouraging both written communication as well as visits/field trips)<sup>114</sup>
13. military and other ministries' help
14. village art and industry
15. topics on training assistants for adult education
16. legal plan related to necessary organization for adult education activities

The General Education Board did not adopt the following points:

1. balancing of each stage's classic middle schools in the format of commerce middle schools and commerce high schools
2. giving students more practical vocational knowledge in commerce high schools
3. increasing hours spent on foreign language

---

<sup>114</sup> T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 'Milli Eğitim Şurası': Altıncı 1957 (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991), p. 88.

4. opening a commerce branch at high schools (*kolej*) that offer foreign language instruction
5. opening secretary branches at Girls' Institutes.

The discussion of Vocational and Technical schools appears more in depth and detailed than that of the 1946 conference. Rather than topics centered on the constituents of the regulations, curriculum and distribution of learned material across grade levels, the latter gathering offered advice about the inner-workings of the schools with a stronger acknowledgement of the distinction between girls' and boys' education. Also, given the number of decisions not approved by the general board, this conference appears to contain a higher level of conflicted opinion and opposing viewpoints when compared to the previous assemblies. When the Democrat Party took over as the Congressional majority party in 1950, the public was ready for change and inspired by the promises made by the DP. However, just as the late fifties bring doubts, criticism, and worries about the changing policies of the DP, this discussion of education appears to reflect the same thing.

The point of interest new to the 1957 conference is adult education. As in 1953, a single UNESCO representative was present at this conference, and a report submitted by UNESCO regarding how to develop an adult education system was debated. After lengthy negotiations about this issue, the adult education report was accepted, and a precedent was set for expanding what has evolved today as a life-long education program, which was central to the most recent Seventeenth National Education Board Conference in November 2006.

### Practical Application and Transformation of Board Conferences During the 1950's

One of the most intriguing questions about this advisory organ for education is the extent to which the suggestions are taken to heart and put into practice, affirming the purpose and function of the conferences in the first place. Actually measuring the extent to which certain policies were influenced by a single conference's decisions and recommendations is practically speaking impossible. At best, the in-depth examination and comparison between board decisions and ensuing laws would require extensive research at deeper level. Nevertheless, this is a subject that should not be completely ignored within the context of this thesis. Therefore, the following paragraphs will by no means claim to present a complete picture of these relationships and interactions but instead, they will present an overview of several conspicuous points including religious education, Village Institutes, vocational and technical education, as well as the theme of democracy, and will at least show some type of consistency (or curious inconsistency) between Board advice and legal action.

This section will also address the need for an understanding of how the conferences transformed over time as well as how they trace similar patterns despite the political distinction between the single-party and multi-party periods. When looking across the distance of eighteen years in which six National Education Board conferences took place, there is no clear break that reflects any major change in political arena between any two specific conferences. The shifts in topics, conference structure, and status are more gradual, with generally small changes occurring between each gathering. One of the difficulties in comparing individual conferences is the nature of the content. With the exception of the 1946 and 1957 conferences which both included the theme of

technical education, each group of topics, hence each year's assigned commissions were quite separate, making it difficult to trace the policies and debates of a single aspect of education throughout a set time period. Nevertheless, the topics mentioned above are the most significant themes from which an understanding of how the conferences' dialogue of continuing issues evolved over time.

### *Religious Education*

Perhaps the most intriguing thing about the issue of religious education and the Board Conferences, is that it is not raised as a deliberate point of discussion until 1962 after the military intervention. There are many changes in the interactions between the triangle of religion state, and civil society that occur during Democrat Party rule. Ercan Türk claims the DP attempted a subtle reincorporation of religion into the classroom, which was cause for debate across the nation.<sup>115</sup> In February 1949, religion classes were introduced into the fourth and fifth grade curriculum, for two hours per week. At this point, the classes were optional, left up to the decision of individual families. But then in 1950, the opposite became true. Students were required to participate in religion class, and only with a request from a parent, could a student be excused from this obligation.<sup>116</sup> In 1950, private courses specializing in reading the Qu'ran opened. Then beginning in 1951, *Imam-Hatip* schools were opened at the middle and high school levels, and over the years the number steadily increased. Later, during the 1956-57 school year, these classes were extended into middle school curriculum as well, yet somehow these issues managed to slide out of the spotlight among debates.

---

<sup>115</sup> Türk, p. 215.

<sup>116</sup> Akyüz, p. 306.

During the 1953 conference, a lengthy debate regarding the nature of religious lessons and its role in a secular and democratic state occurs, but this is by chance. During discussions, among a list of other topics, the issue is raised by a single participant who spawns a brief discussion. Then again, the 1957 conference completely neglects the subject of religion, focusing only on technical and vocational, as well as adult education. The intriguing thing here is, for such a sensitive issue at the time, is it unusual that this sort of discussion is not written into the formal program and commission subject matter, especially given the following comment by Sabit Bursalioglu:

Religion constituted one of the main educational as well as political issues of this period. The Democratic administration managed to create a public conviction that religion was an asset to the state as well as to the individual. This was the natural outcome of an unofficial but extensive revival of religious brotherhoods and semi-religious political institutions.<sup>117</sup>

This interpretation would suggest that the religion-education relationship was at the forefront of conversation, yet this is not reflected in the conferences.

The area of higher education also contains some telling information about the role of religion in education. In 1949, a Faculty of Divinity was opened at the University of Ankara but still tied to the Ministry of Education and government scholarships were provided. With this new field in higher education, the numbers of students who began to study at *Imam-Hatip* schools – opening in seven different provinces under the Private Schools Administration – increased. Then in 1959 in Istanbul, a High Islam Institute was opened, providing an additional opportunity for religion and academic and research pursuits to emerge.

---

<sup>117</sup> Sabit Bursalioglu. *The Changing Character of Education in Successive Reformation Periods of Turkish History*. (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1965), p. 190.

The significance of the role of religion in the debate about the transformation of the political system between the 1940's and 1950's and the surprising minimal amount of attention given to the issue within the four conferences that took place during the beginning of the multi-party period leads to one main theory. It is probably a testament to the fact that the education conferences slowly began to grow selective in their subject matter, choosing 'appropriate topics' that would not cause too much debate rather than actively focus on controversial issues. This would mean these conferences were more under political influence than they appear. Rather than serving to truly provide a space for open discussion and debate about the future of education, the conferences during the fifties may have been more an act of procedure than an effective advisory body.

### *Village Institutes*

The fate of the Village Institutes would also prove to be an issue of intrigue regarding the Board Conferences and practical application. Beginning in 1947, changes in the structure of the Institutes began to occur as well as the start of a distancing from the original philosophy of the project. The most reputable school The High Village Institute (*Yüksek Köy Enstitüsü*) was closed down in 1948, teacher-training courses (*eğitmen kursları*) were no longer offered, and village-teaching internships ended.<sup>118</sup> Then in 1952, enough changes were made, under the administration of Education Minister Tevfik İleri that they were considered the steps towards the closing of the Village Institutes. During the years 1952-1953, most of the institutes were transformed into general education schools and finally in 1954 with Law 6234 all of the remaining Village

---

<sup>118</sup> Kaplan, İ., p. 189.

Institutes were turned into normal primary schools as well.<sup>119</sup> In less than 15 years, this project was responsible for granting 17,162 diplomas to students of institutes spread out over 21 villages throughout Turkey.<sup>120</sup>

There is lots of speculation regarding the decline in support for the Village Institutes. Karaömerlioğlu includes several possible reasons in his article on the institution. There were several accusations made by those filing complaints against the institutes, including communist ideological tendencies, disrespect for law enforcement like the police and army, and even immoral relations between males and females within the school.<sup>121</sup> But Karaömerlioğlu and others suggest there were perhaps some deeper fears that motivated action taken against the Institutes as well. Perhaps the project was considered too successful in their aim to create an obedient and hard-working rural class. The Village Institutes concept was a way of empowering those in the country-side, not just to gain a basic education and specialize in agricultural skills, but they also catalyzed the growth of a unified identity, which was potentially threatening for both the ruling RPP as well as the rising Democrat Party.<sup>122</sup>

Among the most significant changes made after 1946, simultaneous with Hasan Ali Yücel's end of service as the Minister of Education, within the Village Institute system, was its being pushed away from the application of its original structure and aims, the start of a pattern of closing of a number of Institutes, and adding non-villagers to the

---

<sup>119</sup> Akyüz, p. 341.

<sup>120</sup> Kazamias, p. 199.

<sup>121</sup> Karaömerlioğlu, (1998) p. 66-68.

<sup>122</sup> Nadir Gezer. "Sistemin Devre Dışı Bırakılması, Köy Enstitülerin Kapatılması." In *Köy Enstitüleri Amaçlar, İlkeler, Uygulamalar*. (Ankara: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 1997), p. 117.

Institute faculties (a decision made in the 1953 Board conference).<sup>123</sup> According to Rifat Okçabol,

the most central success of the single party period is the village institutes. Starting from nothing with very little money, the institutes were able to construct a unique educational milieu that was fairly self-sufficient. This model was quite an appropriate one for the limitations and conditions of the nation during that period [such as teacher shortages]. But there were many criticisms as well: not democratic, not enough administrators or staff, no importance given to national sympathies, communist tendencies, trying to keep the rural population within the rural areas, a movement attempting to delay urbanization and industrialization. But many of these criticisms are taking the situation outside the appropriate context. The conditions of a nation during a World War with few resources and in the middle of national development cause one to question these types of criticisms.<sup>124</sup>

Here, Okçabol is trying to argue that it is of course always possible to critique a policy or program but without many other feasible options given the limited resources of the period, the Village Institutes, responsible for the education of some 25,000 graduates, was a relatively successful attempt to address the challenges of primary education in the forties. Besides sheer numbers, Sabit Bursalıoğlu believes they helped to “narrow the gap between intelligentsia and the peasantry, and in initiating the present and prospective projects of community development.”<sup>125</sup>

In terms of interaction with the Education Conferences, in general the shifts in policy beginning after 1946 coincide with discussions within the 1946 gathering. Within the report on the regulations related to middle and similar level technical teachers and educators, there is a section reserved for discussion on provision of instructors, especially teachers of specialized skills. The report suggests that graduates of higher education teach classes of ‘knowledge’, while secondary school graduates could teach allowing classes of

---

<sup>123</sup> Rifat Okçabol. *Türkiye Eğitim Sistemi*. (Ankara: Utopya Yayınevi, 2005), p. 53.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, p. 56.

<sup>125</sup> Bursalıoğlu, p. 179-80.

‘skills’.<sup>126</sup> There are also general complaints of unclear messages being made public regarding the success of the Institutes, especially within publications. Often, the discussions openly acknowledge the formation of the Institutes as one with nationalistic aims in order to create the type of citizens desired. One observation made by Nadir Gezer is that the new Minister of Education R. Şemsettin Sirer had prejudices against the Village Institute project and its founders, and his influence at the head of the ministry played a major role in the decline of the Institutes.<sup>127</sup>

For the 1949 Conference, only four representatives of Village Institutes were invited out of a list of over 275 attendees of the conference. Thus right away, it is clear that the Institutes were not a point of focus whatsoever. There are long discussions about education in the villages of Turkey, but the focus of conversation shifts from discussing Village Institutes to ‘Education Institutes’ (*Eğitim Enstitüleri*), which appear to become the center of attention, pushing the Village Institutes aside. Of the few words mentioned, one of the ministry’s inspectors (*bakanlık müfettişi*) İrfan Alicioğlu mentions that since 1946, the Village Institutes have made significant progress and are close to achieving their goal.<sup>128</sup> Directly after, the session is followed with a break, thus preventing more discussion on the subject.

Suddenly in the 1953 conference, where fourteen Village Institute representatives are present, large sections are seen to be devoted to the new teaching program of the Village Institutes, though this is thought provoking since the new teaching program was put into practice beginning in 1947. In September 1947, National Education Minister R. Şemsettin Sirer approved the newly orchestrated Village Institutes Teaching Program,

---

<sup>126</sup> 1946 MEŞ, p. 98.

<sup>127</sup> Gezer, p. 114.

<sup>128</sup> 1949 MEŞ, p. 303.

prepared by the Training and Pedagogy Board, and published in the *Köy Enstitüsü Programları*. Yet, the 1949 Board Conference shows minimal mention of this, especially when compared to the lengthy conversations held during the 1953 gathering.<sup>129</sup> Many secondary sources seem to discuss the Village Institutes as trailing off the education plan after the 1950's yet this discussion does not appear to show signs that there were plans to close down the Village Institute project.<sup>130</sup> There is even a report discussed concerning "Teacher Schools and Village Institutes' New Instruction Plan" (*Öğretmen Okullarıyla ve Köy Enstitüleri Yeni Öğretim Program Taslağı*).<sup>131</sup> The commission responsible for reviewing this report approved the included aims, principles, and curriculum of Teacher Schools and Village Institutes with few changes. Therefore, it is curious that the education plan was reviewed after it was in place within the school system for six years, and then several months after the Board accepted the plan, a law was passed ending the Village Institutes all together. Within discussions, the following topics were raised for discussion:

- Institutes for teacher training are distinct from other forms of education, thus requiring specialized teachers.
- Education institutions newly established within this new teacher training plan should have their directors participate in cooperation with the chosen teacher representatives of teaching associations.
- Rather than creating an instructor to teach students, teacher training schools should be creating a guide to show students how to learn.
- As part of teacher training, it is not enough to read books about teaching; trainees must go abroad in groups to participate in training first-hand.
- Extracurricular activities to guide trainees must be established in order to encourage a unified notion of a teacher's identity.
- It must not be forgotten that besides just the ability of a teacher, the teaching environment such as curriculum, student-teacher ratio, classroom equipment and so on, must be considered in the success of

---

<sup>129</sup> MEŞ '47, p. 245.

<sup>130</sup> Akyüz, p. 341-342.

<sup>131</sup> MEŞ '53, p. 571.

students' education. So, if necessary, it is suggested that private lesson halls be opened.<sup>132</sup>

Here the discussion shows no indication of shutting down or even widely changing what existed of the Village Institute project. It is likely that since the law that closed the Institutes would be passed only months later and it takes a length of time to write and pass laws, at the time of the conference, certain government officials, at least members of the Ministry of Education were aware of the plan to end them. Yet, this is not even hinted at during the conference. In fact, the idea that they were ended only several months after the National Education Board – the advisory organ on education to the state – approved a new plan for the institutes, is a firm statement reminding the Board they are only making recommendations, which are not official unless approved by the Education Minister himself.

#### *Vocational and Technical Schools*

The beginning of the fifties brought great developments for vocational and technical education institutions. Increasing by six times, the number of vocational and technical schools rose to 200, student numbers grew to around 50,000 and around 3,000 teachers and skilled instructors existed in the early fifties.<sup>133</sup> There was a strong emphasis on creating ties between learning and education with real-world practical experience; for example, the creation of various apprenticeships, training programs for workers in industry, and technical instruction were emphasized. These developments of course required the rapid expansion of higher education as well. Between 1950-1960, four new universities were opened, and high school years were increased to four. The early 1950's

---

<sup>132</sup> MEŞ '53, p. 591-92.

<sup>133</sup> Türk, p. 213.

also meant a great need for rapid industrial development, naturally requiring investment in technical departments of formal schooling. Bursalıođlu explains that “the shortage of mechanical and technical equipment and the difficulties involved in their importation required consideration with regard to the domestic production of some of them. This brought about further expansion and departmentalization in technical education institutions, versatility in their curricula, and rapid increase in their number.”<sup>134</sup> Due to the success of this realm of education, vocation and technical schooling does not appear to be a central issue in the 1953 conference.

Yet, these developments were balanced with some very significant negative consequences of the fifties as well. The increasing emergence of Turkey into the global sphere after World War II, with membership to the United Nations in 1946, participation in the Korean War in 1950, and acceptance as a member of NATO in 1952, meant impending international pressure to heed the requests of the Western nations, backed by significant financial investment offers and financial-need packages like the Marshall Plan. Turkish leadership at the time felt that “it would be helpful for Turkey to conform more closely to the political and economic ideals (democracy and free enterprise) cherished by the Americans.”<sup>135</sup> There were certainly advantages to this strategy of foreign policy, but for vocational and technical education, there were several negative effects, many of them related to the West’s demand for the closing of military factories and major industrial centers, causing great damage to the whole Turkish industrial system. These decisions reflect a reprioritizing of attention and resources from the quality of educational opportunity and training to efficient production processes instead. Pamuk

---

<sup>134</sup> Bursalıođlu, p. 174.

<sup>135</sup> ZÜRCHER, p. 209.

provides critical insight into what this kind of external pressure on Turkish industry meant by identifying a report by the World Bank, “which called for the dismantling of large number[s] of the etatist manufacturing establishments, including the country’s only iron and steel complex.”<sup>136</sup> This came as a sudden contrast to the previous years’ success in export commodities due to the occurrence of the Korean War. But once the war ended, industry development lost speed and government support. Perhaps in an attempt to rectify this blow, the 1957 conference was designed to focus on ways of addressing the receding progress of vocational and technical school education. Additionally, discussions of the 1957 Conference position investments in this type of education as the most efficient way of encouraging the national goal of modernization, economic growth, and international respect.

It is also likely that the emphasis on encouraging technical institutes as well as art institutes reflects a slow ideological shift in educational philosophy of the time. The early conferences reflect a style of dialogue that implies the importance given to the notion of product creation, that is, the government is responsible for molding its citizens into the type of social being that is best for the nation. What begins to emerge in the late forties and early fifties is the sense that memorization of a pre-established collection of knowledge, regardless of how useful or productive it is, does not encourage the personal growth and leadership abilities of individuals, but instead reaffirms the state/leader: citizen/follower model. When Günaltay expresses his desire to encourage people to apply themselves and use their minds in 1949, this begins a phase that accepts and nurtures the value of having an educational system that is empowering to its students,

---

<sup>136</sup> Roger Owen & Şevket Pamuk. *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*. (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), p. 105.

rather than keeps them at the mercy of the system. Then in 1953, İleri also shows an affinity for teaching/training in a scholarly manner for moral, constructive and creative students, rather than adhering to tradition tendencies. It is this morphing of educational ideology that goes hand-in-hand with the great push for a more practical, hands-on approach via technical and vocational schools as well as art institutes.

### *Role of Democracy In and Out of Education*

The first decade of the mutli-party period as mentioned in previous sections may be summarized as a time where the subject of democracy was a popular one, which becomes clear when tracing how common this theme is in the discussions and speeches of the Board Conferences and party or government programs. Yet simultaneously, there is much agreement in secondary sources that view the second half of the 1950's a blow to democratic ideals instead. Much of this dialogue surrounding the importance of 'free nations' is respectably derived from the ideals of Atatürk's original plan for the nation, but received a revitalizing surge in the early fifties as a result of Turkey's economic support by the United States in particular, and the resulting expectations.<sup>137</sup> Somehow the large umbrella of 'the democratic process' also encompassed the opening of several international high schools with strong foreign language departments as well as a few universities that are based somewhat on the American system model like Middle East Technical University.

Another part of the democratic principles revered in the fifties was equality of opportunity politically, economically, and educationally as well. This means that the ethical obligation of the government to include all members of its society in the

---

<sup>137</sup> See Ahmad and Owen&Pamuk's discussions of the Menderes decade.

distribution of the right to the chance to gain a public education was beginning to be addressed. This can be seen in the government's decisions in the mid-1950's to open special schools designed for students with special needs. In 1950, Ankara School for the Blind and Boarding School was founded. Then in 1953, the Ankara School for the Deaf including a Boarding School opened, and finally in Ankara during the year 1955, the first class for retarded primary school students went into session. Not only was this sensitivity for special-needs students, but it also applied to regional inequalities. The 1953 conference includes the first real push for spreading significant efforts out into the east of Turkey, as well as continuing expansion in larger cities of the Western half.

However, there were of course certain events that hindered the democratic process within the realm of the school system during these years as well. As the decade progressed, an increasing number of critics of the regime began to get attacked via verbal slander, demotion of a person's rank or position, or sometimes even through more drastic actions including arrests and violent protests. Along with journalists and other media representatives, university professors were often targeted as a result of their public objection to DP activity. Erik Zürcher says, "Through these laws, university professors were prohibited from political activity, some newspapers closed, journalists and politicians jailed. [Laws also] prevented the cooperation or unification of opposition parties in 1957 elections."<sup>138</sup> The presence of this type of action was especially disappointing to the university community since professors had, during the single-party era, exercised a much greater influence and freedom in the realm of politics.

### *Difference and Similarity of Structure and Institutional Role*

---

<sup>138</sup> Zürcher, p. 185.

The question of how particular trends come and go in and between conferences can also create a valuable dialogue when focused around a more structural approach, focusing not only on how were critical subjects within the conferences adapted to the conferences, but also how the conferences themselves changed in the public eye, in terms of function and in its position in the negotiation between state and society.

The notion of status becomes important in the transformation of the role of the board conferences in the negotiation of the state-society relationship. The first two board conferences were commenced with an evening gathering of board members at the personal home of İsmet İnönü and his wife, while beginning in 1946 and after, there is no record of any such social occasion. Instead of being initiated with a social activity, the Board members appear to gather for strictly formal discussion purposes, also without the tilt towards an individual politician or acknowledgement of one party's dominance over the event. Then in 1953, a new kind of social pattern appears to emerge. There begins to be an inclusion of social activities between commission sessions, such as opera, ballet, art exhibits, and the symphony among others. This is a curious phenomenon during a period when the status and respect for teachers is thought to be slowly declining. It is possible that this insertion of access to 'social culture' is an attempt on behalf of the ministry to produce an image of Turkey's education system as meaning more than strict instructional ability, but as providing an example of what 'global citizens' of the educated elite should be doing. During the off hours, the 1957 conference also gives evidence of entertaining trips to the opera, radio house, and ballet. This is perhaps in response to Turkey's post-war venture to reassert itself and its position in the international sphere.

Furthermore, until 1949, the first three conferences included moments of silence to pay respects to government officials, and more importantly, Atatürk and İnönü. This ends in 1949 when the Minister of Education opens the conference with his speech inaugurating the event. However, there is a single paragraph that appears to request a selected group from the board members to actually go and pay respects to Atatürk's burial chamber instead. Then in 1953, there is a return to three minutes of silence as a symbol of their respect for Atatürk, but this action simultaneously removes the mention of any other politicians like President İnönü, or later Prime Minister Menderes and President Bayar. Again, it is most likely that this is an attempt to shift the nature of the conferences back to a more neutral setting, without drawing too much attention to a specific party or crediting a single individual. On the first day of the 1957 conference, the opening speech includes three minutes of silence for Atatürk as well as the Çanakkale military casualties of war in honor of the eighteenth of March. Therefore, it can be understood that these conferences are still seen to be national events obligated by nationalistic agendas. The fact that an education conference would include time for a historical memorial moment should be a reminder of the continuing ties between this institutional body and the Ministry of Education and national government.

Besides these points, the structure of the conferences sees little change between the single-party and multi-party periods. There are not obvious breaks or fissures between the conferences of the single-party and multi-party periods. Thus attributing specific party affiliation to a particular conference would be unjustified. Nevertheless, the themes, approaches, educational philosophies, and conceptions of the meaning of childhood, citizens, learning, society and democracy experiences transformations between and

within the conferences. The basic rules of conduct – determination of conference topics, committee/General Board relationship, hierarchy of participants and advisory role – do not appear to experience much transformation as a result of the change in political nature of the country.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

*Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.*  
- *H.G. Wells*

#### What are the National Education Board Conferences?

The underlying mission of this thesis was to formulate a working understanding of what the national education board conferences were in the mid-nineteenth century, what they entailed, and how to establish their meaning and function for the individual and for the future of a developing nation. Hopefully most of these answers have been touched upon in the previous chapters. But to conclude, there are a few main points that must be clarified.

#### *Purpose and Function*

The first six National Education Board Conferences show that their initial design was formulated to establish a precedent for one conference to be held every few years in order to review potential problems with the existing system, update policies, propose new strategies and approaches, as well as gather feedback from varying sectors of the national education system. While these goals are certainly central to the success of the conferences, there seems also to be an aim to expand the system by creating new branches of schooling (education institutes, adult education facilities) and adding certain aspects to the curriculum (health, morality, family relations) as reflected in some way

within each of the Board Conferences after the Science Councils of the twenties and the first conference in 1939.

There is also a noticeable distinction between the discourse of the first two and the next four conferences, the former two taking place during a period when a strong government was still an arguable necessity and the Republican People's Party felt obligated to use its best judgment in providing access to education and learning opportunities based on foreign and local experts, university professors, and the Ministry of Education's own research. Yet, beginning in 1949, with the development of a sense of responsibility to the public's demands and expectations of education possibilities, there is an increasing attention to the opinions of society and everyday citizens. It was not acceptable to plan a school system based only on the abstractions of theories and good intentions. In Prime Minister Günaltay's opening speech of that year, he states clearly that the actions of the Ministry of Education as well as the decisions of the National Education Board are being monitored by civil society, reminding everyone that the function of the conference is not only producing winning ideas, but also answering to the demands of the public.

One final addition to the functions of the Board Conferences can be seen as early as during debates of the third, in 1946. This was the desire to maintain some sense of stability in the system. It must be considered that even though the first conference took place in 1939, there had been three science councils and discussions of national education system taking place as early as the years before the foundation of the official Republic. With this in mind, it is easier to understand the frustrations of the public and members of the education system at the fact that the changes made every few years at the National

Conferences meant constant new adjustments, adaptation, and shifting of teaching strategies and schedules. For example, the fact that still basic issues of systematic nature, teacher qualifications, and standardization are being discussed into the late fifties reflects the relatively slow progress of the country's system of education. In the context of nation-building and compared to other achievements made in political and economic realms, the constant reforming and restructuring of school-related institutions is noteworthy. During the middle of the 1946 conference when a question is asked about the blatant lack of stability in even the basic foundations of the system, the response called for patience and a vision for the long-term benefits of consistent revision and reformation of formal schooling. Nevertheless, the point was made that a new effort must be made to finalize at least the foundational aspects of education. An additional function of the Board was not only to provide valuable suggestions for the Ministry, but also to incorporate those suggestions into a permanent framework that would not be so ephemeral as in the past.

#### 17<sup>th</sup> Annual *Milli Eđitim Őurası* and Future Research

Besides the primary goal of trying to contribute to the literature by offering an in-depth and insightful look into the nature and character of the National Education Board Conferences during the first forty years of the Republic, it is of no less importance to provide a healthy critique of the existing ways the conferences were viewed and utilized in discursive contexts. It is undeniable that they can and should be used as a significant primary source for understanding paramount developments in the Turkish education system. It is also often true that the suggestions made by the Board can be found later in

legal documents of the same periods. Nevertheless, the most critical mistakes noticeable in secondary sources are the assumptions that the Board decisions are synonymous with education policy and decision-making of the Ministry of Education. In fact, it is not unusual to find missing links between the secondary source content of important issues and the conference contents. The most poignant example of this was the topic of religion and education in the fifties. The notion that the conference contents are intrinsically legitimate sources reflecting the most critical issues of the time is too superficial, considering the complexity of such a phenomenon. It would be more appropriate to address the subjective agenda of certain parties, genders, classes, and regions, however inconspicuous they may be.

There are also lessons to be learned about the future of the National Education Board Conferences of the twenty-first century based upon this historical analysis of the origins and early development of the *Şura* and the emergence of a nationalistic system of education. First and foremost, these conferences must be recognized as an advisory organ of the Ministry of Education. With regards to the past, this distinction is clear in some sources, but other texts within educational discourse tend to blend the discussion of Board conference decisions with official regulations. There is an often unnoticed inconsistency between Board suggestions, and applied policy. The conference recommendations cannot be assumed to reflect the practical changes that took place within any historical context. Similarly, the most recent seventeenth Board was accused of being ‘too politicized’ and representative of a single party’s agenda, namely that of the Justice and Development (AK) Party. Yet remembering that the initial Board Conferences were indeed created and served as an organ of the government of the time, it

is difficult to expect the debates and topics of discussion to be neutral while the entity of the Şura is intrinsically tied to the state. Rather than directing blame upon this aspect of the Education Board, perhaps it would be more effective and productive to consider initiating a separate Board of Education that would remain privatized, and organized by a distinct civil society organization. These conferences could also be held annually rather than every four to five years, since their existence would not hinge on the other political agendas of parties in power. This would also prevent certain critical issues from being left out of the main program of the conference and hopefully encourage more civil participation in both the organization of the conferences as well as in the debates of each issue. While it is not being suggested that this type of private entity should replace the *Milli Eğitim Şura*, having two with unique roles and connections would provide the project of improving national education in Turkey with a much stronger support system.

The conference discussions of the past should be viewed as an intriguing phenomenon, firstly, because of what its debates insightfully suggest about people's perceptions regarding the development of a nation's system of education and secondly, because of what they can say about the nature of the *Şura* itself. With this in mind, one can be hopeful that the main ideals and original aims of the National Education Board may be retained for the future, remembering Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's original 1921 Educational Congress. Despite the difficulties and stresses of a war-torn land, Atatürk impressed upon the educators he gathered, men and women alike, that one of the top priorities of a developing nation must be the provision of quality schooling for its people. The unforgettable message is that rather than to dabble in technicalities and petty disagreements over political influence, the *Milli Eğitim Şura* must be preserved as an

entity that serves to allow critiques of the current system of education, and will ensure the forward progression of the basic right to learn, for Turkey's generations to come.

APPENDIX A:  
English Introduction to the 17<sup>th</sup> National Education Board Conference  
(<http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr>)

The 17<sup>th</sup> Turkish National Education Assembly will be held from 13 to 17 November 2006 for the purposes of restructuring the 2000's national education system on the basis of the recent social, economic, technological and scientific developments and improvements, and meet any actual and potential needs, and develop solutions for the current problems experienced in the national system.

Like the past examples, the 17<sup>th</sup> Turkish National Education Assembly is a comprehensive activity performed at the world standards in a wide participation from all over Turkey.

Formal opinions have been requested on the issues expected to take place in the agenda from a number of institutions throughout Turkey, including:

- The ministries that operate and manage educational institutions,
- Central and suburban units of the Ministry of National Education,
- Public and private universities,
- Public entities and organizations,
- Educational unions, associations and foundations,
- Non-governmental organizations.

Representatives from the above listed parties attended the preliminary committee studies in regard to the National Education Assembly. Upon evaluation of the formal opinions, two important predominant issues have been determined to work on.

The Assembly agenda has been determined as follows:

1. Inter-Level Transitions, Orientation and Examination in the Turkish National Education System
2. Globalization and the Turkish National Education System in the EU Process

The preliminary committee studies for the Assembly were conducted with 112 participants from 8 to 16 June 2006.

The studies were targeted to develop a common vision in the process of globalization on the basis of the international equivalent community approach and the EU criteria. Another objective was to create a continuous self-renewing system to protect our values, and allow reaching a contemporary level in balance with the prevailing conditions in Turkey and the goals of our community.

The preliminary committee reports have been compiled in a book to guide the Assembly members.

We take this liberty to express our best wishes for this Assembly with the vision of modernity to be auspicious and beneficial to this county and the Turkish Nation, and sincere thanks to the honorable scientists and experienced and elite representatives of the participant institutions and organizations for their valued help and efforts in preparation on the preliminary documentation.

General Secretariat of the Assembly

APPENDIX B:  
Turkish Introduction to the 17<sup>th</sup> National Education Board Conference

ONYEDİNCİ MİLLÎ EĞİTİM ŞÛRASI  
(<http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr>)

Türk Millî Eğitim Sistemi açısından Cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarından itibaren düzenlenen millî eğitim şûralarının önemi herkes tarafından kabul edilen bir gerçektir. İlk kez, 1921 yılında Maarif Kongresi adıyla Ankara’da düzenlenen ve Atatürk’ün bizzat cepheden gelerek açılışını yaptığı millî eğitim şûraları; 1923,1924 ve 1925 yıllarında toplanan Heyet-i İlmiye çalışmaları ile devam etmiştir. Bugünkü adıyla millî eğitim şûralarının ilki ise 1939 yılında yapılmıştır.

7 yıl aradan sonra, 13-17 Kasım 2006 tarihlerinde düzenlenen 17. Millî Eğitim Şûrasında eğitim sistemimiz, kademeler arası geçişler, yönlendirme ve sınav sistemi ile küreselleşme ve AB sürecinde Türk eğitim sistemi boyutlarıyla değerlendirildi. Şûrada, her biri kendi alanının uzmanı olan katılımcılar, millî eğitimimizin sorunları ile ilgili görüşlerini demokratik bir ortamda dile getirme olanağı buldular.

Davet edilen yaklaşık 850 kişinin tamamına yakınının onurlandırdığı şûraya katılanların % 14.55’i tabii üyelere, % 36.49’u MEB mensubu resmî-özel kuruluş temsilcilerinden, % 17.09’u akademisyenlerden, % 10.97’si sivil toplum kuruluşları temsilcilerinden, % 10.97’si diğer kamu kurumları temsilcilerinden, % 6.24’ü yerel yönetim temsilcilerinden ve % 3.70’i de yurt dışından gelen temsilcilerden oluşmuştur. 17. şûra daha önce yapılan şûralarla karşılaştırıldığında, akademisyenlerin ve eğitim bilimleri uzmanlarının oransal olarak en yüksek oranda temsil edildikleri bir şûra olmuştur.

Eğitimle ilgili model arayışlarında, alışılmış neden sonuç ilişkilerini ileri sürerek yapılan değerlendirmeler eğitim adına çözümler üretmeyi engellemektedir. Eğitimin niteliğiyle ve niceliğiyle ilgili sürdürülebilir iyileştirmeleri sağlamak istiyorsak basit neden sonuç ilişkilerinin dışına çıkmak zorundayız. Şûrada alınan kararları da bu şekilde değerlendirmemizde yarar vardır.

Eğitim sistemimizin aksayan yönlerini düzeltmeye yönelik sıkça tekrarlanan önerilerin şûra kararı haline getirilmesi çok önemlidir. Dolayısıyla bu şûrada da yıllardır dile getirilen önemli eğitim sorunlarının çözümü için önerilerin sunulmuş olmasını şûranın önemli bir başarısı olarak görmek gerekir.

Şûraya katılan değerli üyeler, Atatürk’ün işaret ettiği yol ve odaklandığı amaçlar doğrultusunda çalışmalarını başarıyla tamamladılar ve eğitim sistemimizin geleceğine yön verecek nitelikte gerekli önerileri sundular. Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu olarak görevimiz, eğitim sistemimizi geliştirecek uygulanabilir nitelikte olan kararların hayata geçirilmesi için yapacağımız çalışmalarla devam etmektedir.

Büyük Önder Atatürk’ün, “En mühim ve feyizli vazifelerimiz, millî eğitim işleridir. Millî eğitim işlerinde mutlaka muzaffer olmak lazımdır. Bir milletin hakiki kurtuluşu ancak bu

suretle olur.” sözlerinin ışığı altında, 17. Millî Eğitim Şûrası kararlarının milletimize hayırlı olmasını diliyorum.

Saygılarımla.  
Prof. Dr. İrfan ERDOĞAN, Talim ve Terbiye

APPENDIX C:  
Translations

1. Ismail Safa Özler's Speech from page 37:

“Bugüne kadar, özellikle 324 (1908) İnkılbından sonra eğitimimize mutaç olduğu gerçek yönü vermek için çalışan bir çok saygıdeğer insanlar görülmüş, onların hayırlı ve yararlı girişimleri (teşebbüsleri) eksik olamamıştır. Ancak, kendilerinden sonra bütün bu girişimler, sürekli yolu ve yönü değiştirilen ufak bir su gibi kurumaya ve kaybolmaya başlamış, her yeni gelen, eskisini bırakarak başka bir alan ve biçimde çalışmak istemiştir. Eğitim öğretim kurumlarımızın kişisel çalışmalara bağlı, kesin olarak yerleşmemiş ve desteksiz kalmaları bugünkü kurak ve elemli manzaranın en büyük nedenidir. Bakanlığa geldiğim gün, tehlikeyi be hastalığı bu noktada gördüm. Bu yüzden bütün eğitim meseleleri üzerinde memleketimizin uzmanlarından, fikir adamlarından, eğitimci ve sosyolog-sosyal bilimcilerinden oluşan bir topluluğun bilimsel ve müsbet kararlarına ihtiyaç vardı. Böyle kararlar olmadan doğru ve kalıcı bir iş yapabilmek imkansızdı... Bir Eğitim Bakanının zaten buna yetkisi de olmazdı. Bence Eğitim Bakanlığı, ülkemizdeki bilgin ve düşünürlerin karar ve fikirlerini uygulayacak bir araçtan başka bir şey değildir... (Bakanlar değişebilir) fakat sizing kararınız ve sizing verdiğiniz program değişmemeli ve yeni bir kararınız olmadıkça aynen uygulanmalıdır.”

2. Hasan Ali Yücel's Opening Speech from page 42:

“Cumhuriyet Maarifine ait meseleler üstünde düşünürken, kültür hayatındaki tecrübe ve bilgileri ile ün almış şahsiyetlerin fikirlerine başvurmak ve onları dinlemek, öteden beri Cumhuriyet Hükümetinin ehemmiyetle iltizam ettiği bir usuldür. Daha Milli Mücadele yıllarında, düşman topraklarının hükümet merkezimizin yakın ufuklarını sarstığı en buhranlı bir devrede Ebedi Şef Büyük Atatürk, Ankara'da toplanan Maarif Kongresini bizzat açmış ve bununla kültür meseleleri etrafındaki müzakere ve münakaşaların hayati ehemmiyetine tarihi bir işaret vermiştir. Kendimi, idealinin evladı bellemekte en aziz kuvvet kaynağını bulduğum Büyük Şefim İsmet İnönü, çok kereler her türlü toplanmalarına şeref vererek irfan yocularını aynı izde yürümeye bilfiil teşvik etmişlerdir. Geçmiş yıllarda Milli Şefini, vekillik makamında asil olarak görmüş bulunan Cumhuriyet Maarifi, zaman zaman topladığı ilmi heyetler ve kongrelerde meslektaşlarımızın kültür meseleleri etrafındaki fikirlerini söylemeye bu ruhla imkanlar hazırlamıştır.”

3. Hasan Ali Yücel's Closing Speech from page 44:

“Önüne konulan her meseleyi, ilim ve kültür adamlarına has bir davrayışla ve en titiz ilmi araştırma ile, mütehassıslarını imrendirecek uyanık ve geniş bir görüşle halletmek için her ilmi vasıttan en cömert ölçüde istifade etmiş olan Şuramızın takibettiği verimli metot, takdire değer bir esabetle temeyyüz etmiştir. Bu ilmi çalışma metodu, yüksek heyetinize, birkaç aya sığıştırılmıyacak işler birkaç gün içinde ve ihtiyaca çok uygun bir yolda başarmağa imkan verdi. Yüksek Şuranın çalışmasında beni en çok sevindiren ve

bahtiyar eden cihet meslek arkadaşlarımın, halli karşısında buldukları hiçbir fedakarlığı esirgememeleridir... Yüksek heyetinizin hergün almış olduğu kararlar, memleketin en uzak köşelerinde bile çok sevindirici akisler bıraktı. Bu, yaptığınız işlerin, memleketin hakiki ihtiyaçlarına ne kadar sıkı sıkıya bağlı bulunduğunun en canlı işaretidir.”

#### 4. Reşat Şemsettin Sirer’s Opening Speech from page 70:

“Birinci değişiklik, Turk cemiyetinin, iş bölümünün meydana getirdiği bütün mesleklere çocuklarını serpen ve dağıtan bir bünye iktisabetmiş olmasıdır.

İkinci değişiklik, mesleklerin müntesiplerinden olanları amprik bilgilerle yetindirmiyen aynı zamanda bir eğitim de icabettiren bir ehliyet ister hale gelmiş olduklarıdır. Bu da ekonomik ve sosyal bakımdan memlekette değişmiş olan bir seviyenin alametini teşkil eder.

Üçüncü mühim değişiklik de şudur. Teknik Üniversitemize, teknik okullarımıza bunların bugünkü şartlar içinde alıp okutabileceklerinin kat kat üstünde öğrenci gelmektedir. Sanat okullarımız, sanat enstitülerimizi, yapı usta okullarımız kurduğumuz şehir ve kasabalarımızda yüzlerce, binlerce Türk çocuğu şetaret be sürurla, emniyet ve gururla bu okullara koşuyor.”

#### 5. Prime Minister Şemsettin Günaltay’s Opening Speech from page 72:

Buna göre gençlerin dimağlarını hayatta takibedecekleri mesleklere göre hazırlamak, o kadar lüzumlu olmıyan şeylerle fazla yormamak, hele bütün yükü hafıza yüklemek yolunu bulmağa gereken ehemmiyeti vermek zorundayız. Ana metot, hafızaları doldurmak değil, mefkureleri işletmek yolu olmalıdır. Müspet ilimlerin hayret veren inkişafını endiksiyon yolunun genişlemesiyle tahakkuk ettiğini biliyoruz. Her halde büyük kütleyi bidayette dimağları işleyecek surrence yetiştirmek, tatbikatla bu işlemeyi amelileştirmek yolunu genişletmek zorundayız.

İçine girdiğimiz ve muvaffakiyetle neticelendirmek azminde olduğumuz sağlam demokrasinin, beklediğimiz feyizli sonucu verebilmesi, gençlerimizin bu sahada da teşiz edilmelerine mütevakkf görünmektedir. Bilgisizlik yüzünden demokrasi anlayışının ne garip tecelliler gösterdiğine her gün hepimiz hayretle şahit olmaktayız. Demokrasiyi her türlü kayıttan azade mutlak bir başıboşluk telakki edenler olduğu gibi, başkalarının hukuk ve şerefine tecavüz için açılmış bir yol sananlar da görülmektedir.

Demokrasi, insane cemiyetini teşkil eden fertlere, insane olarak her hususta müsavi hak ve salahiyet tanıyan bir rejimdir.

Bu rejim tahakkuk edebilmesi, feyizli neticeler vermesi müsavi hak ve salahiyetleri tesbit ve bunların hudutlarını tayin eden kanunla mutavaatına mütevakkıftır.

Demokrasimizi dejenere omaktan siyanet için yeni nesle nakiki demokrasi esaslarını felkin etmek, zannımca çok lüzumludur. Bu yapılmadığı takdirde demokrasiyi memleketi hercümerç etmek istidadındaki demogokların fezvir vasıtası olmasına meydan vermiş oluyoruz. Çocuklarımızı hakiki demokrasiye inanmış olarak yetiştirmek, bu memlekeğin müstakbel mukadderatiyle çok ilgilidir. Yüksek heyetinizin bu hususu da inceliyeceğini umuyorum.”

6. Tevfik İleri's Opening Speech from page 75:

“Milli eğitiminin türlü meseleleri arasında ilköğretim birinci derecede ehemmiyeti haiz bulunmaktadır. Bu öğretimi kemiyet ve keyfiyet bakımından bir an evvel en ileri bir şekilde memleketin en uzak köşelerine kadar yaymak mecburiyetindeyiz.

İlköğretim teşkilatının mecburi be ihtiyarı olmak üzere iki kısma ayrılması uygun görülmüştür. Mecburi olanlar ilkokullarla yetiştirici ve tamamlayıcı sınıflar, özel eğitim ve öğretime muhtaç çocuklar için açılacak okullar olacaktır. Okul öncesi eğitim ve öğretim teşkilatıyla tamamlayıcı kurslar, ihtiyarı müesseseler mahiyetinde kurulacaktır.

Çeşitli sebeplerle henüz ilkokul açılmış birbirine yakın küçük köylerin bulunduğu yerlerde pansiyonlu ve yatılı ilkokullar, gündüzlü bölge okulları açılması, gezici öğretmenlikler ihdası derpiş edilmiş ve okulun faaliyetini istihsal hayatının icaplarına uydurmak zere mevsiminde yayla, otlak ve bağlara taşınan köylerin okullarının da oralarda vazifelerine devam etmeleri dikkate alınmıştır.

Vekalet iyi vasıfta öğretmen yetiştirme ve yetişen öğretmenleri mesleki bakımdan olgulaştırma kararındadır.

Sayın Şura üyeleri, herkesçe bilinen şu hakikatleri buradan bir kere daha tekrar etmeyi faydalı buluyorum: Önümüzdeki yirmi, yirmi beş yıl memleketimiz için ehemmiyetli ve pek hayati bir devredir. Yeni Türk nesillerini ilmi usullerle ve asrın ihtiyacına uygun şekilde yetiştirmek mecburiyetindeyiz. Bu zarureti gerçekleştirmek için herhangi bir tılsımdan medet umacak vaziyette değiliz. Milletimiz, gayeye varabilmemizin teminini Milli Eğitim teşkilatımızdan beklemektedir. Çocuklarımızı, yaptıklarını bilerek yapan, milli ideale bağlı, ruhları ve şahsiyetleri üstün birer insane olarak yetiştireceğiz. Çocuklarımız, sonsuz bir çalışma ihtirası taşımalı, başarının zevkini duymalı, tenbel ve tefeyli yaşamaktan nefret etmeli, organizasyon kabilyetlerini geliştirmeli, iyi ahlaklı, yapıcı ve yaratıcı vatandaşlar olmalıdırlar. Talim ve terbiye usullerimizde ne kadar kuvvelenirsek, bu üstün ideale o derece yaklaşmış olacağız.”

7. Ahmet Özel's Opening Speech from page 77:

“VI. Maarif Şurasını Mesleki ve Teknik Öğretim ile Halk Eğitim mevzularının görüşülmesine tahsis etmeyi faydalı bulduk. Mesleki ve Teknik Öğretim konuları 1946 Şura'sında incelenmiş ve o yıldan bu yana, bu alanda kaydolunan ilerlemeler, istatistikleriyle, gerekli kısa izahlarla bir broşür halinde Sayın Şura Üyelerine takdim olunmuştur. Bu mevzuda hedefimiz, Vekalet çalışmalarından, Mesleki ve Ateknik Öğretimin bugünkü durumundan Şurayı haberdar etmek, aynı zamanda bu öğretimin memleket ihtiyaçlarını daha geniş bir şekilde karşılayabilmesi için Şuranın tavsiye ve telkinlerini sağlamaktır.

Mesleki ve Teknik Öğretimin dünya yüzündeki ehemmiyetine Sayın Şura Üyeleri her cephesi ile vakıftırlar; bu konunun, asrın yeni vasıta ve metodlarından faydalanan memleketimizin ekonomik ve endüstriyel hayatıyla ne kadar sıkı bir şekilde alakalı olduğunu da takdir etmektedirler. Milletimizin bugünü ve yarını bakımından bu derece ehemmiyetli bir faaliyet şubesinde gerekli tekamülü temin etmek vazifemizdir.

İkinci mevzuumuz olan Halk Eğitimi, bilhassa V. Şuranın izhar ettiği arzu üzerine, bütünü ile ilk defa olarak, huzuruza getirilmektedir.

Bu eğitimin, ümmilikle mücadeleden başka, iyi yaşama, vatandaşlık ve sağlık bilgileri verme, halkı aydınlatma, mesleklere hazırlama, verimi artırma ve umumiyetle mesleklerde ilerlemeyi sağlama gibi hedefleri olması da tabiidir. Esasen eğitim gayesi, ferdi sosyal hayata hazırlamak, seviyeli, moral hayata kavuşturmadır. Bu da onu bir meslek sahibi kılmak suretiyle tahakkuk safhasına girer.

Sözlerimi bitirmeden evvel bize kıymetli yardımlarda bulunan yabancı ve milletlerarası bütün teşekküllere ve onların kıymetli mümessilleri olan mütehassıslara teşekkürlerimi ifade etmeyi zevkli bir vazife bilirim. Hür milletler arasındaki işbirlikleri, onları birbirlerine daha çok yaklaştırıp kuvvetlendirmektedir.”

## THESIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahmad, Feroz. *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1977.
- Akyüz, Yahya. *Türk Eğitim Tarihi: Başlangıçtan 1993'e*. Kültür Koleji Yayınları 2: İstanbul, 1993.
- Apple, Michael. *Official Knowledge*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- The State and the Politics of Knowledge*. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2003.
- Arar, İsmail. *Hükümet Programları (1920-1965)*. İstanbul: Tıpo Neşriyat ve Basımevi, 1968.
- Başgöz. İlhan. *Türkiye'nin Eğitim Çıkmazı ve Atatürk*. Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1995.
- Başgöz. İlhan & Wilson, Howard. *Educational Problems in Turkey 1920-1940*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968.
- Binbaşıoğlu, Cavit. *Eğitim Yöneticiliği*. Ankara: Kadıoğlu Matbaası, 1978.
- Çağdaş Eğitim ve Köy Enstitüleri: Tarihsel Bir Çerçeve*. İzmir: Dikili Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1993.
- Bursalıoğlu, Sabit. *The Changing Character of Education in Successive Reformation Periods of Turkish History*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1965.
- Cicioğlu, Hasan. *Türkiye Cumhuriyetinde İlk ve Ortaöğretim (Tarihi Gelişimi)*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1983.
- Dale, Roger. (ed.) *Education and the State: Volume II*. Sussex: The Falmer Press/The Open University Press, 1981.
- Dodd, C.H. "The Development of Turkish Democracy", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19 (No 1, 1992): 16-30.
- Fägerlind, Ingemar & Saha, Lawrence. *Education and National Development*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983.
- Fortna, Benjamin. *Imperial Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Gedikoğlu, Şevket. *Kemalist Eğitim İlkeleri ve Uygulamalar*. İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1978.

- Geyikdağı, Mehmet Yaşar. *Political parties in Turkey: the Role of Islam*. New York: Praeger Publications, 1984.
- Gezer, Nadir. “Sistemin Devre Dışı Bırakılması, Köy Enstitülerin Kapatılması.” In *Köy Enstitüleri Amaçlar, İlkeler, Uygulamalar*. Ankara: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 1997.
- Gök, Fatma (ed.) *75 Yılda Eğitim*. İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1999.
- Göktürk, Duygun. “*Analysis of the National Education Councils During the Single-Party Era in Turkey*.” Masters Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005.
- Heper, Metin & Landau, Jacob. *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*. London, NY: IB Tauris & Co Ltd., 1991.
- Heper, Metin & Sayarı, Sabrı. *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002.
- Kaplan, İsmail. *The Ideology of National Education in Turkey and its Implications for Political Socialization*. Ph.d dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 1998).
- Kaplan, Mevlüt; Oran, Halil; Metin, Mustafa; Akgöl, Halim; Güvendi, Mustafa. (ed.) *Çağdaş Eğitim ve Köy Enstitüleri*. İzmir: Dikili Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 1993.
- Kaplan, Sam. *The Pedagogical State*. Stanford: Stanford Univesity Press, 2006.
- Karacan, Hasan. *Köy Enstitüsü Programları*. Ankara: Köy Enstitüleri ve Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı Yayınları, 2004.
- Karaömerlioğlu, Asım. “The Village Institutes Experience in Turkey.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No.1 (May 1998): 47-73.
- “Elite Perceptions of Land Reform in Early Republican Turkey.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 27 No.3 (April 2000): 115-141.
- Karpat, Kemal. *Turkey’s Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959.
- The Gecekondu: rural migration and urbanization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Kazamias, Andreas. *Education and the Quest for Modernity*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966.

- Kirby, Fay. *Türkiye’de Köy Enstitüleri*. Ankara: Rüzgarlı Matbaa, 1962.
- Lowe, J. *Education and Nation-Building*. New York: Barnes&Noble, 1971.
- Navaro-Yashin, Yael. *Faces of the State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- O’Cadiz, Maria; Wong, Pia; Torres, Carlos A. *Education and Democracy: Paulo Freire, Social Movements and Educational Reform in Sao Paulo*. Oxford: The Westview Press, 1998.
- Okçabol, Rıfat. *Türkiye Eğitim Sistemi*. Ankara: Utopya Yayınevi, 2005.
- Owen, Roger & Pamuk, Şevket. *A History of Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1998.
- Özbudun, Ergun. *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey*. Ankara: Turkish Political Science Association, 1988
- Popkewitz, Thomas. *Educational Knowledge*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2000.
- Sakaoğlu, Necdet. “14. Yüzyıldan 21. Yüzyıla Türkiye’de Eğitim” In Istanbul Forum conference paper, 2004.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şuraları 1939-1996’ Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1998.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Maarif Şurası’ (Birinci 1939) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şurası’ (İkinci 1943) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şurası’ (Üçüncü 1946) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şurası’ (Dördüncü 1949) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şurası’ (Beşinci 1953) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.
- T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı ‘Milli Eğitim Şurası’ (Altıncı 1957) İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1991.

- T.C. Milli Eğitim Komisyonu. *Report of the Turkish National Commission on Education, 1959*. Istanbul: American Board Publication Department, 1961.
- Torres, Carlos Alberto. *Democracy, Education, and Multiculturalism*. Oxford: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998.
- Türk, Ercan. *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nda yapısal değişmeler ve Türk Eğitim Sistemi*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım Ltd., 1999.
- Verschoyle, T. "Education in Turkey" *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944- )* Vol. 26, No. 1 (January, 1950): 59-70.
- Yıldırım, Güzver. *Recent Perspectives on Turkish Education: An Inside View*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- Yiğit, Ali Ata. *İnönü Dönemi Eğitim ve Kültür Politikası*. Istanbul: Boğaziçi Yayınları A.Ş., 1992.
- Yücel, Hasan Ali. *Milli Eğitim İlgili Söylev ve Demeçler*. Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 1993.
- Zürcher, Erik. *Turkey: A Modern History*. New York: IB Tauris & Co Ltd., 1993.